

See also: Fantasy, Nucleus, Performers, Ting

Above: Group members articulated criticisms of one another; page from a notebook held by Anthony Howell, nd, c.1975, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive

Miranda - Not reliable
 Anthony - Dismissive & cursory
 Mickey - lazy
 Fiona - Intentionally malicious
 Howard - Too obsequious
 Lindsey - Moody
 Anita - Too ~~young~~ young

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~~ ~~the~~ ~~capacity~~ ~~of~~ ~~an~~ 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 is 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 constant working dynamic - I would think about 5 - at the most - but for performance touring 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

- 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

L O I S T I N G



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

Marie-Anne Mancio



2009-09-03

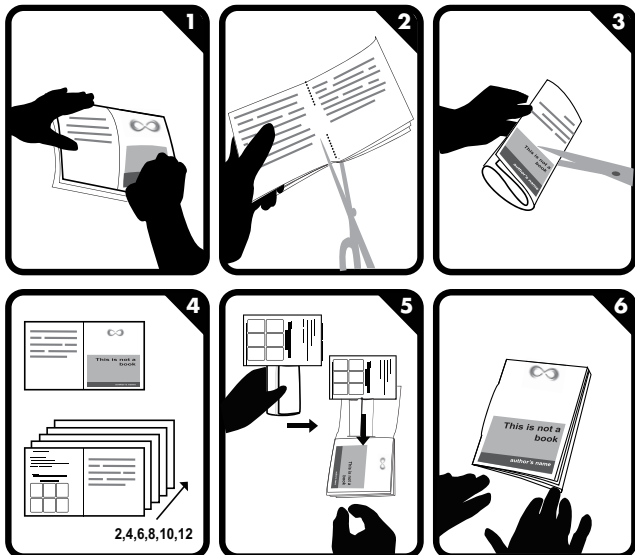
Published by Proboscis
C Marie-Anne Mancio & contributors 2009

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

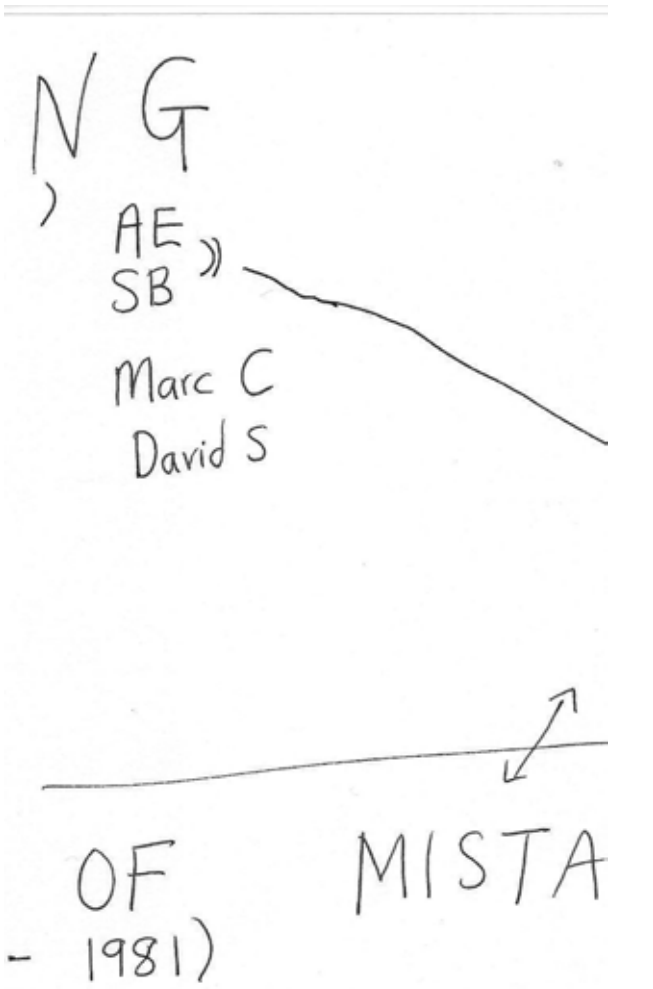
Marie-Anne Mancio

Curator See: Michael Craig-Martin and Jason E Bowman



Mancio, Jason E Bowman.

Amongst the artists/critics who have looked at The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes' work are:
 Pat Murphy, David Coxhead, Susan Hiller, Susan (Bonvin) Eden, Jane Clark, Amanda Welch, John Welch, John Sharkey, Peter Dunn, Sebastian Faulks, John Spurling, Adrian Searle, Michael Couter, 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 Honyck, Sue Bannerman, John Howell, Nick Wood, Marie-Anne



See also: Art Room, Hour book
Chance
 See also: *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,

Installation/performance artist involved in early Ting, also previewed *Homage to Pietro Longhi* (see *Bibliography*). Read: Tom Holert *Celebration? Real Life*, Afterall books, 2007.

