

In the field part 3 (The Raffles Years: Mannequins, John Peel and The Big Issue): Community Art 1996-9

Alan Dunn

Kick-off

Tuesday 20th August 1996. I arrive in Carlisle and wander down to Brunton Park to fork out £11 for a dull 1-0 win over Chester courtesy of an Owen Archdeacon goal. It is Third Division fare and not very good but it gives me time to think about this residency. Always start with a football match.



Raffles is a 1920's garden estate that suffers post-war decline. The much-quoted Independent on Sunday article from 1994 describes it as "a no-go area with a high level of crime" and between 1987-95 Raffles receives £16m of Estate Action Programme funding. During the three years I am there it receives a further £3m from the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)

programme. Within the SRB, art is but one of around twenty areas of regeneration including health, employment and young people. This is a useful model to clearly separate out the areas and their funding, working more holistically. The residency itself is managed between Eileen Norman and Mick North at Tullie House, the city's municipal art gallery and museum, and the Raffles Community Development Partnership, headed up by Terry Boyle.



For the application, artists are asked to come up with a design for the front of the Salvation Army that is being converted into a community hall. There is a printers on Berry Street in Liverpool that always catches my eye. Miller Signs have a mannequin up a ladder fixing the "Miller" sign and I adapt this for Raffles. I propose fixing five mannequins to the Sally Army balcony as if there is

permanent work being done and creating a round-the-clock presence. It says "we are working on it." In a nod to the Repo Man supermarket scene, we will name it THE HALL, with one "L" being carried as an L-plate. It is accessible and explainable and most of the 6,000 Raffles folk are soon aware of the mannequins.

After the game, I drink with Mick North and we chat about the mannequins and another idea I have for THE HOUSE, the community house that hosts the SRB offices. They want it safe, to stand out and to bring some lighter moments to the Raffles days. I half-jokingly propose completely covering it with coloured burglar alarms, Hansel and Gretel style. Mick loves it but we won't

realise this idea. I start staying with Tullie staff member Floss in her art deco house in Stanwick as they try to sort me out a house on Raffles. I am shown two properties but SRB staff tell me to avoid both like the plague due to the neighbours and I settle for a shitty bedsit downtown on Alfred Street South, along from the cinema.



How do you start? I get a desk in THE HOUSE. Half my time is spent on logistics towards making the mannequins happen and the other is spent listening to those tales that locals want you to hear first. They talk a lot of non-SRB youth worker "Ginger" and Scooby Snacks (Valium). I meet with Terry B and Julie Nugent, the most experienced youth worker on the Estate. I will spend the next three years working with Terry and Julie through some extreme highs and lows. They are my key contacts and become my barometers, soundboards and conspirators. I meet Gordon Nicholson at the Council. He is originally from Easterhouse and immediately and sarcastically asks where my boyfriend is. Even if I have one, he

has no right to ask, and this is during our first formal meeting to discuss planning permission for the mannequins. *Painters, Picassos and Poofs*. Small-town small-minded prejudiced bastards are a dark side of arts and regeneration rarely written about.

As Rollins writes, *get in the van*. Ignore it, do the work and transform bitterness to mocking to curiosity to grudging support to collaboration to pride. I see people like Nicholson as challenges or maybe it is a form of alchemy. I head back to Liverpool to think about Raffles and watch Bragg performing at Reading. He tells exactly the same jokes between songs as he did in Liverpool. Disappointing.

I am also asked to consider a three-month project for the nearby Newtown Primary School. I don't work with sketchbooks as such but keep bits of paper and mental notes. I meet Tullie's curator Terry Bennett and local studio owner/lecturer Roger Lee and we'll later work on a good *Engage* project and Raffles website respectively. I collect the Alfred Street keys and sit in The Crown with keys to four different properties, thinking about the Raffles/SRB team. Scots Mo works in health, Scots Dave is a recovering something and in-house graphic designer and youth worker Andrea is local and perhaps not living the life she wants to. Old Cindy and Old *Credit Union* Dick are the community workers you get in every situation, keen to attend meetings and eager to (be seen to) take part in democratic processes. I pop down to Tullie for a Goldsworthy talk on his *Sheepfolds* project and Mick scans the crowd, grinning at what he calls "Andy's car-driving rural fanclub that attend anything he does." Terry Bennett is on the phone to Simon Grennan and Roger Lee at Shaddon Mill is talking to someone about Bryndis. I need blinkers to get started in Raffles. I present the mannequins idea to the whole of the SRB group and community. It is a funny proposal and perhaps ideal for the Raffles context.

