

Purdies Farm

*Mutual Poems* – Fiona Templeton, Anthony Howell, Mickey Greenall, August 1976, Courtesy Fiona Templeton

Punk

*Preparations for Displacement*

Poetry

Photographers

Performers

Performance Art

Payne, Miranda

Participation

Pairs Game

U O I S N F I P



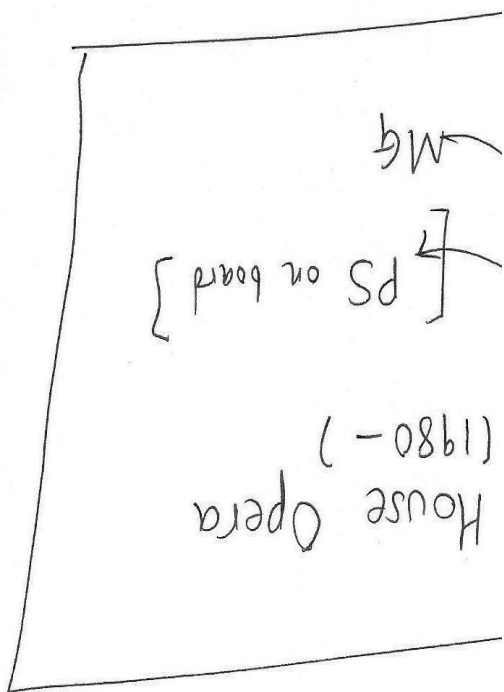
# An A-Z of The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes – P

Marie-Anne Mancio

**Poetry**  
Anthony **Howell** and Fiona **Templeton** are both poets. Other poets involved with or in contact with Ting include David **Coxhead**, Tom Lowenstein, Carlye **Reedy**, John **Welch**. Andrew **Eden** recalls a poetry bookshop on Kensington Church Street frequented by Ting.  
See also: **Cambridge** Poetry Festival and **Essora Tessorio** at the Whitechapel.

**Preparations for Displacement** (Corn Exchange, Cambridge, **Cambridge Poetry** Festival, 19-21<sup>st</sup> April, 1975)  
See also: **Metronome**, Amikam **Toren**, **The Street**

“Of the pieces I worked on, I liked the Cambridge piece because it represented the best of the early **Ting** – the freedoms possible within the structure and the beautiful nuanced differences between each of the two performances we did there. There was the sense of an organic reality with its own coherent logic, flexible enough to allow different things to happen. Having said that, I can’t remember that much about it – the amazing thing is that no one can- beyond what they were doing and what was visible to them at the time. **Structures** were clear, what each performer was doing was clear, but there was so much choice around “how and when”. I remember sitting absolutely still for a long time. Then doing “The Muybridge Solo” (this was a performance I did based on the still framed from the Muybridge series of the Man Getting Up from a Chair”. At one point I moved to the centre of a circle and noticed that some audience member had joined in. Amazingly, they had taken on the slow motion, durational quality of the performance and fitted right in. Meanwhile Anthony [**Howell**] and Fiona **Templeton** read texts, Mickey **Greenall** partnered himself



2009-09-03

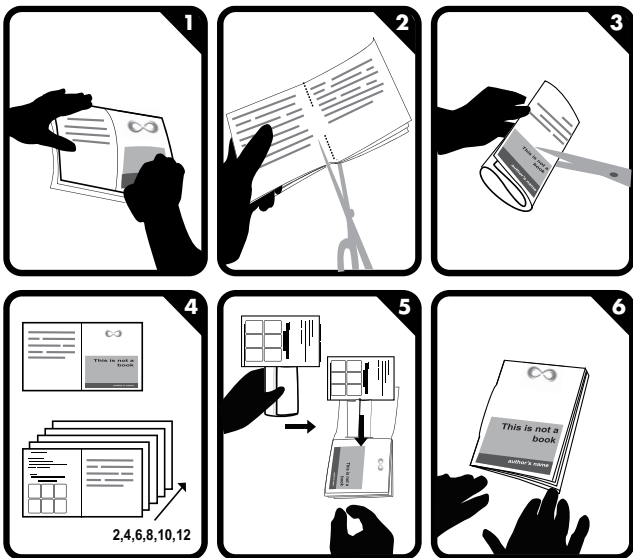
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Marie-Anne Mancio

