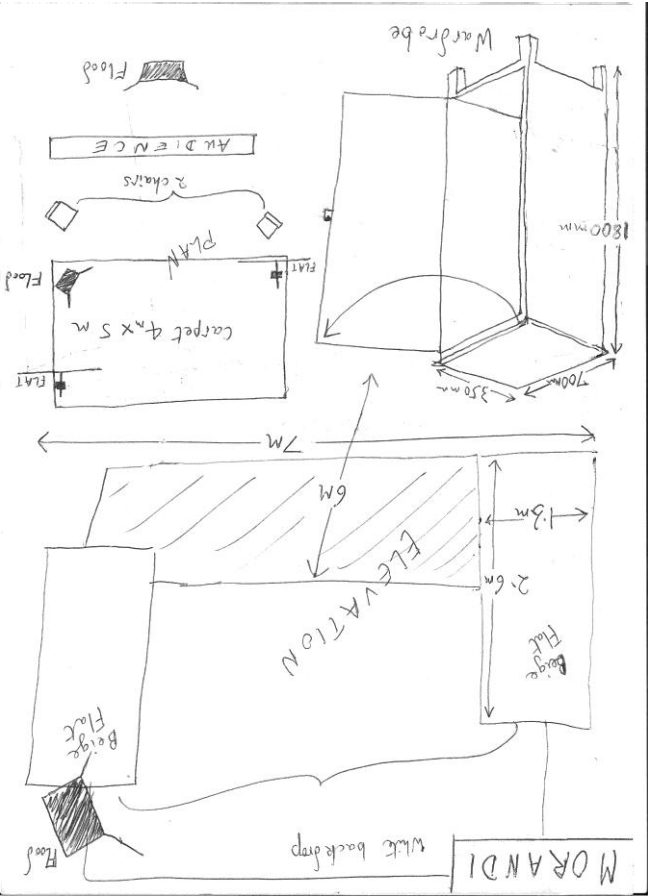


Diagram stage set *Homage to Morandi* @The Theatre of Mistakes



Digital Masks

DIGITAL MASKS

- Employ one or more of the fingers of one hand to create a mask by hiding or distort ing part of the face.
- Employ one or more of the fingers of both hands to create a mask in the same manner.
- Create a mask in theis manner either for yourself or for another performer or for yourself and another performer.
- Employ JOINTS EXERCISE to move fingers, hands and arms up to or away from the face. Keep movements crisp, with long pauses between each movement.



Anthony Howell performing *Digital Masks*, one of many *exercises* from the *Gymnasium*
©The Theatre of Mistakes, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive

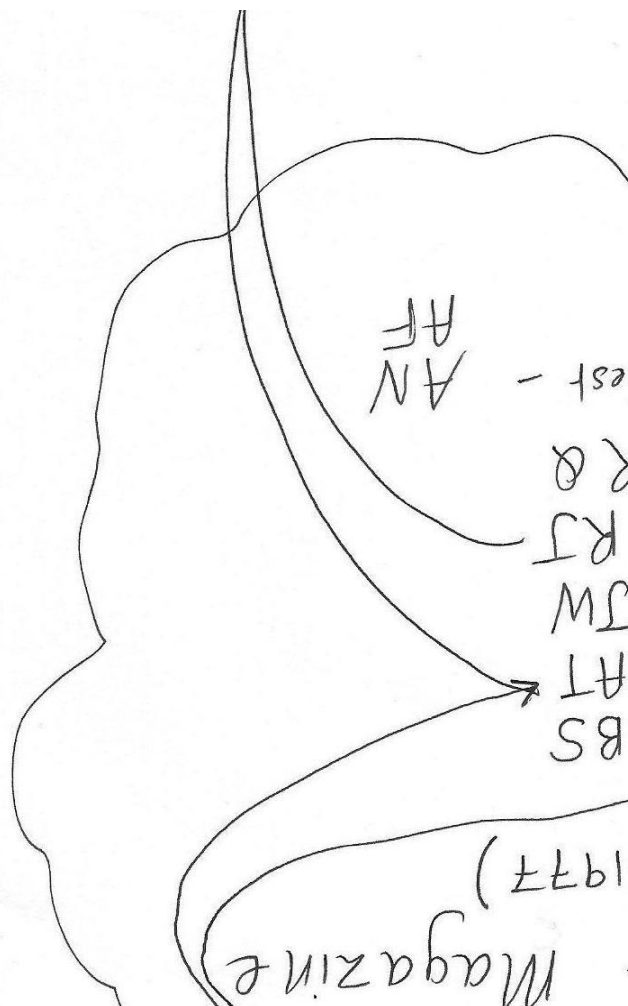
- Doors
- Documentation
- Disappearances
- Digital Masks
- Diagrams
- Deborah Howell
- Death
- Dance
- Dairy, The