Back in Liverpool I work on the billboard for the *Girls' High* project. I take the famous Joe Jordan handball incident from 1977, turn it on its side and paint it as a nation saw it. That is, a Welsh hand clearly punches the ball. That is what the media tells us that we see. In Raffles I start spinning plates between mannequins, working with young people, Newtown and some new works for inside the Sally Army. I meet Spaz who tells me "I may be useful to you" and part of early residencies is to whip up some chaos and stand back to observe it. For Newtown, they are interested in something on their wall but it is incredibly exposed and vulnerable. Along the top of the wall is an ominous-looking security mesh and I have the very simple idea of weaving a painted plastic design through this mesh, thus drawing attention to it, keeping the artwork high and creating something that can be enjoyed from the street but also from the playground.



There are no windows inside the Sally Army so I propose painting some blinds and creating fake views of pleasant landscapes; all very simple but technically challenging. Soon, Raffles' slightly poisonous relationship with the rest of Carlisle emerges as Tullie and the Council warn me against trusting Terry and Julie, and vice versa. It takes time, but not much, to work out who the real workers are and it is important that I am based in THE HOUSE. I meet Titch and Haggis, lost young lads who help out as interns on the Newtown project, but Spaz doesn't show. Back to Liverpool for some big Bluecoat Tate Cream piss-up with Andrew Nairne, who doesn't recognise me, Rodney & Juliette, Sue & Margit, Sam Ainsley, Douglas, Ross, Kettles, Susie H, Christine B, Mark Wallinger, Lingwood, Whiteread, Jayne C, Rebecca G-N and Eddie S. Or maybe I fall asleep in EA in 1990 and dream of such a Liverpool opening? Bryan B phones to ask if I can do anything with 30,000 dud CDs he can get from Blast First. I say yes of course but nothing pans out.

Waiting at the bus stop in Raffles to head home, I am approached by some guy from the Estate wielding a kitchen knife asking for half a cig. I give him it and he staggers off. Prick. I have £40 on me. I start working up designs in Newtown and the number of kids involved is good for the SRB Outputs column, as Terry reminds me. Julie N corners me in the kitchen to check what music I am into (I think I say "oh, the usual Smiths, Fall, Ramones stuff") and tells me that at the interview I am the only one with good shoes and a twinkle in my eyes. Top tips for interviews, kids. I meet Peter A who is running car projects for the young people and speak to Maddie Nicholson at ArtGene in

Barrow-in-Furness for advice about banner ink as she does a great project on the side of long-distance lorries.

News & Star / Saturday, October 10, 1998
LOCAL NEWS
Raffles artist gets a little help from an army of mannequins

'Ere, I've been sold a dummy!

By Staff Reporter

ALAN Dunn plans to spend the next six months touring Carlisle's Raffles estate with paint pot in hand ready to daub designs on buildings.

CHEERING
In Stranmillis, he transformed a boarded-up railway arch to paint a huge group of St. Columba, and in other places he helped out a poor football club by painting a cheering crowd onto the wall.

He has already transformed the outside of the estate's main entrance into a cheering community centre.

Alan, 36, plans to place large mannequins at the front of the building to make it look as if it is constantly getting a new look.



Above, a model of what the centre will look like.

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Dummy
man: Alan
takes a
mannequin
down
Raffles
Avenue
MISC
SCOTT

At this time, there is still no email and I have to get any official letters typed by our secretaries Denise or Lisa. I soon acquire five mannequins for £5 each but, depending on your perspective, Gordon Nicholson either (a) does his job thoroughly or (b) throws every possible obstacle in my way in getting the mannequins installed. Usually you hope to meet somewhere in the middle with your commissioners, yet "the commissioners" often boils down to one or two mavericks who want to do exciting new things in any given context. I do get Trounce to donate PVC for free for Newtown and gradually meet the Notman

family of Sharon, Kevin, Yazmin and Levi and the dog Cash. A few pints in The Howard Arms with Mo and soon-to-leave Council Gerard and at last get my hands on the classic Butthole Surfers 7" *Pepper: You never know just how you look through other people's eyes*. Except in Raffles where some are not slow in asking "Oh, aren't you just one of those poofy artists?"