Cascade and Pour See Waterfall

Car -
 See also: Victoria Chick, Miranda Payne, *The Street*, Howard Tong) performed /real
 Also: *Ballet for Cars*, created by Amikam Toren who was apparently a non-driver.

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)

1977 Feb:	"Going", Scottish Tour of Glasgow College of Art, St Andrew's Festival.
Apr:	"Going", Cambridge International Poetry Festival
Jul:	"A Waterfall", 48-day performance series at Hayward Annual Exhibition, Hayward Gallery, London; also workshops
Sept:	"Going", Biennale de Paris, Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris
"Type 2", Galerie Parthenon, Paris	
Oct:	"Going", PAC International Contemporary Art Fair, Grand Palais, Paris
1978 Mar:	Workshops at Essex Road Hall, London
1978 Mar:	"Two Freedoms", "Waterfall" School of Art
Nov:	"Map of the Mind", "Going", Arsenal Gallery, Bristol
Nov:	"Going", Floating Theater Festival, Pittsburgh University
Nov:	"Going", Pennsylvania State University, Pittsburgh
Dec:	"Going", Theater for the New City, New York City
1979 Jun:	"Orpheus and Hermes", Forum (The Ateliers Kunst, Innsbruck
"Two Freedoms", Graalshelennale, Vienna	

1977-9:

Home to Morandi Tour of Holland

University Theatre Festival, Brescia, Salle Polyvalente, Ferrara

Orpheus and Hermes, Brighton Theatre Festival,

1980:

to Morandi and Table Move 1, Kunsterhaus Bethanien, Berlin

Theatre, London; Home to Morandi Tour of Belgium; Home

to Morandi, Going; Table Move, Jeanetta Cochran

1981:

Chronology

Choice by Chance see Change, Manifesto

Macroeconomics and Keynes, Routledge 2002) and a keen singer.

Sheila Dow (eds), Essays in Honour of Victoria Chick: Money,

University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai,

Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at

Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

Recruited to perform at Anthony Howell's poetry readings then with Ting by Signe Lie Howell (both were members of the Southend Green Women's Liberation group in the early 70s), economist Victoria Chick suffered a bad car accident during the Cambridge Poetry Festival of 1975 and was hospitalised. She recalls Ting announcing the news at the start of Preparations for Displacement

"and the next day this man came to the hospital ward and you could see him negotiating with the ward sister because he'd actually come to visit me though he didn't know me... nobody does that... And he was an economist and he came to visit me just because he was an economist and I was an economist"

(Interview: Victoria Chick, London, 4th Nov 2008)



Victoria Chick in Preparations for Displacement at the Cambridge Poetry Festival, April 1975 Photograph ©The Theatre of Mistakes

STUDIO International

Improving The Studio Foundd 1953 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1978

PERFORMANCE

Report by Peter Dunn

New Contemporaries Live Work Show

Acme Gallery, 31 May-5 June

The 'third-come' of the Ting, Theatre of Mistakes 40 events, such a central issue as production was only raised by Peak Performance, an interesting group of 1st and 2nd year students from Shindell and Ting. The point of including people like Reader Work and Ting, who have been out of college for a year or so, allocated for discussion and reviews. However, despite its many problems, the Live Work Show University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai, Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

It was perhaps indicative that, in a week of about 40 events, such a central issue as production was only raised by Peak Performance, an interesting group of 1st and 2nd year students from Shindell and Ting. The point of including people like Reader Work and Ting, who have been out of college for a year or so, allocated for discussion and reviews. However, despite its many problems, the Live Work Show University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai, Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai, Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai, Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai, Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai, Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

PERFORMANCE ART 1 magazine

The Theatre of Mistakes, Waterfall, Paula Cooper Gallery (November).

Stepping slightly to an aesthetic time warp, the Theatre of Mistakes, an English-speaking group, presents a wonderfully anachronistic process piece called Waterfall. The work is built around the states formalist icon of structure, an attitude in which an idea about structure is both method and subject. The performance, based on a series of chains, rhythmically and

water, cup by cup, from the floor to the top of the stack. When the higher bucket is full, it is poured in a cascade back into the bottom one. Like all art such process works, what you see is not what you get. There's no development other than the playing out of the system, and no narrative since even the minor accidents of the ending is blotted by a programmatic which hangs heavily while the performers relax, talk informally, and even drink from the water. The performance, based on a series of chains, rhythmically and



WATERFALL

Waterfall addresses to the process of work reduced, simple to which no less, a series of systematic permutations. What results is a static construction of role of performer, with white costumes, de-personalized roles, and repetitive action, all to further emphasize the quality of formal arrangements over the factory stemming from subject matter. As a form, this is an image more than a discursive narrative (a systemic poem is used to time the piece's action). Waterfall's one hour length, however, aspires to the latter's effects and thereby achieves a strong impressionistic impact. Such a length appears to stretch its brief insights on a frame that calls for a more expansive and overall view. After some twenty minutes, the novelty fades and an initial wonder fades to an end as one waits and end.