U O I S N F I O N



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

Marie-Anne Mancio



2009-09-03

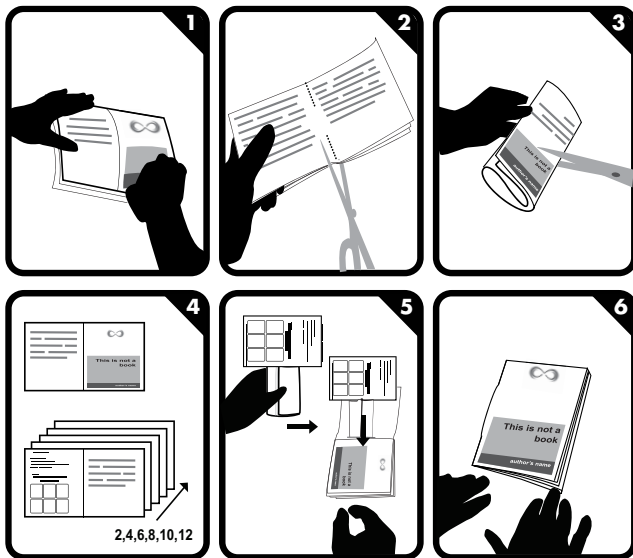
Published by Proboscis
C Marie-Anne Mancio & contributors 2009

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The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes

an **A-Z**

D

Marie-Anne Mancio

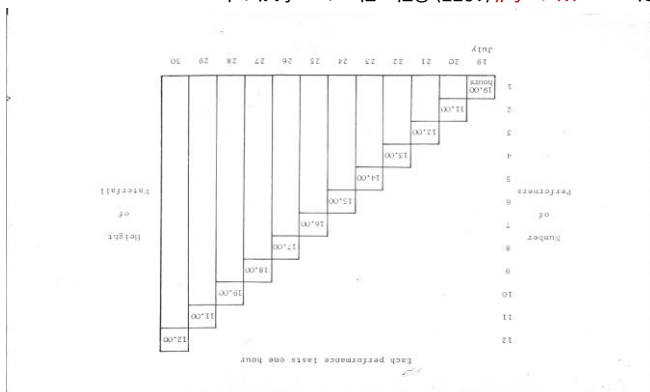
Statement by Jacky Lansley for the Art Room, c. 1976
The Theatre of Mistakes Archive

Jacky Lansley
I have decided to use 'dance' as a reference point for my activities, in an attempt to create a recognisable focus or basis for concerns which I feel apply to other areas of art activity.
Although for the last three years or so I have been functioning in a loosely defined as 'performance art' (whatever that might be) I have a long historical involvement with dance as a specific area. I do not feel the problems dancers have are exclusive to dancers, although I think a certain amount of specialised attention has to be given to the form in order for it to develop a radical identity which other progressive artists can recognise, and respect. Many artists seem to regard dance as an admirable but naive activity, many dancers seem to resist theoretical discussion in the fear that it will destroy the pure physicality of dance. I feel there has to be both, a physical revolution (breaking away from restrictive techniques etc.) and a theoretical revolution (analysing the oppressive structures and institutions which support it).
It is difficult to find critically active contexts in which to explore some of these issues, for the obvious reason I suppose that they do not as yet exist, although there are a few beginnings such as the Dance Agency (what M.C.A., where a nucleus of people concerned with dance (of which I am one) are organising themselves in an alternative way. However, as said before I do not feel the questions are exclusively concerned with dance, and I am not at all sure they should only be exposed within the 'dance venues'.
I am therefore going to present what I do in 'The Art Room' as a series of dances, not that I will necessarily do any dancing, but then what is dance?