performance art activity.  
The company is intent on discovering methods that will lead to such a proliferation of  
common sight on any space, and as common an activity, as any of our national sports.  
for a deckchair in the sun, a pint of lager and white figures scrolling across a green.  
It is the hope of The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes that art performances will become as  
"play the game" for themselves, yet a good game can attract a good audience. Each  
watches of a game of cricket matches in their own terms, some for the result, some  
Like any great painting, Pairs' Game exists in its own terms. Teams playing cricket  
As with any game, instructions are learnt and rules elaborated, but no particular  
actions are choreographed. Unlike any game, there is no method of winning. The  
performers may play for and against themselves and for and against each other, each  
may decide on methods of collaboration or methods of sabotage. Mostly, they per-  
form for the sake of the performance.  
from any discipline can be incorporated into the piece. The performance can be  
number of performers involved and the amount of space available. New performers  
strategies decided upon. The piece can expand or contract in size depending on the  
—and even during the present performance—fresh instructions are discussed and new  
Pairs' Game is an example of constant growth in performance art. At each rehearsal  
played in the piece.  
of one's own actions. Opposites and reflections governed the choice of objects em-  
cases it is also possible to duplicate one's own actions and to perform the opposite  
actions, the attempt to perform the opposite of another's actions. In certain  
actions have inspired the instructions for both aural and body actions. In certain  
Two concerns occupy the performers throughout the piece: the reflection of another's  
in a sculptural way.  
have been added, and certain objects have been chosen to contribute to the piece in  
ed working on in May 1975, concentrating on actions in and around a single square.  
Since then the outer square and instructions governing actions in the outer square  
Pairs' Game is a performance piece which The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes first start-

PAIRS GAME

THE TING: THEATRE OF MISTAKES

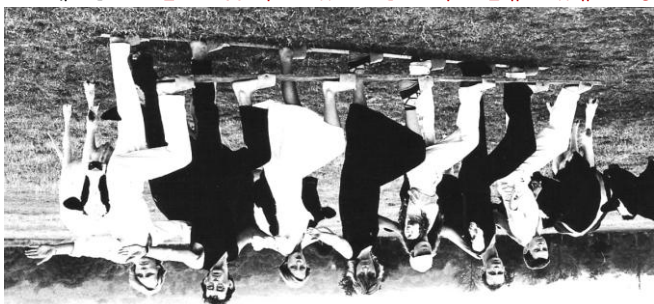
See Miranda Payne

Pairs Game (July, 1975, May 1976)

# The Ting: Theatre of Mistakes

an **A-Z**





Greenall, Howell, Templeton, Payne, Urquhart, Moran, Tong at Purdies Farm, circa 1975

The second time I went for the Dream Mapping belly. I think Anthony collaborated with Susan Hillier on this. People were invited to sleep outside in a fairy ring (true) and to perform their dreams next day. The farm was heaving with people – artists, musicians, all kinds of London people. I guess it was like an early rave or new age traveler event. Anyway, I abandoned it and went to sleep at the end of the farm on a tree bed which Janz had built. There was a rainstorm in the middle of the night and I struggled across three muddy fields in the pitch black to get to the farmhouse, snapping lots of bits of string which caught at my neck on they way. I remember the following morning an irate sculptor appeared in the kitchen wanting to know who had sabotaged his string sculpture. This was in the summer of 74. The last time I visited would have been 1977 maybe. The group were preparing for a performance and Anthony invited Janz and myself to come and watch a rehearsal. At this stage, the group were very tight, focused and professional. Re the function of Purdie's: I can hardly say...the images are striking though. A working farm. A new age idyll and then a kind of intense, hard edged performance retreat." (Pat Murphy in response to *Questionnaire*, December 2008)

The Theatre of Mistakes rehearse at Purdies, nd, c Summer 1976  
Photos: ©The Theatre of Mistakes, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive



"[Purdies] was a very creative time. Intense. Really intense." (Interview: Lindsay Moran, London, 6<sup>th</sup> Nov 2008)



Payne also designed the poster for *Orpheus and Hermes*:

*Waterfall*  
*Performance, Pairs Game, Preparations for Displacement, Purdies,*  
See also *Art Schools, Five Concert Pieces, Going, Lecture*  
House Opera with her then partner Julian Maynard Smith.  
Payne eventually left The Theatre of Mistakes to co-found *Station*