Since idea governs the performance, the weight of "interest" falls on execution, and the performer's attention is directed to each step through physical

strict attention to avoid mistakes. Here a touch of the exotic intrigues, as British accents, unknown personalities, and a clearly structured discipline figure as a subset of color to an American audience. That the action of Waterfall creates a nominal need does not diminish the considerable skill with which the performer greases it

John Howell

It was perhaps indicative that, in a week of about 40 events, such a central issue as production was only raised by Peak Performance, an interesting group of 1st and 2nd year students from Shindell and Ting. The point of including people like Reader Work and Ting, who have been out of college for a year or so, allocated for discussion and reviews. However, despite its many problems, the Live Work Show University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai, Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

University College London (read: Phillip Arestis, Meghanad Desai, Australia. She is currently Emeritus Professor of Economics at Chick performed in The Street, also 1975, before leaving for

David Coxhead *Text for a Dance Purdies*, August 1974



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

Correspondence See Letters

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, 24 Nov 2008). However, this does contradict Signe Lie Howell's memory that there was always discussion or 'post-mortems' after workshops/performances.

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

Collaboration See Mutuality, Wallpaper

Conceptualism

See: **Bibliography, Unwritten**

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

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 undertaken many of the traditional ways of reflected a "female point of view which film/video, promoting performance and installation, its works models of working, and wanted to erode boundaries between 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 Dairy in the early

See also: *Birth Ballet Chorale, Ephemera, The Street, Women*

Clark, Jane

1974-6:

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*

John Welch read David Coxhead's *Text for a Dance* in a sonorous voice.
 Tom Lovenstein read David Coxhead's *Text for a Dance* in a strong voice.
 Alan Fuchs 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 patterns and aspects of Anthony Howell's *Field* ~~XXXXXX~~ *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 "roles" in the start
 of the piece will be the time to
 change these things
 — coster, secretary, driver,
 hacker, rehearsal organiser,
 general planner,
 documentation specialist.

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

11 We should be more like characters than gregarious.
 Tell each other when we like what someone has
 done, and tell that person or vice versa — as usual
 not funny.

12 Get more into our dreams, dream mapping, the
 primary piece.

13 To be part of the group where each
 everyone is so strong that each
 comprehensive different world to
 contribute to each and every
 person.

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

15 A mechanics for as many as possible of these
 necessities rather than endless discussions.

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 in all
 permutations.

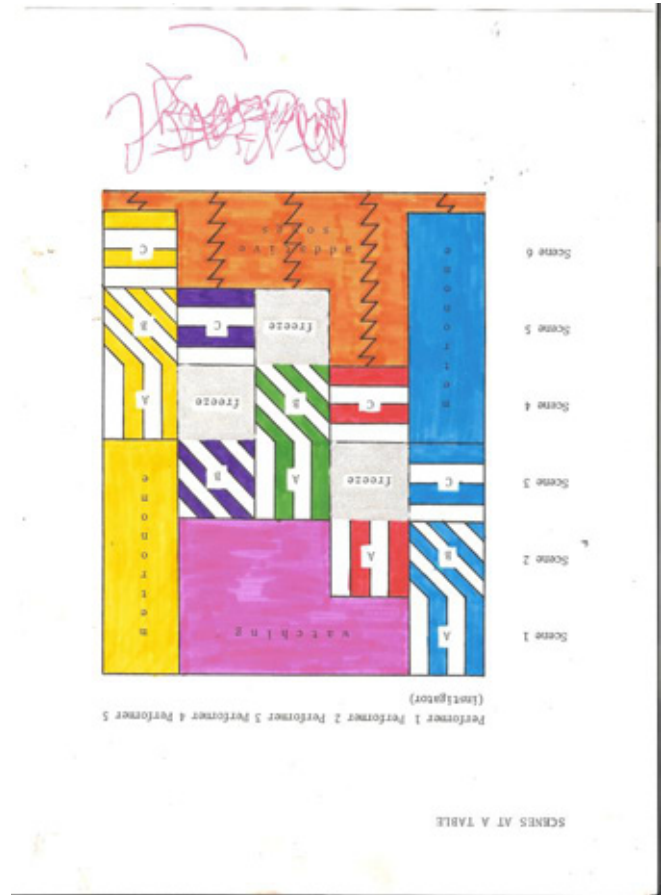
17 Stable economic situation.

18 Go & see things.

19 Each of us should do the other — 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 Broun 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.