

Cambridge Poetry Festival
Camouflage
Car
Cascade and Pour
Chaimowicz, Marc Camille
Chance
Chick, Victoria (Vicki/Vicky)
Choice by Chance
Chronology
Clark, Jane
Classicism
Clumsiness
Collaboration
Conceptualism
Core Group
Correspondence
Coxhead, David
Craig-Martin, Michael
Critics
Curator

U O I S N F I P



An A-Z of The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes – C

Marie-Anne Mancio

Above: Group members articulated criticisms of one another; page from a notebook held by Anthony Howell, nd, c 1975, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive
See also: **Fantasy, Nucleus, Performers, Ting**

Miranda - Not reliable
Anthony - Dismissive & cursory
Mickey - lazy
Fiona - irritatingly meticulous
Howard - Too obsequious
Lindsay - Moody
Anita - Too young pretty

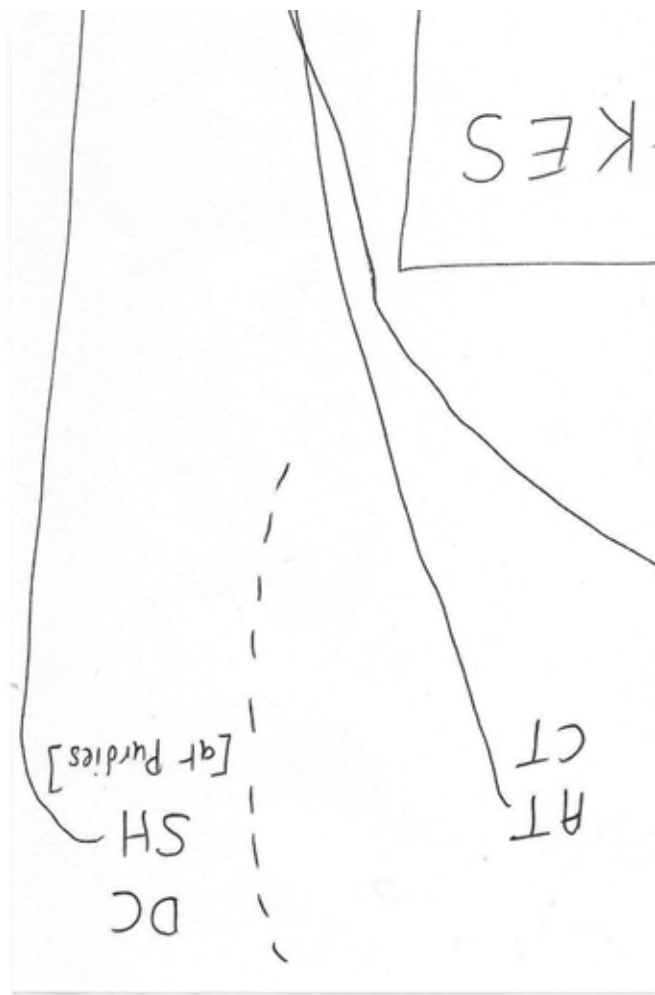
The core group shifted over the years. **Documentation** (programs) refers variously to nuclei of five, six, and seven performers. Mike **Owen** for instance appears to be among them but Howard Tong's recollection is that Owen was not a constant presence. In the summer of 1975, the group comprised: Anthony **Howell**, Fiona **Templeton**, Michael **Greenall**, Howard **Tong**, Miranda **Payne**, Lindsay **Moran**, and Anita **Urquhart**.

Core Group (The Theatre of Mistakes)

Mutual necessities

- 1 We should have a core group ~~that all~~ ~~the capacity of~~ where all of us attain the highest capacity of the energy of the strongest member — though this may show itself in different ways and in different roles.
- 2 If the nucleus continues the size it if I think we should not only maintain present pressure but also distinctly increase it — until either we are all as strong as each other or the weaker elements — however weaker — are eliminated.
- 3 As far as performance goes we should definitely all be as strong as the strongest inside the core group.
- 5 We need a really competent working dynamo — I would think about 5 — at the most — but for performance tending increase that number. Obviously pressure on volunteers for touring would not be as heavy as on nucleus group.
- 6 facial expressions.
- 7 A timetable with realistic pacing
- 8 Some counterbalance of pairing pressures, and Ting/with Ting dualism —
Women's days, men's days, younger group meeting, older group meeting, different night meetings, rotary of choice by chance variations of any category by which to divide ourselves.