I get put in touch with The Estate Welder (Scots Dave number 2) who will help with the mannequins and six weeks in, things are getting sorted. The inevitable local newspaper interest kicks in and young Mark from The News & Star visits to interview me about the mannequins and Newtown. We chat for an hour about previous projects but when he faxes me his draft article, he has researched Hamilton further and claims that my mural is solely the response to a lady being raped in the car park. He is condescending to the Raffles community and I go through it with an angry red pen and tell him off. It is a disgusting piece of writing and part of me feels sorry for him that he has to write this way. We are both 29 and I go for a drink with Terry and Julie and wonder about hospitality and artistic freedom. The article is drastically reworded and published as *'Ere, I've been sold a dummy!* and contains no sensationalist generalisations that serve only to keep art in a dark and weird place. The five mannequins are dropped off in THE HOUSE and Haggis tries to rob one immediately so we move them to Dave's welding shop where they are welcomed like the Spice Girls. I sigh with relief and invest in the Space LP *Spiders*. Good work, Yorkie. For the *Girls' High* project in Glasgow, Douglas asks for memories of sounds from the EA studio and I fax him a list of Spoonie G of course, Sinatra & Hazlewood, The Fall, SWANS and Simon & Garfunkel.



I get a donation of yellow waterproofs and hardhats for the mannequins. A few pints and wander in to the Richmond to see Electric Lounge and The Delgados support The Wedding Present, whose Kennedy, even without Albini present, is phenomenal. Ears still ringing, I shoot up to Glasgow for quick tour around Easterhouse with old Jim Pauley and on to the *Girls' High* Mackintosh opening, catching up with David H, Dempster, Ross, Moffet, Coley, Bonnar and Andrew

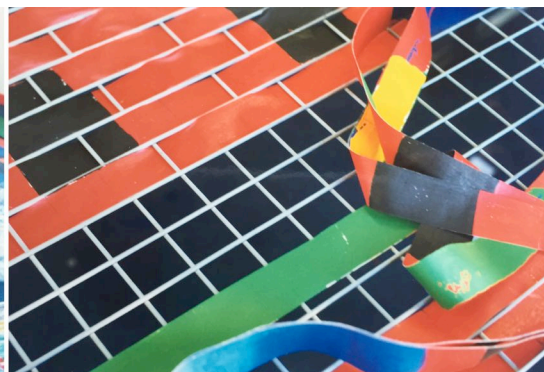


Nairne who remembers who I am and tells me Julie Roberts is living in Carlisle.



Back to Raffles for a weird day as Scotland play Estonia for three seconds and still fail to score. Estonia don't turn up and the crowd chant "One team in Tallinn." I end the evening in Orton Road with Kim and her husband, two dope-filled abused fucked-up Heavy Metal Arts Project committee members

and would-be artists. I work on images for inside THE HALL and a fake stained-glass panel for the outside. Bump into local John who tells me of the Raffles sweep on how long the mannequins are going to last. He has put £1 on a month. A lot of people in Raffles are paranoid and a LOT are wearing neck braces. In sickness and in health. I get a call from Sefton Construction Curriculum Centre and BMCC in Bootle about some big hoarding project working with six schools. Rush up to Glasgow to see *Anfield '77 (part II)* billboard installed near Bellgrove. Hand ball, surely! The *Girls' High* Fruitmarket opening is full of Barbara K from Chicago, Ross in his white suite, George Wyllie still talking about shipbuilding, Fagen, Harding, Angus, Kelly, Sutherland, Richardson, Palmer and, again, I am



kind of glad to get train out, this time to Carlisle. The best record shops in town are Pink Panther and the one in Botchergate Market. It is a good time for

slightly odd singles, if not LPs, such as Gene *We could be kings*, Gorky's *Zygotic Mynce Patio Song*, Tricky's *Nearly God* & Terry Hall *Poems*, Catatonia *I am the mob*, Beck *Loser*, Nick Cave *Into my arms* and White Town *Your woman*. Really good weird pop. I help out with the annual *Fire Parade* and we put THE HALL back to February to focus on Newtown, with half an eye on



Liverpool's 6-3 win in Sion in the days of McManaman, Björnebye, Barnes, Fowler and Berger.