Dance

A large, 'empty', dilapidated building that was occupied by Space and artists such as Jane Clark, Robert Janz, Annabel Nicholson and the London Film-Makers Co-op [1971-5]. The Ting met here in 1973/4 for workshops.
See also: Anthony McCall

Dairy, The (13a Prince of Wales Crescent, London)



See also: Peter **Stickland**

and have become artworks in their own right. space, these 'scores' facilitate recreation of their performances intricate **notations** of movement, representations of time and structurally where they may be used to reading for meaning. BEING PERFORMED. These invite the audience to read OFTEN INCLUDE DIAGRAMS RELATING TO THE WORKS THE THEATRE OF MISTAKES' PROGRAMS/POSTERS

(SEE ALSO **KEY** FOR THE DIAGRAM ON THE BACK OF THIS A-Z)

DIAGRAMS

Deborah **Howell**, see **Howell**, Deborah

Sadly, Michael **Greenall** is the only member of The Theatre of Mistakes who is no longer alive. His friends and colleagues have all remembered him with great respect and affection.

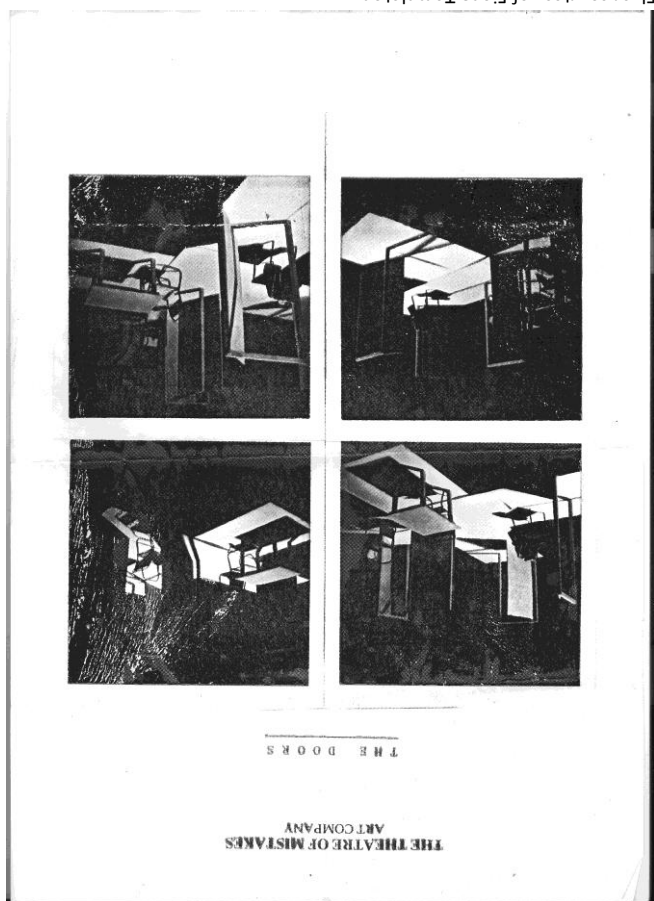
Death

Aside from Anthony **Howell**'s involvement with the Royal **Ballet** (pre-**Ting**), The Theatre of Mistakes' interest in the **architecture** of space and **notations** of performances, the New Dance scene burgeoning in the UK throughout the 1970s is an important context in which to consider Ting's practice. In its departure from traditional forms and its leanings towards the kinds of minimalist practices embraced by some conceptual artists and musicians, and in its collaborative strategies, it afforded a far better model for making work than traditional theatre.

Inspired by developments in the U.S. such as Judson Dance Theatre, the British radical collective X6 was established by Maedée DuPrès, Emilyn Claid, Mary Prestidge, Jacky Lansley, and Fergus Early, and resident in its own space in empty Butler's Wharf by 1976. Before that, there was the use of intertextuality and interdisciplinarity in the dance company Moving Being; then from 1974-5, Lansley and Sally Potter were the Limited Dance Company, performing choreographies that combined quotidian movements, text, surreal imagery, and a feminist sensibility. There was an interest in performing in public spaces – galleries, schools, parks, pavements, prisons... There was the anti-expressionism of Richard Alston's Strider – a democratically run group where participants could take it in turns to choreograph; there was Mary Fulkerson's anti-technique; Rosemary Butcher's improvisation and instruction-led processes and use of real time, and performance artist Rose English/ film maker Potter's collaborations which subverted gender roles. X6 may have been more politically motivated (seeking to engineer social change) than The Theatre of Mistakes, but there are parallels nevertheless in their methods of devising.