Page from Notebook of Anthony Howell, nd, c.1975
The Theatre of Mistakes Archive



2009-09-03

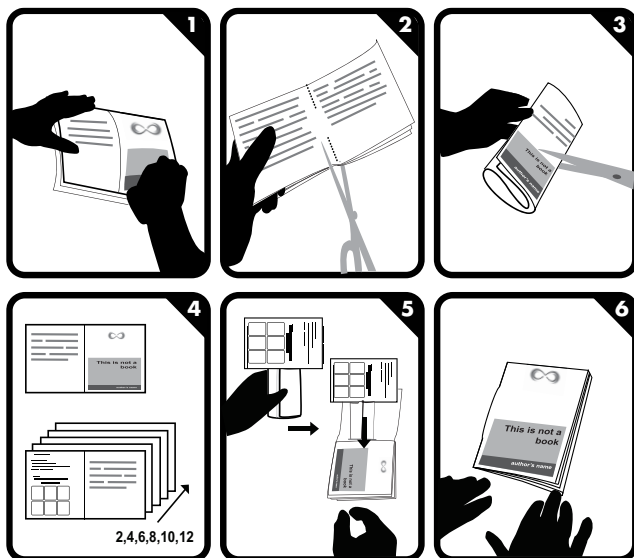
Published by Proboscis
C Marie-Anne Mancio & contributors 2009

Part of Proboscis' Diffusion Residency Programme

<http://proboscis.org.uk> | <http://diffusion.org.uk>

www.bookleteer.com

made with Diffusion Generator by



Poster for 1975 Cambridge Poetry Festival

The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes

an **A-Z**

C

Marie-Anne Mancio

5
Rinehart (MD), himself a fiction created by George Cockcroft, published in 1971, *The Dice Man* the autobiography of Luke one another in unlikely combinations; images created by accident recognizing the potential of randomness. Words placed alongside nullifies personality; frees the mind from clichéd associations by chance functions to eliminate the 'hand' or the Modernist mark; it chose Templeton as its director, for example.) For the artist, Fiona Templeton, and Michael Greenall to devise *The Street* and roles within the company. (In 1975, the dice selected Pat Murphy, democratizing element and the preferred method of determining adhered to, were less important than the use of the die as a (recalled by Peter Stickland) whereby all dice decisions were choreographer Merce Cunningham - and a Ting dice weekend republished in the late 60s and early 70s and used by *Idiot's Guide to the I Ching*, 2001) - which was Elizabeth Moran; Joseph Yu *The Complete* from the inception of The Ting. The popularity of the I-Ching (see *Choice by Chance*, or die-throwing, was a conceptual presence See also: Art Room, Hour book

Chance
See also: Art Room, Hour book
Choice by Chance, or die-throwing, was a conceptual presence from the inception of The Ting. The popularity of the I-Ching (see Elizabeth Moran; Joseph Yu *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the I Ching*, 2001) - which was republished in the late 60s and early 70s and used by choreographer Merce Cunningham - and a Ting dice weekend (recalled by Peter Stickland) whereby all dice decisions were adhered to, were less important than the use of the die as a democratizing element and the preferred method of determining roles within the company. (In 1975, the dice selected Pat Murphy, Fiona Templeton, and Michael Greenall to devise *The Street* and chose Templeton as its director, for example.) For the artist, chance functions to eliminate the 'hand' or the Modernist mark; it nullifies personality; frees the mind from clichéd associations by recognizing the potential of randomness. Words placed alongside one another in unlikely combinations; images created by accident. Published in 1971, *The Dice Man* the autobiography of Luke Rinehart (MD), himself a fiction created by George Cockcroft, 5

Cambridge Poetry Festival
The **Ting**: Theatre of Mistakes performed at the Cambridge Poetry Festival in April 1975 (*Preparations for Displacement*) and 1977 (*Going*).