We paint the Newtown plastic strips and I simultaneously work with the six schools across Bootle and Seaforth on *Portholes*. Great fun, knowing all the schools and their quirky ways from before. Such trust makes a major project like this possible but in Raffles, I

get complaints from one of the teachers about paint on a pupil's clothes.



The Liverpool-Carlisle journey includes a section on the Glasgow-London line with the occasional pissed mum-of-six or fitba fans who think you want to listen to their sectarian shit. I take a class of Newtown Y7's to the art school to look around but mad little fucker Craig, known all across Raffles, pushes even the most patient of us to the limits. But for every Craig there are fantastic young people who know nothing beyond Raffles and are eager to create and have fun with colours and patterns. Drink with Terry and Julie in Finnegans Wake and we try to work Raffles out. Does throwing millions at it actually change a thing? We try to pay Titch and Haggis for helping out at Newtown but they end up threatening and trying to extort more out of me. Newtown is a great little project and we sit after it in THE HOUSE office, surrounded by totally fucked out-of-it young people and look out at boarded up windows and you do wonder about whether certain people really do want to find solutions to such areas. The day after, a body is found in the beck, along from



THE HOUSE. I turn on the TV and somebody called Douglas Gordon wins the Turner Prize and one of the drunk teachers shouts at me "Look – a young Billy Connolly!" The fog of community art. I get a flight to Düsseldorf two days after Newtown, a tactic I evolve over the years.



Portholes are installed and we move on. Start spending evenings with the Notmans who live on the appropriately-named Brookside Avenue. It is a kind of drop-in soap where a lot of the behind the scenes stories are shared. You have to take beer and sleep on the sofa and wake up the first morning staring at their dog Cash who is wearing your glasses and their two kids are



standing there in stitches. Head back up to Glasgow for Christmas and *the uncle who I always thought was a spy* dies in a Tunisian hotel en route to the airport on his way home. We do what we can then get coach to London and ferry to Calais to Paris to find Helen's daughter's place in Rue D'Orsel.

Paris. Matta and Clemente at the Pompidou, Miro and Duchamp, Champs-Élysées and the *Live Life* show at MOMA with a little RAY + JULIE at Three Month in the catalogue! Baselitz's tartan sculpture and Polke's Dots, Musée D'Orsay and *Whistler's Ma* and delicious steak in Pigalle. Louvre, catacombs, Musée national du Moyen Âge, Museum of African and Oceanic Art, La Defense and Museum of the Arab World. It is so cold that the tears from my eye freeze on my face. The comfort of art, strangers, love and good food.

1997

We arrive back in Liverpool and the flat is fine. A day later, we are robbed. Cameras gone, Dictaphone, VHS, flash etc, BASTARDS. Only blessing is that the Macintosh LC575 is so bloody heavy they leave it alone. Angrily back to Raffles and someone has sprayed *THE HULLS ARE MURDERERS* all over THE



HALL. I have a new idea for THE HOUSE, based on the gold name plaques that every local house has: cover THE HOUSE in plaques with everybody's signature, a kind of visual petition. We all live here. Raffles is full of really angry vicious dogs, which I hate. I start collecting some local stories and myths (eg why is it called Raffles?) and have an idea for a Museum-on-wheels to celebrate all the positives about Raffles. The powers that be seem happy enough and extend my contract by another six months. I bump into Nathan on the train and he is a changed man, talking about million pound budgets and projects in Switzerland and how he's worked out the mechanics of the art world of what to say at openings, how to operate with people and how to get ahead. Yet he doesn't ask me a single question. Isn't that part of it?