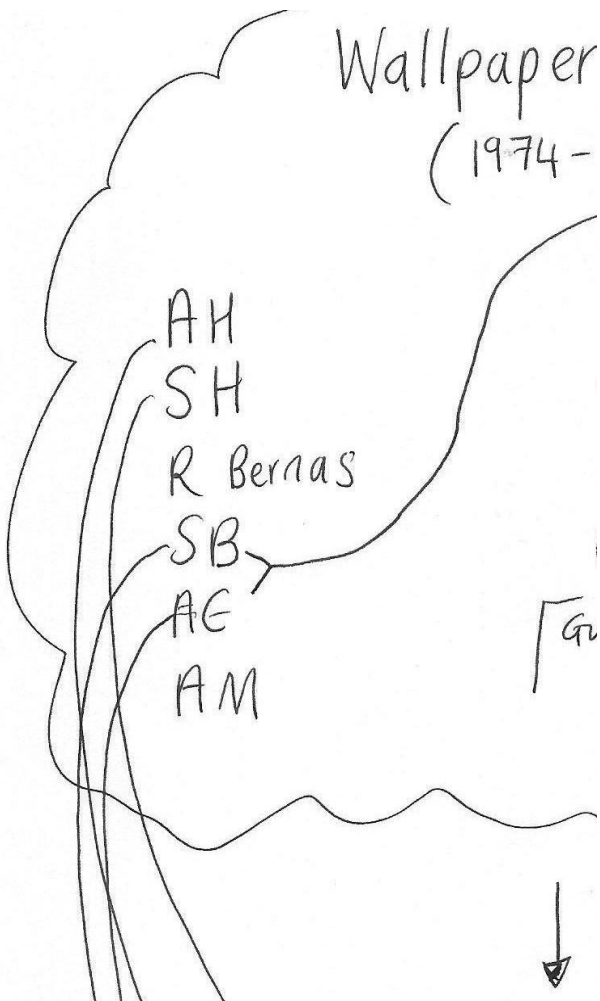
Further reading:

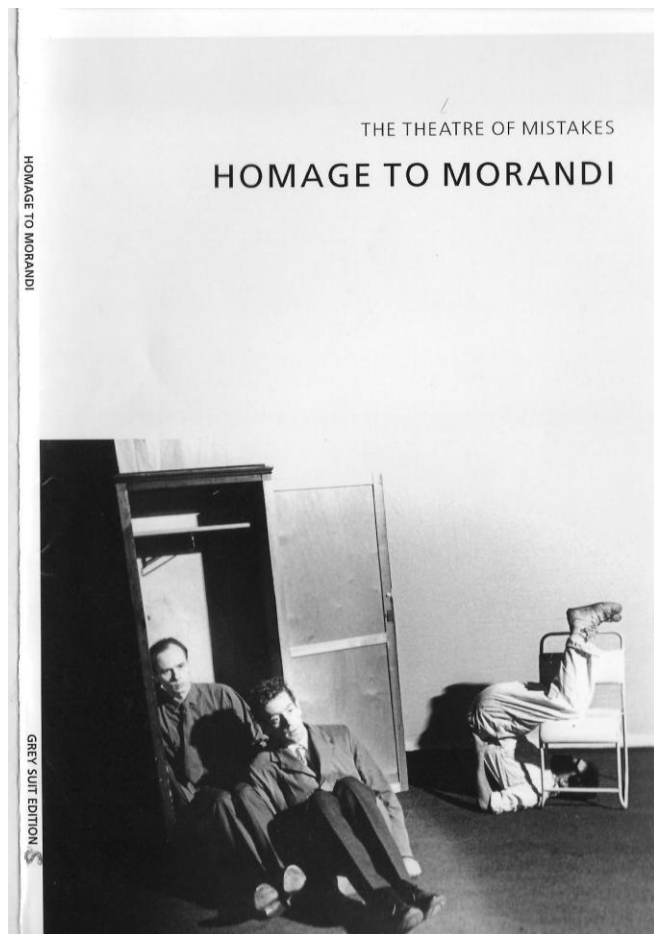
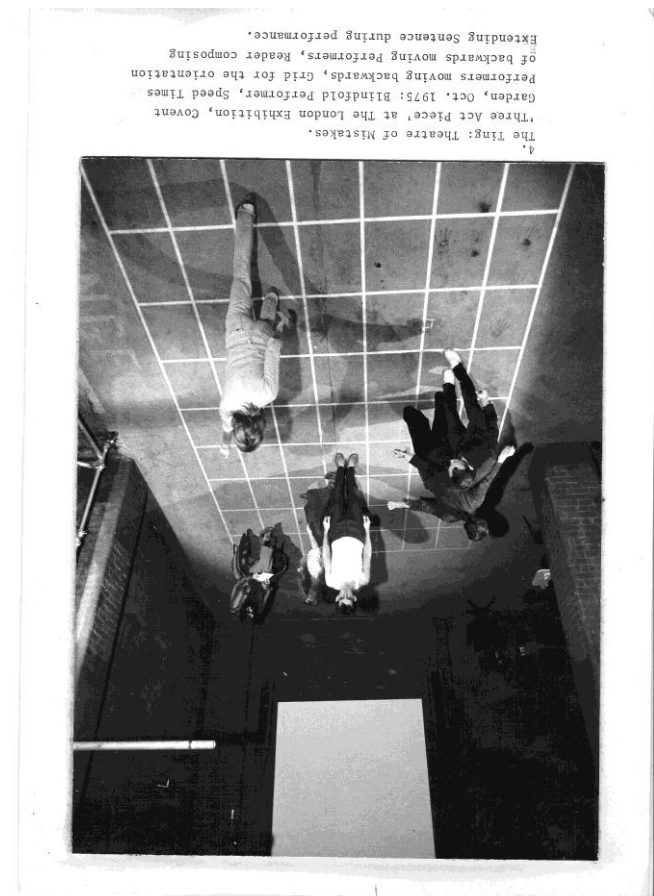
Stephanie Jordan *Striding Out: Aspects of Contemporary and New Dance in Britain*, Dance Books, 1992