Reverse of the poster for the 1977 Cambridge Poetry Festival

See also: **Audiences** for a review by Sebastian Faulks, **Bibliography**, **Cars**, Robert Janz

Camouflage

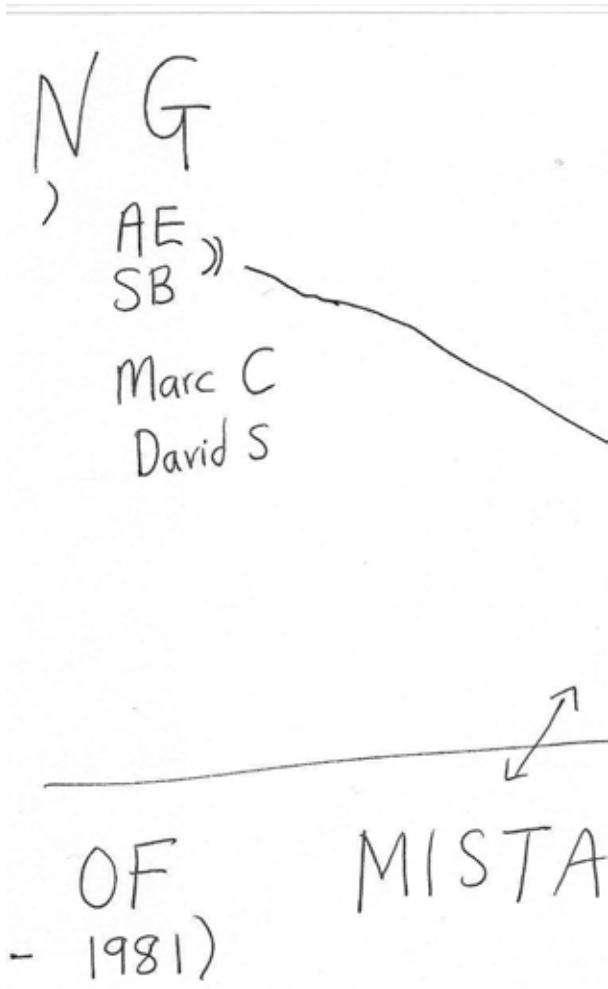
Camouflage: All performers should wear costumes that camouflage them in the street (e.g. neutral street colours, a soaking wet performer camouflaging the street as the street on a wet day, a performer camouflaged as a road sweeper etc.) while at the same time parts of the street—walls, pavements, gardens—are to be camouflaged. Thus the street is disguised as a performance space and vice versa. A breakdown truck from the garage on the Leverton Street corner to be draped in military camouflage netting (lent by Coldstream Guards, Chelsea Barracks) and parked inside the factory archway blocking entry to the audience.

Notes from *The Street* (1975), The Theatre of Mistakes **Archive**

Camouflage by Display and Display by Displacement: Various locations including St. Pauls, the British Museum, Sunday May 16th 1976. Lindsay **Moran** recalls a near arrest by a policeman who was not amused by his performance of standing absolutely still in Burlington Arcade... (Interview: Lindsay Moran, London, 6th Nov, 2008)



Amongst the artists/critics who have looked at The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes' work are:
Pat Murphy, David Coxhead, Susan Hillier, Susan (Bonvin) Eden, Jane Clark, Amanda Welch, John Sharkey, Peter Dunn, Sebastian Faulks, John Spurling, Adrian Searle, Michael Couturier, Marc Chaimowicz, David Cunningham, Paul Overy, Sarah Kent, Tim Hilton, Alan Fuchs, Michael Shepherd, William Feaver, Donna Lange, John Howell, Stuart Morgan, Andre Rutten, Jac Heijer, Jan Baart, Daniel de Lange, Sue Wardlaw, Anthony Masters, Rainer Hoynck, Sue Bannerman, John Howell, Nick Wood, Marie-Anne Mancio, Jason E Bowman.