It is the sound of the remix, of Boo Radley's *Have we ever let you down?* It is about the ARTS DAY on 18th February and installing all the mannequins, blinds and stained glass panels. Old Cindy resigns from the Residents' Association on the same ARTS DAY that the mannequins are officially unveiled. They look bonkers. Human, but alien. I try to convince the Council *not* to cover the whole building with anti-climb paint, although that is another project, but they do a thick band. We position the mannequins to make THE HAL into a typo with no room



for the other L that is the L-Plate. Inside, a mini-mannequin called Kevin paints a negative/positive portrait of one of the big mannequins and kicks over a pot of paint. The front mannequin sits and smokes and looks out over Raffles. The local press goes mad with *Meet the mannequin man*, *Deep in the art of Raffles* and *Some people are on the hall – they think it's all real!* Pissed in Finnegans later and T+J laugh and try to get fucking money out of my arts budget!?! Nice try, folks!

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Back to Liverpool for Tony Wilson carrying Deller on stage for the premiere of the Bluecoat-commissioned *Acid Brass* at LIPA. Back up to Bootle to do another big mural at Linacre and an indoor one at Rawson. Turn my fear of Angry Dogs into a Birds-style phonebox series for Edition Klöckner. I invite Raffles folk to draw angry dogs around an image of me trapped in the phonebox. Catch up with Duncan H at the new Three Month in Wolstenholme



Square, by Cream, and tune into another classic Liverpool 4 (McManaman, Fowler, Fowler and Berger) Newcastle 3. Perhaps Duncan's best work is his text piece *THIS IS A FIELD*, produced by the same Miller Signs that make the official *THIS IS ANFIELD* one in the tunnel. In Raffles we interview for a new Arts Assistant and Jill B starts. Finnegan's Wake again and meet

Jeremy Latimer at Tullie. Young Malky Mackay, son of cruel old trainer Malky Snr, gets sent off in Old Firm Game. Jeremy chats about a *Fantasy Football*

exhibition. I buy eight burglar alarms for the front of THE HOUSE, gather signatures and start speccking up a possible mobile MUSEUM. Back to Liverpool for the Grand National. The race is about to start and we notice helicopters above. Turn around and all the 'posh seats' have already been evacuated. Bomb scare, that turns out to be a sandwich.



Have to walk back to town and as we pass The Adelphi there is a row of short jockeys on tip-toes at the check-in desk trying to book rooms. As for the horses and The Adelphi, there is of course the 1954 incident of Roy Roger's Trigger staying there. Hospitality.



Jeremy pops over for a Liverpool PV evening and we catch up with Margit, Phil Jeck, ex-EA Jane Dalton, Rodney D, Roddy B, Tom C, Alice Angus and Bryan B talking about the anniversary of *Sgt Pepper*. This time we get in to Cream but the music is awful. I meet with Bryan, Bill Drummond and Deller as JD presents *The*

history of the world and I show Bill my idea for a 7" picture disc using that old JAMMs image from EA. He says he doesn't quite understand it all but gives me his blessing. It is *Vinyl Junkyard* at Bluecoat with Jeck's *Off the record* and

Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard's *Doing it for the kids* with Kylie, Bowie and Cure tribute acts. I stand next to Deller and try to make conversation but the fucker blanks me. I really like his projects, but what is wrong with being social?

Raffles is depressing, grey and angry. Drinking away my Sundays on Brookside watching Carlisle beat Colchester in the Auto Windscreens Shields Trophy Final. What is the point of the mannequins, banners, murals and workshops when there is nothing really left, or nothing changing? That said, one of the Raffles workers, Andrea is now seriously considering packing in her current life to go study at Art School. I am pleased but also wary of accepting any responsibility for the break up of her marriage due to this decision. Educating Rita. We find 5k for THE MUSEUM to get started. I scribble two lists called I (DON'T) WANNA ...