Pat *Murphy* also recognises her impact (see *Women*).  
(Conversation: Peter Stickland, November 2008)

herself disappear on stage;  
Peter Stickland recalls Miranda had an incredible ability to make

(Conversation: London, October, 2008)

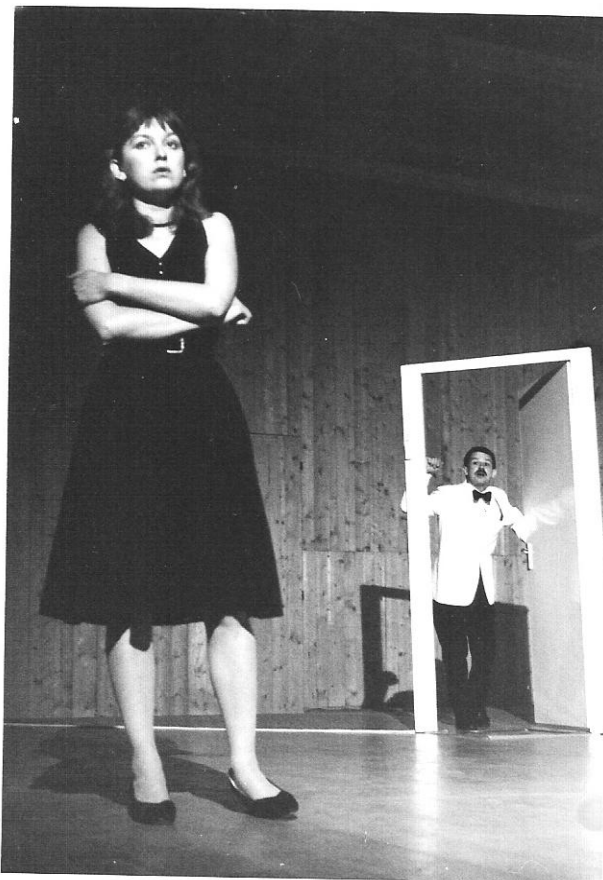
which others could project their fantasies.

She describes her *Seventies* self as a "blank," as a space onto

Extract from Program notes, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive

Born 1954. Worked with the Bird in Hand Theatre Company on two plays performed at the Hoxton Hall and at the Mercury Theatre. Studied at Maidstone College of Art. Performed with the Theatre of Mistakes in "Preparations for Displacement" (Cambridge Poetry Festival 1974), and "The Street" (Kentish Town 1974). Created "Pairs' Game", which was first performed by the company in 1974 at The Southampton Performance Show. Performed with the same company at The London Exhibition 1974, and "Pairs' Game" was performed at the Stade in 1975. I then worked on a production of "Rank"—a play about the Windsor Free Festival—in 1976: this was performed at the Roundhouse Downstairs and went on tour in Devon and Cornwall. I also performed in "A Waterfall" at the Hayward Gallery 1977.

MIRANDA PAYNE



Payne in *Orpheus and Hermes*

Photo: ©The Theatre of Mistakes, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive

Purdies – Hazley Heath, Hartley Witney, Hampshire: a constant through the yearly histories of Ting: The Theatre of Mistakes. It represents intense periods of creativity, a site for the group to live and work together. In the early years, it is the venue for weekend events. Later, it's where works are honed prior to autumn touring.

Jacobean farmhouse; all the animals on the farm are female. Howard and Mickey sunbathe naked by a pool flecked with goose droppings; a hot summer of no rain and forests on fire; Anthony walks the Dalmatians; lying in hammocks strung beneath trees; there are performances in fields through the night to 2 a.m.; in the yard, horses are put through their paces; rehearsals in the barn; exercises at dawn; photographs of the effects of shadows on surfaces; playing shove ha penny in the local pub; waiting for Anita to finish getting ready; an impromptu set when furniture sits on the lawn waiting for removal; clewys finds a dead mouse in the toaster; Miranda lives in a tent by the pool as she finds the house too claustrophobic; **signing on**; fences to mend, **tips to the cash and carry**; staying up late to do the budgets; walking in huge circles on the local cricket pitch; flared trousers so wide Peter catches his foot in them and breaks an ankle; Fiona wearing a man's suit in rehearsal; villagers calling them Tesco rejects' in an era when Tesco is a byword for scum; banned by The Cricketers Arms after *Active Circles* encourages rainfall.