DEWIS THOMAS THE LISTENER 25/4/77



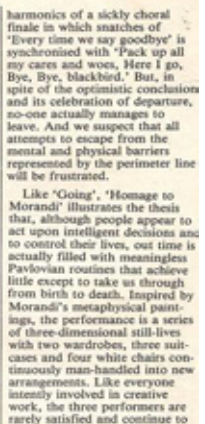
...for...

«Le refus de «la belle image»

ARTS

Journal of Management Education 36(7) 809-824

Time Out



While caution and compromise pervade the London art scene, Sarah Kent goes overboard about Tings . . . or, more precisely, The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes, who are peddling their performance wares at the Jeannetta Cochrane Theatre this week.

with the furniture in their charge. Julian, as a removal man in a brown warehouse coat, is the first to be seen, carrying a disgruntled wardrobe: 'Who wants to be a tall boy?' Peter, wearing a white boiler suit, stacks and rearranges chairs chaotically. 'And Another chair. And another chair. And another chair' until he too, grumblingly identifies the last as a 'grand old chair', muttering, 'I could have been Chippendale.' Anthony in Khaki is responsible for suitcases — 'I'll take care of those', he says, then off the wardrobes, opening and closing them — until sitting in on his luggage, he announces 'Suitcases. Check.' As in 'Going', dreams of escape from the dreary routine jobs which this charade parodies are the only thing that hold the piece in throwaway comments like 'Have suitcase, will travel.' But escape from their drone-like lives is the only thing that holds the salesgirl on the beauty counter winning the Miss World Competition, or the models in travel goods rooms in a dream of a world tour.

A cross between Greek tragedy



Performance, also SLEEPWALKER, MIRRORING hands, STREET BOX performers, ABSENCE.

11 Joseph Kosuth, Yoko Ono, Adrian Piper in the U.S. to John Latham practices prevalent in the 60s and 70s, practices that range from Conceptual art is perhaps best viewed as a disparate range of See: **Bibliography, Unwritten**

Conceptualism

Collaboration See **Mutuality, Wallpaper**

feet in movement.

marred in performance by something as simple as the sound of Mistakes, but felt the outcome of these investigations were fascinated by the concepts explored by The Ting: Theatre of Howard Tong's move away from performance was partly a cause of his dissatisfaction with the clumsiness of people. He was

Clumsiness

Classicism See **Ballet, Going**

Issue 8, Summer 1999)

(Mel Taylor "To whom it may concern" *FilmWaves*, context."

representing the work within a feminist film back into distribution, and to committed to bringing forgotten early women's making and watching films. Circles was also undermines many of the traditional ways of reflected a "female point of view which film/video, promoting performance and installation. Its works radical, interested in interdisciplinary practice and co-operative which grew from the London Film Makers' Co-op. Circles was and Pat Murphy, Clark was one of 11 women who funded Circles, discussions/performances. In 1979, along with Annabel Nicholson days of The Ting and participated in several Ting cardboard house in Robert Janz's studio at the *Daily* in the early Film maker (Clark, *Water Reflection*, 1973) who lived in a See also: *Birth Ballet Chorale, Ephemeria, The Street, Women*

Clark, Jane

1974-9:

THE TING: THEATRE OF MISTAKES		Performances 1974-1976
1974 Nov:	The Ting at A.M.P., London	
1975 Apr:	"Preparations for Displacement", Cambridge International Poetry Festival	
Jul:	"The Street", London	
" :	"Pairs Game", "The Three Act Piece", "Sabotage Piece", Southampton Performance Show	
Aug:	"Solos", "Automotive Regeneration", "Height Slides and Collisions", The Village Green, Hartley Wintney	
Sep:	"Anti-Gravity", Basingstoke	
Oct:	"Five Concert Pieces and a Free Session", The London Exhibition	
Nov:	"The Lecture Performance", Roundhouse, London	
Dec:	Ting Free Session, Roundhouse	
1976 Feb:	"The Three Act Piece", new version, Goldsmiths College, London	
Mar:	"Elements of Performance Art", 15 performers, Winchester School of Art	
May:	"Pairs Game", new version, Slade School of Art, London	
" :	"Two Journeys", Slade School of Art	
June:	Acme Gallery, London, New Contemporaries "Elements of Performance Art", 3 performers, Maidstone College of Art	
" :	"The Table Piece", open rehearsals, Goldsmiths	
" :	" " " " " " Falkland Fair, London	
" :	"The Table Piece", University of East Anglia	
Jul:	Reversal, The Art Room, London	
Aug:	"Active Circles", Hartley Wintney "The Table Piece", Chieveley "Trio", Artist's Market, London	
Sept:	"Scenes at a Table", London Calling "Homage to Pietro Longhi" (Scenes at a Table), Serpentine Gallery, London	
Nov:	"The Ascent of the Stedelijk", Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam	