be your monkey wrench
know if you are lonely
go to Chelsea
be friends with you
get drafted

be your dog
be adored
be sedated
be black
hold your hand



I work on THE HOUSE and THE MUSEUM and drink most evenings in Finnigans with Terry and Julie as Tony Blair becomes Prime Minister. These alcohol surgeries with T+J become important. Ter-RAY + JULIE. They keep me grounded and maybe I keep them up in the air. I have an idea for the Fantasy Football project of reworking a whole set of Argentina 1978 images so that Scotland actually win it, making visible the pre-tournament hype dream. Pop over to Manchester to see Oursler at City Art Gallery, Kiessling at Cornerhouse, Brigitte's stained glass in the Manchester German Church, Indian in Rusholme and home. Meet with CastleWorks who propose cladding THE HOUSE with plywood over the render before installing the six hundred golden plaques. We try to get some work for Kevin and Sharon Notman who have really taken me under their wing, along with T+J, Zoe, big Dave, Mo, Lisa, the Greens and old Dick. I locate an old Police trailer in Penrith and that is soon in a Carlisle garage waiting to be turned into THE MUSEUM. Some Y7 kids decide to stage a sit-in in THE HOUSE for no reason. Maybe they want the attention. Staff are scared. Stressers and depressers.

THE HOUSE is installed on the day Dortmund win the Champions League. Plaques look great. Plaques are stolen. Certain family names are scratched out and we witness a kind of Raffles-wide voodoo plaque feud. I expect this

and repairs are done rapidly. The World Wide Web arrives in Carlisle and I look myself up.



Back in Liverpool I catch some fucker scally at our back door trying to rob our telephone. I do the usual post-project exit and we head to New York. Stay at Hotel Newton on Upper West Side and the city has changed almost beyond recognition since 1990. Cracking Odd Nerdrum show in Chelsea, plus Clemente and Red Grooms, up to 113th to meet Nancy for some *ethnic food*. Empire State, DIA Centre's Sandbach strings, Balkenhol and seeing Tricky in *Fifth Element* at 3am on safe streets. Arrange to meet Tom Eccles, now director of The Public Art Fund, at his Keith Haring launch but later we all down too much free vodka and the night doesn't end well, does it Tom? Head to SoHo for Gilbert & George and see Rodney D's hotel installation. Eccles' other half Jenny calls me the next day to tell me to fuck off. We forget that part of the art world and hop on a Greyhound to Boston to meet pissed Nigel from Liverpool and do a bit of drinking and porch life. Visit the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and head back to NY. Stand in a Post Office queue behind Walter Matthau and jet home.



The mid-1997 sounds of Primal Scream's dubby *Vanishing Point*, more Soulbossa *Sour loser* and Coade *Too young*. The challenge in Raffles is once you have your feet under the table as an artist-in-residence and you know some of their secrets and they know yours, how do you still keep things fresh? I think about this on train down to London for the Fantasy Football auction at Croydon

Clocktower with Jeremy, Tom C, Simon Patterson and Kettles on the phone bids. He gets Duncan F, whom I want for my conceptual Scots-players-only *Ally's Army* as it is finishing bottom that counts. Back up for Three Month opening and then further up to Bootle to sort another mural out. The Raffles crowd visit Liverpool for a few mad days of hunting cheap silver and cheap Nike. I show them RAY + JULIE and drunken bowling.

Pop into Bluecoat for meeting with Steve and Phaedra Hardstaff and Rick Walker to start on the *Sgt Pepper* install. We build a 3D Pippy Longstocking, a Mars landscape and get artists to nominate new characters to form the crowd: The Invisible Van (Morrison), Swampy, Sylvia Plath and Michael

Jackson's face covered with a ©. The Hardstaffs and Walker are a joy to work with and I'll collaborate with Rick again and reconfigure *Sgt Pepper for Democratic Promenade* in 2011. Duncan M and John Y around helping out too, both in black leather jackets. Weekends spent up in Seaforth with Duncan C working on *The Bin Wagon* that becomes *The Bin Issue*. Mad sunny days and laid on a plate for the local press: *Art goes in the bin* and *They have all bin painting the town*. Quick one-week mural at St. James again with glorious swaying trees and little kids in black bin bags to protect their clothes.



Chat with Henry *The Christians* Priestman and arrange to mix my single for the Bluecoat in his legendary Anglesey studio. It is all a bit rushed but I collage together sounds from the other *Vinyl Junkyard* performances and invite Philip Jeck to do a funeral remix for the b-side. Henry seems to think Eric's founder Roger Eagle used to live in the very Livingston Drive flat we now inhabit. I have an idea for a billboard in Belfast called *FUCK DANCE, LET'S ART*. Over to Salford to discuss indoor collage murals with six libraries.