Purdies Farm See also: *Lost Farm*



Anthony Howell walks the Dalmatians at Purdies farm. Photo© The Theatre of Mistakes, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive

“There is a ghost story around the name. I remember Anthony telling the story – maybe something about lost children “perdus” being bricked up in the chimney. Anyway, this was a stud farm in Hampshire where Deborah Howell, Anthony’s mother and a key performer in early Ting events, bred and broke in horses. There was a big farmhouse, a stable block and a **big wooden barn with spaces between the slats of wood, so that the horse cantering in the field outside, would strobe past like a zoetrope or some early movie machine.** There was also a swimming pool and a long drive. It was quite a way to the nearest village. I visited Purdie’s three times in all and each visit was an event. First was a weekend when I went with Robert Janz and sat on a swinging bed in the barn while Anthony played a flute and the horses cantered outside. Then Deborah showed us a mare who was about to give birth. You could see the shape of the unborn foal on one side of the mare’s

## Performers

See also: *Core Group, Ting*

See also: *Bibliography*

open to visitors by appointment.  
[www.thisisliveart.co.uk/resources/Study\\_Room/pubs\\_articles.shtml](http://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/resources/Study_Room/pubs_articles.shtml). The Live Art Development Agency, London has a study room

For an introduction to live art resources, see:

*Theatre Review* 2(2), 1994: 1-7

Nick Kaye 'Live Art: Definition and Documentation' *Contemporary*

For a history of British live art, see also:

(Conversations with Anthony Howell, London, Oct-Jan 2008-9)

conducting research for this book in the UK.

Anthony Howell met with and assisted Goldberg when she was

Rosalée Goldberg *Performance Art from Futurism to the Present*

For an historical overview of performance art, see:

Brisley and Genesis P. Orridge were shocking audiences.

Bruce McLean was opposing Caro's notions of sculpture, Stuart

Welfare State, Gilbert and George were *Underneath the Arches*,

such as the People Show, IOU, Forkbeard Fantasy, and

audience. The British scene in the 1960s was dominated by groups

together; Gina Pane risked mutilation at the hands of her

her trousers; Marina and Ulay Abramovich tethered themselves

*Bed*; Valie Export sat in darkened cinemas, a hole in the crotch of

Accord endlessly masturbated underneath a gallery floor in *Seed*

Yves Klein used nude female models as human paintbrushes; Vito

Futurist banquets, Dadaist protests, 1950s Happenings and so on.

Artists' use of performance has been well-documented from

## Performance Art



Excerpt from letter from Anthony Howell and Fiona Templeton to Croydon College, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1977. Courtesy Miranda Payne:

We recommend Miranda very strongly indeed. She has proved herself one of the wisest and most imaginative of the people who have worked with our performance art company. The success of the piece she created for us in June 1975 (PAIRS GAME) was the main reason for our being awarded our first grant from The Arts Council. She worked patiently and tirelessly through our first year of existence as a group, on visual art pieces as often as on performances, bringing a distinction to the conceptual side of our work and proving an adept performer. She was instrumental in setting the