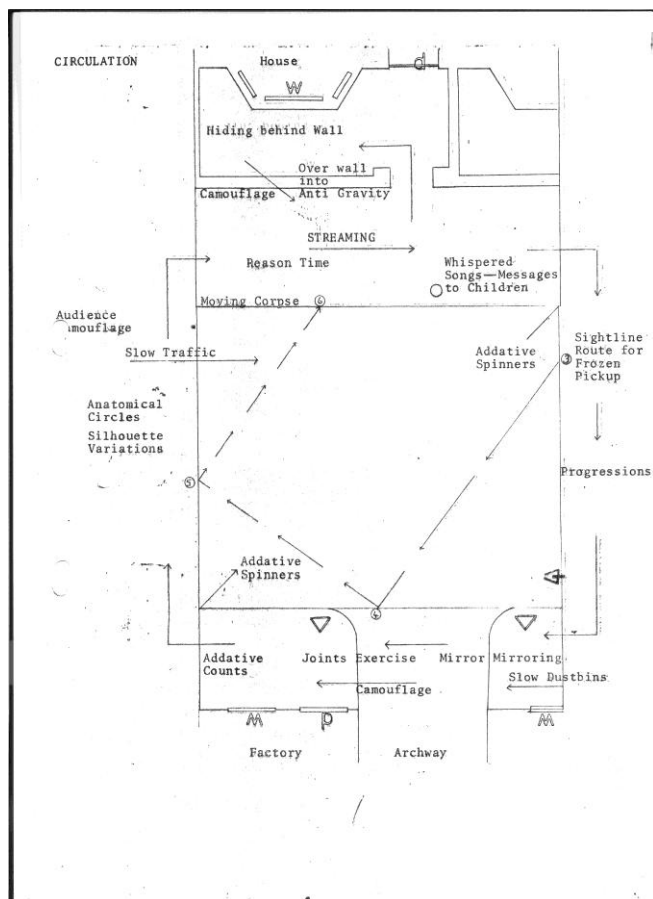
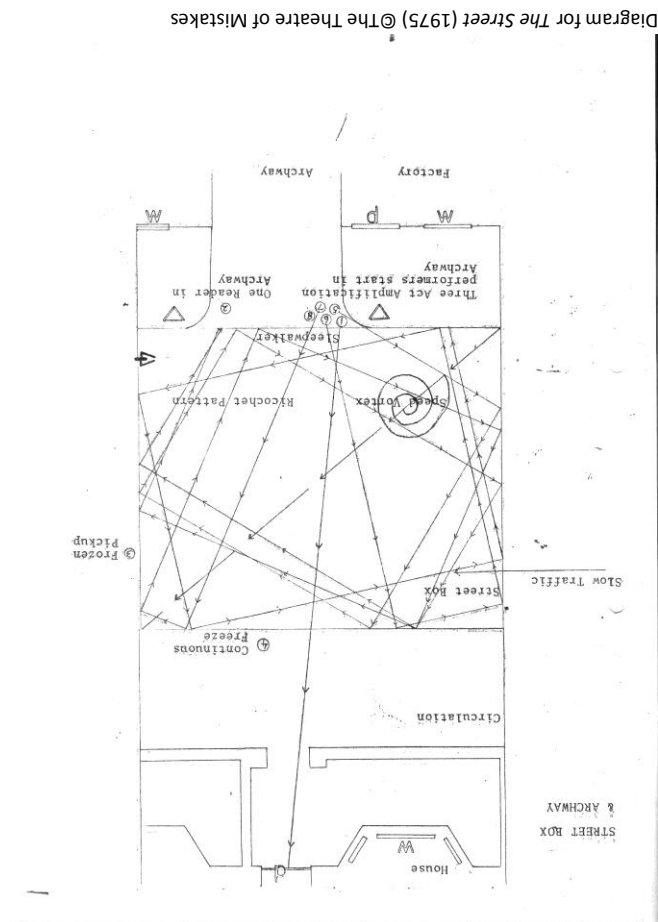
The Doors