THE MUSEUM months

THE MUSEUM is an interesting and galvanising idea, working with all ages across Raffles as well as the Council and historians, technicians, engineers and schools. I find R. Hinds, a caravan-making company that will weld THE MUSEUM structure for me on top of the trailer. They will then move it into an empty warehouse where I will paint it to resemble one of the Raffles houses and fit it out with an alternative history of Raffles, except that there is not really an official one. It is an artist-in-residence history of Raffles. There will be a little figure called Kev, the most popular local name, wearing a Bob Marley mask, the most popular local singer, wearing a Carlisle top that is red, gold and green, with all the letters removed from the sponsor's logo except (EDDIE STOB)ART. Large pages from a book will tell the story of where I think the name comes from and a TV screen will



show documentaries and animations. THE MUSEUM will tour schools and then beyond to change perceptions of Raffles.



I spend six months working on THE MUSEUM towards its launch in February 1998, training between Carlisle and Liverpool every week. Things speed up. I



raise an additional 3k for THE MUSEUM and get another flat in Alfred Street South, where I hear of Diana's death. I read a lot of Patricia Highsmith but feel numb about Diana. I meet local historian Jim Templeton and communicate with the author Margaret Forster. I meet murderer Nick Breck-McKye on his watercolours and Steve White digs out a 1774 map of the area with the word "Rafels" on it. One

of the mannequins suddenly goes missing. Hacksaws are used to get her off. We receive a ransom note and then photographs of her at various parties



with drinks and cigarettes. I am interviewed by the Police about her and they ask with straight faces whether I have a picture of her. She is later found in the burn and re-installed on THE HALL where she

grins at the rest of them and stands still again. Drink with Terry and Julie in Botchergate and just have to laugh.

Brigitte gets offered the ICI Fellowship in Redcar for a year. I trace the name Rafels a bit further back to 1688 with Ra meaning boundary and Fels being



fells. Liverpool artist Godfrey Burke gets in touch about a possible billboard project. Primal Scream issue their dub remix LP and Bill Drummond creates the ***k The Millennium 12" with Liverpool Dockers

and Jeremy Deller. Do my time in Salford and Eccles with suspicious librarians that gradually come around. More pizzas and digestives.

Approached about a Carlisle Festival and collaborate with the young people and Peter A to construct a spin painting machine. The Raffles gang then decide to visit Belfast to meet up with an equivalent youth project. Drive to



Stranraer and Seacat to Belfast and met by youth worker Stephen Settled in to Helga's Lodge before heading to a getting-to-know-you evening at the Ardoyne Youth Club.

Dreading the "So, what team do you support?" question. Uncomfortable. Long call back home with Brigitte about the Three Month Gallery show she curates and that is trashed during set-up by some weird NxNW film festival

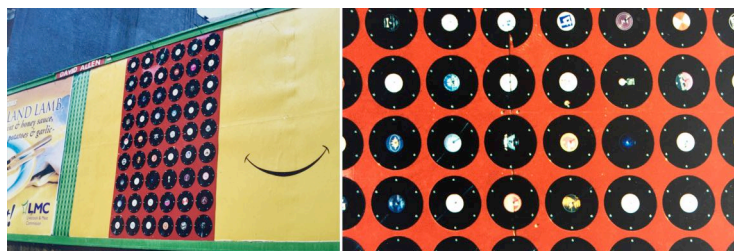


linked to the fucked-up bleached-hair Colin and his Massive Video. TO BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS IF YOU EVER MEET THIS MAN. Bluecoat postcard opening: the use of clouds on LP sleeves. Start work on *The Launderette* up in Bootle with Duncan C and the Radiohead-listening team. We work with loads of local young people on topical animations and play them on a screen fitted inside an old washing

machine and install this in a launderette. Captive audiences. Three Month opening and meet John Reverend Max Ripple Wood. Christmas in Liverpool is a little sombre and grey. Maybe we are all just tired.