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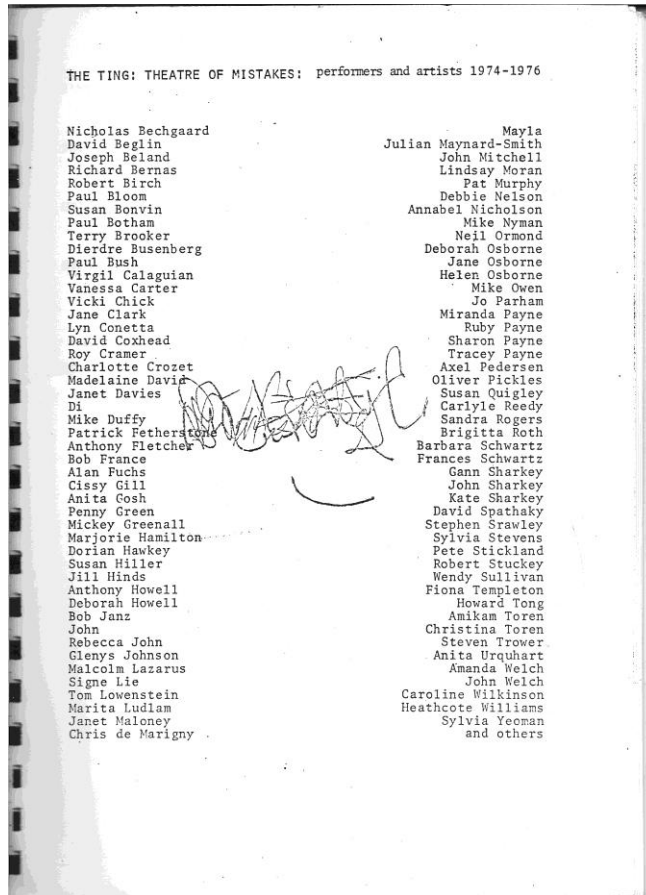
Curator and artist Jason E Bowman has suggested reading the history of The Ting: The Theatre of Mistakes as a trajectory or transition from Minimalism to Punk. Further reading: Kerr, Joe; Gibson, Andrew and Seaborn, Mike (eds) *London from Punk to Blair*, Reaktion, 2003



Photo: © Kirk Winslow Going



See also: **Archive, Documentation** Photographers  
Nicholas Bechgaard, Bob Van Dantzig, Niamh Ferguson, Geoff Howard, Robert Janz, Glensy Johnson, Anthony McCall, Andre Moran, Lindsay Moran, Mike Nelson, Brigitte Roth (from October 1975), Ray Smith (photographs of *Homage to Morand*; Fine Art Fellow at Southampton University in 1978), Caroline Wilkinson, Kirk Winslow



Page from Howell, Anthony & Templeton, Fiona *Elements of Performance Art July, Ting books, 1976* listing all the performers

Photo: ©The Theatre of Mistakes, The Theatre of Mistakes Archive  
*Preparations for Displacement* Cambridge Poetry Festival, 1975



(Pat Murphy, response to *Questionnaire*, December 2008)

wearing his MAN/WOMAN costume. At certain points also, performers picked up the kodalith transparent masks I had made of each of us and moved through the vast space "being each other." I remember the relationship of stillness to movement, slow motion contrasted with sudden bursts of swift movement and everything intensifying towards a climax."

## Punk

"A FULLY ARTICULATED SUBCULTURE, WITH A DISTINCTIVE VISUAL STYLE INVOLVING A BRICOLAGE OF ELEMENTS SUCH AS FETISH CLOTHING, TEDDY BOY GEAR, RIPPED AND TORN ITEMS AND, UNFORTUNATELY, NAZI UNIFORMS (THOUGH THESE WERE ESCHEWED FAIRLY EARLY ON). IT ALSO DEVELOPED, PARTLY THROUGH NECESSITY, A DISTINCTIVE GRAPHIC DESIGN STYLE, WHICH FOUND EXPRESSION IN RECORD SLEEVES, PUBLICITY AND IN 'ZINES', THE XEROXED AND COLLAGED PUBLICATIONS [.....] THE NEGATIVITY AND EVEN NIHILISM THAT PUNK EXPRESSED WAS IN DIRECT CONTRAST TO THE OPTIMISM OF THE COUNTERCULTURE [...] PUNK WAS AN AESTHETIC RESPONSE TO THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DISASTERS OF THE NINETEEN SEVENTIES. IT REFLECTED A WORLD OF INDUSTRIAL AND SOCIAL ANTAGONISM, URBAN DECAY AND HOPELESSNESS, NOT JUST THROUGH THE EMPLOYMENT OF SPECIFIC IMAGERY, BUT THROUGH THE VERY METHODS OF CUT-UP, MONTAGE AND APPROPRIATION IT EMPLOYED, WHICH VISUALLY ARTICULATED THE DISLOCATIONS IN THE COMING OF POST INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY."

(Charlie Gere "Punk and the Digital Aesthetic" paper *Moving the Image: Visual Culture and the New Millennium* CHArt Conference proceedings, Volume 3, 2001)

Photo: ©Andre Morain *Trio*



Photo: ©Nicholas Bechgaard *Preparations for Displacement*



Photo: ©Lindsay Moran *Going*