Notes from The Theatre of Mistakes, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive
See also: **Ting, Birth Ballet Chorale**



Tong and Urquhart left; Peter Stickland replaced Moran in 1976 and Glenys Johnson and Julian Maynard Smith took on core group roles. In the shift from the looser **Ting** to the more structured core - The Theatre of Mistakes - there was perhaps more critique, more analysis amongst participants. Despite the reviews of the August 1974 weekend event at **Purdies** that Anthony Howell persuaded participating artists to write, Andrew **Eden** and Susan **Bonvin** insist, "There was no point at which there was any kind of feedback. No, it just wasn't in any way like that." (interview: Andrew Eden & Susan Bonvin, *Peterborough*, 24th Nov 2008). However, this does contradict Signe Lie **Howell**'s memory that there was always discussion or 'post-mortems' after **workshops/performances**.

Correspondence See **Letters**

Coxhead, David See also: **Bibliography, Ting, Wallpaper**

Writer of: novels (*Afghanistan*), analysis (*Dream: Visions of the Night* with partner Susan **Hiller**); art criticism (*Amikam Toren - Actualities* (Matt's Galleries, 1984)

John Welch read David Coxhead's Text for a Dance in a somnorous voice.
Tom Lovenstein read David Coxhead's Text for a Dance in a strong voice.
Alan Puck read David Coxhead's Text for a Dance in a quiet voice.
They read it out of doors. It was almost sunset. Others were moving through the pasterns and aspects of Anthony Howell's Field **Mail** Dance.
The Text accompanies the dance like music; like music, the dance goes with the text.
It is impossible to estimate whether there are more implicit combinations of words in the text than possible configurations of movement in the dance, or if their potentials are reciprocal. It is impossible to estimate the number of coincidences, correspondences, dimensions.
(Text for a Dance consists of 15 plates, each containing 15 tiles. A word is inscribed on each tile. "The text should be understood as an endless telegram, often obscure, sometimes incomprehensible, but containing a meaning that requires the readers to insert a verbal punctuation so that its message can be deciphered")

Review by SH [Susan Hiller] of *Text for a Dance* nd, c.1974
The Theatre of Mistakes Archive

Craig-Martin, Michael (1941-)

(See www.michaelcraig-martin.com) **Conceptual** artist, educator, and close friend/partner of Michael **Greenall**. **Curator** of **Summer Show 5** at the Serpentine in 1976 at which The Theatre of Mistakes performed **Homage to Pietro Longhi**. According to Anthony **Howell**, Craig-Martin influenced the company, attending all the performances of **Going** and several rehearsals. (See Anthony Howell in Nick Kaye's *Art Into Theatre*, Harwood Academic, 1996, 137)

Critics

See also: **Audiences, Bibliography**

9 Acceptance of "role" in the short term until we have the time to change these things
— cost, secretary, driver, hooter, relaxed organism, conceptual planning, documentation specialist.

10 We need to be personally faithful — come to some depth, knowledge and presence of each other's heavier attitudes or feelings however quickly they may seem, however easily we may be able to criticise those parts. Quaverlets also.

11 We should be more like chocolate than grahamas.

12 Tell each other when we like what someone has done, and tell that person or vice versa — as usual not blame.

13 Get more into our dreams, dream swapping, the fantasy piece.

14 To be part of the group where each & everyone is so strong that each & everyone has a very powerful comprehensive different world to contribute to each and every other.