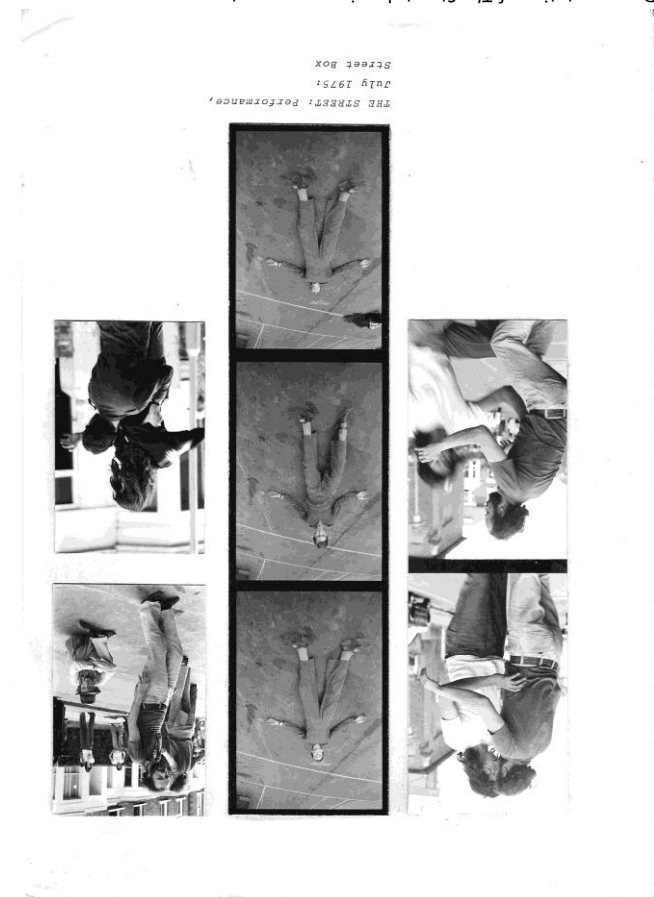
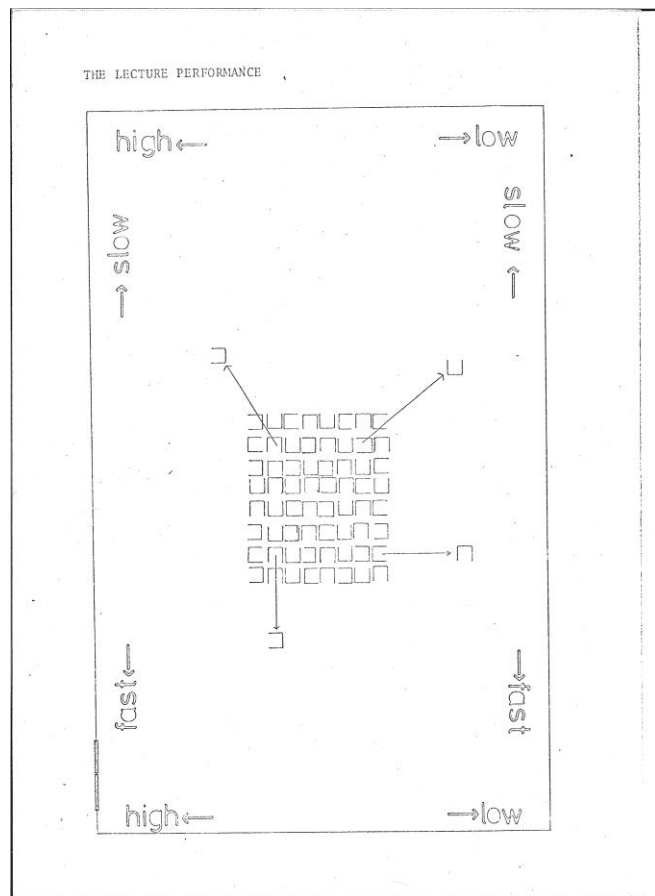
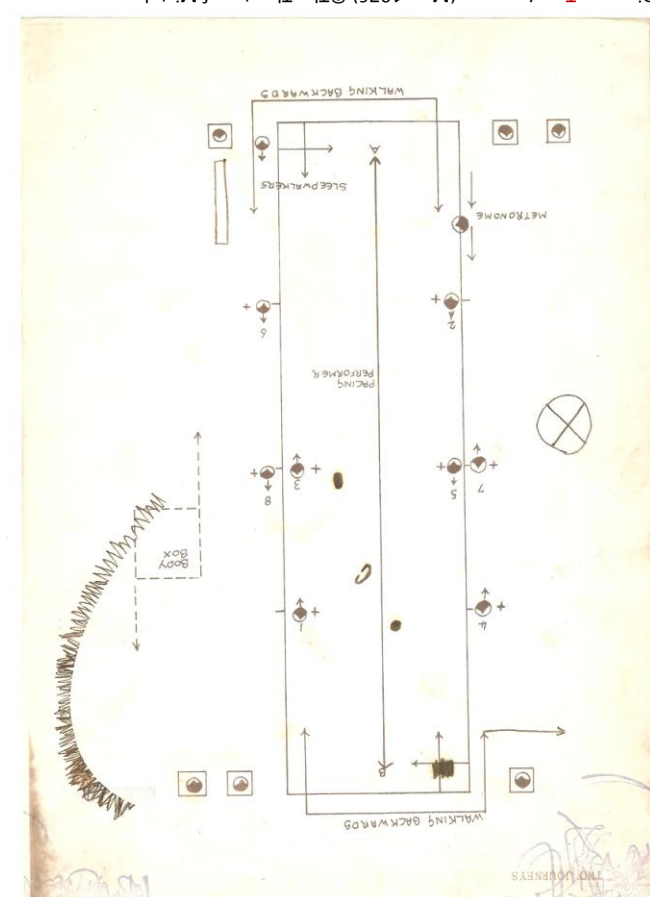
Late performance piece by The Theatre of Mistakes.

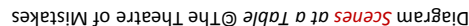




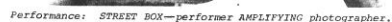
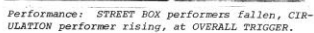
Script available to order from Amazon, Grey Suit, or 77books.co.uk ISBN
no 1903 006 015



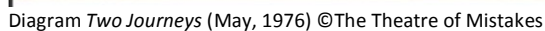
Documentation of *The Street* showing movement sequences.*Two Journeys* at the Slade, Photo ©The Theatre of Mistakes, The Theatre of Mistakes ArchiveDiagram *Two Journeys* (May, 1976) ©The Theatre of MistakesDiagram *Lecture Performance* (1975) ©The Theatre of Mistakes

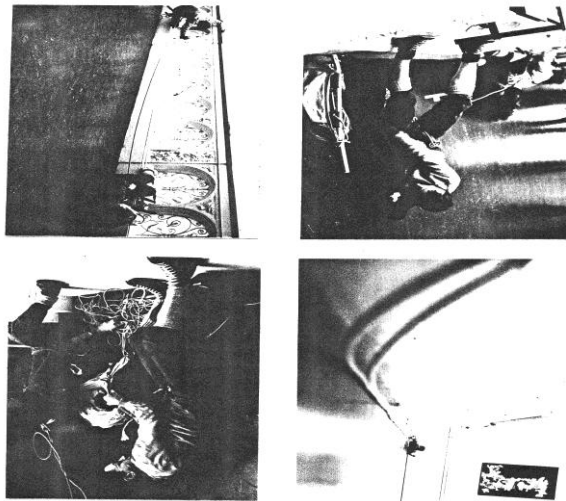


The Ting Dance.