15 I think everyone should bring pencil & paper to meetings and I think we need a core group where this might be said.

16 A mechanics for as many as possible of these necessities rather than endless discussion.

Notes: 5 hours/week 5 hours off per day
1 person "off" per week.
New ways other than perf.
Some understanding of boyfriend/girlfriends outside group.
Other groups down.
6 hour practice of a few exercises. Joints on all permutations.

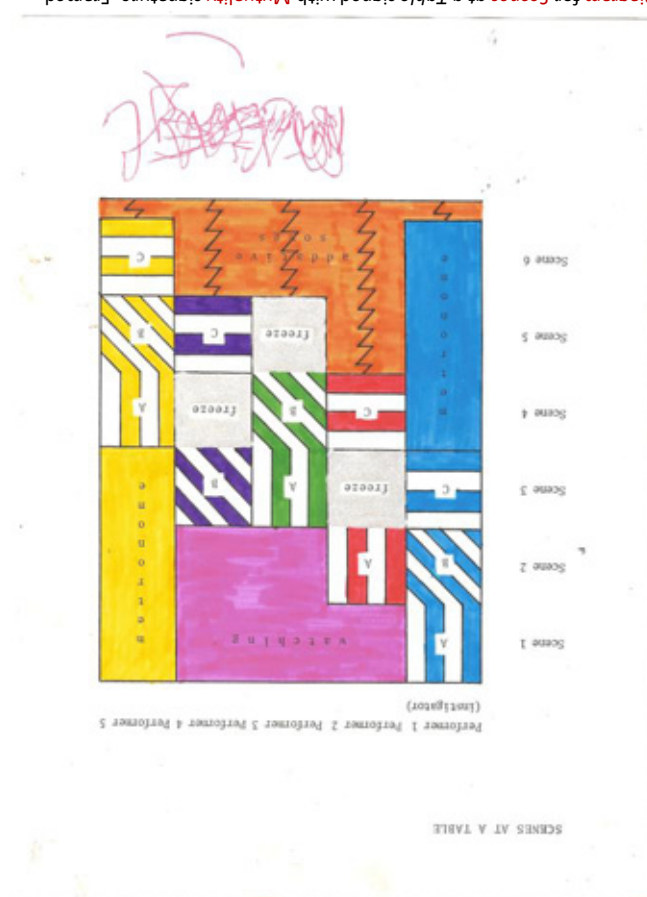
17 Stable economic situation.

18 Go & see things..

19 Each of us stimulate the others — its no use being carried through a meeting anymore than through a perf.

20 Reading list. Go & see things.

21 More events that help rather than meetings — role swapping.



in the UK, to Cildo Mierles in Brazil and which could be said to have originated with Duchamp's infamous urinal.

There are certainly parallels between The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes and some conceptual artists' approach to **documentation**. The Theatre of Mistakes' *Scene* and *Time* diagrams for *Scenes at a Table*, for example were conceived as visual representations of the performance structure, and individually coloured, signed, framed, and sold as artworks in their own right. Equally, the *Elements* book with its instruction-based **exercises** might be read as the equivalent of a Sol Le Witt or a Stanley Brouwn piece, enabling the reader to create their own works, albeit ones with multiple permutations. However, contrary to Lucy Soutter's claim ("The Photographic Idea: Reconsidering Conceptual Photography" *Afterimage* Mar-Apr 1999) that "since the mid-60s conceptual artists have denied any interest in photography *per se*", The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes deployed photography as more than a means of documentation. It informed the practice of at least three associated artists — Robert Janz, Glenys Johnson and Lindsay Moran — and resulting images reflect preoccupations with time and space (cf Pat Murphy on her "Muybridge solo" in *Preparations for Displacement* and multiple photographs of *Waterfall*).

It is also worth noting, as Peter Stickland says, that The Theatre of Mistakes saw themselves as artists and whilst they very aware of conceptual practice (in conversations with Bowman and Mancio, Howell cited the work of Henry Flynt - www.henryflynt.org - as influential), they were also as happy to be unfashionably engrossed in Pietro Longhi. (Conversations: London, Oct 08-Jan 09) Given the bias towards the theatrical in writings on performance, a reassessment of The Theatre of Mistakes' impact on British conceptualism in the 1970s is overdue.