19





Photographs by the Theatre of Mistakes

When questioned, none of the performers could remember the contents of the capsule deposited on the ledge at the end of their performance *Ascent of the Stedelijk* (November 1976). As of 2009, despite the museum's refurbishment and the efforts of the curators, this canister has not been found.

Disappearances...

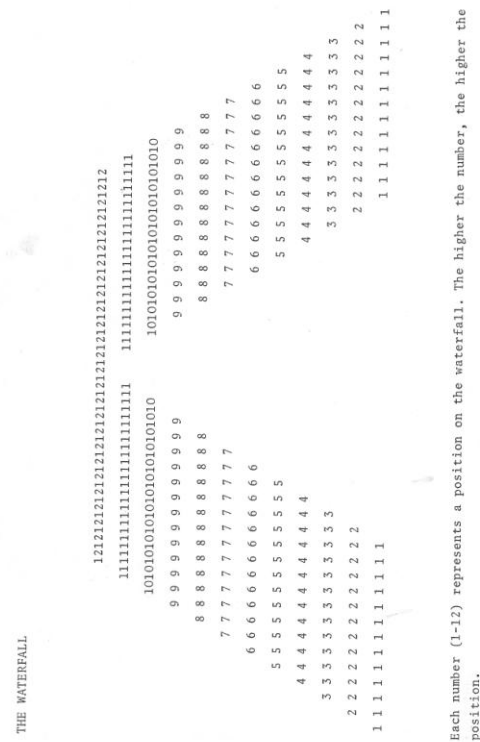
Documentation

See also: [Critics](#), [Diagrams](#), [Photographers](#), [Soundings](#)

Documentation of events appears to have been important to The Ting and thereafter to The Theatre of Mistakes. Despite the prevailing notion that 1970s performance was an ephemeral artform whose integrity is compromised through the act of recording, The Theatre of Mistakes allocated responsibility for it by defining it as a core group role. In the beginning, this took the form of snapshots and reviews – some handwritten – undertaken by artists of events they had witnessed at Purdies, most probably at Anthony Howell's urging. Later, with the input of Howard Tong and Fiona Templeton, The Theatre of Mistakes' visual language became more sophisticated; exercises were collated and edited into the Elements book; in *Three Act Piece*, for example, photographs were annotated devising a clear notation system for the performance.

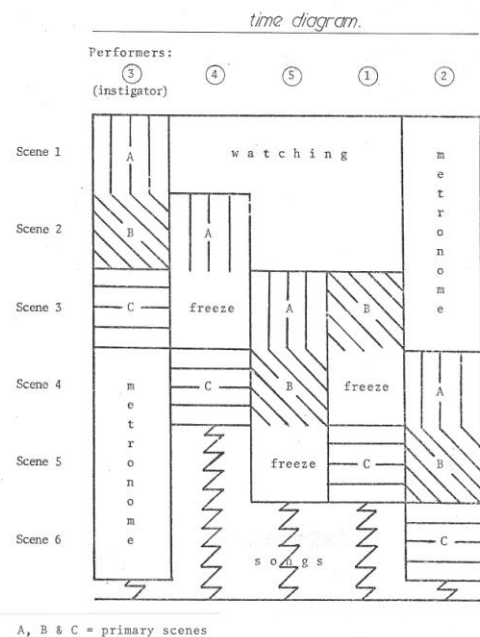
Under Mickey [Greenall](#)'s influence a decorative element was introduced into documentation and under Peter [Stickland](#)'s, drawings shifted from basic stick figures representing movement and placement to elaborate, technical plans or little sketches that became artworks in their own right. The comb-bound books of [Preparations for Displacement](#), [The Street](#), and [Waterfall](#) progressed to published, illustrated scripts (see [Bibliography](#)) their publication still largely self-funded. Individual members' commitment to contributing to, preserving, and storing The Theatre of Mistakes [Archive](#) also attests to a collective recognition of documentation as a perpetuation rather than negation of the live moment.

Diagram *Waterfall* (1977) ©The Theatre of Mistakes



Each number (1-12) represents a position on the waterfall. The higher the number, the higher the position.

Each vertical column represents an hour.



A, B & C = primary scenes

ACT THREE

Diagram *Going* (1977) ©The Theatre of Mistakes