1998

January is cold and damp and spent making little *Ally's Army* TVs, painting and fitting THE MUSEUM and working on *The Launderette*. I get offered a billboard in Belfast, the *FUCK DANCE*



LET'S ART one. They ask me to change it to XXXX DANCE, which is fair enough on a public billboard. In response to my lack of passion for dance music, I secure fifty-four dance records to a billboard, thus deeming them unplayable.

It is meant to be a 16-sheet but they change to a 48-sheet at the last minute, I just smile (literally, in paint). I bolt the discs to hardboard and my regular transporters Interlink Express despatch them to Belfast. It is installed although I never see it.



Fantasy Football show opens in Walsall but I can't be there. Get short-listed for some public art commission in Bootle. I will propose an

elevator that disappears into the ground and some LED textworks but they don't go for anything in the end. Listen a lot to new Ian Brown LP. *Under the pavement, the beach*. I propose a weekend beach for Raffles, inspired by an Australian project in which they close a flyover every weekend and cover it with artificial grass. On Friday 13th February we present THE MUSEUM to the public for the first time. It looks great although I detect a weird cloud of negativity over the whole Estate. Seasonal disorder?



The picture disc arrives, titled *take the mic away* after a line by a little kid in it. One side has the JAMMs image from EA and the other the Titanic in honour of



picture disc pioneer David Sarnoff who is the first person in America to receive the S.O.S. from the sinking ship in 1912. Our *Tony-Blair-meets-The-Bends* animation for *The Launderette* works beautifully.

Shelagh Cluett is in Liverpool and in Cains until 2am. The *DECADent* book arrives. *Ally's Army* gets a mention in The Guardian. The usual post-project trip, to Düsseldorf again, Karneval time, over to Cologne to meet Jürgen and see the Lichthof Hat Factory and meet Jörg at the school for the later projects. Call from South Bank TV who want to film *Ally's Army*. Time spent at *Blade*



Runner ICI in Redcar and Saltburn. Regents



Cinema at end of pier, except that the pier is gone. Smoking allowed in one half of cinema. We see the original *King Kong* and *Creature from the Black Lagoon* in 3D and hear the real waves lapping the wall behind the screen.



Back to Manchester to catch up with Pavel, now installed in Manchester Metropolitan University. Do a bit of Cologne prep and meet George Yellow House McKane on Bold Street. Start working on a tape-to-tape collage called *Licht(hof) Fire* for the Lichthof in Cologne, using Nirvana's *Lake of fire*.

Rush down to London and out to Richmond to sit in a chair à la Pete Murphy's Maxell advert, watching Scotland 1 Iran 1 and Ally MacLeod. Courtesy car to Euston and up to Raffles. Playing badminton with Margit at Toxteth Sports Centre and some guy jogs around the court, spitting everywhere. Margit asks him to stop and he explodes and starts screaming "Fucking Nazi Jock racist Hitler cunts, I fought in the Toxteth riots for this place, you've got no right to be here." Speak to Sharon and Zoe about the future of Raffles and get offered big *Photo'98* project in Leeds. Godfrey secures £1,800 R&D funding from ACE towards the *Liverpool Billboard Project*. Over to Birkenhead to meet ARCH Initiatives and pencil in eight days work designing 4-sheet billboards to go in bus shelters, as the World Cup kicks off with Brazil 2



Scotland 1. Start work in Ebor Gardens in Leeds, staying with Clare C and Chumba Geoff. Back quickly for Foreign Investment's *Laughing Stock Exchange* performance at Liverpool Community College. My dad sorts me out a new desktop PC from The Pirate Store near the Barras and we work up the Ebor designs into ceramic tile designs. Back to Leeds and find a local pub for the Michael Owen game against Argentina. Barman asks what I want and I just point, thinking a Scottish accent isn't the best idea tonight. Over to Manchester to work with Rick on his *Green Machine* eco-car project. Another weird World Cup final.

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**JUST BOOK THE CAR
FOR SOIL CHANGI**



... many driver Rick with some of the children who helped transform his Volkswagen into a tiny estate. He said: "People just start reg... WACKY Rick Walker grows months to transform the car in project with inner-city children

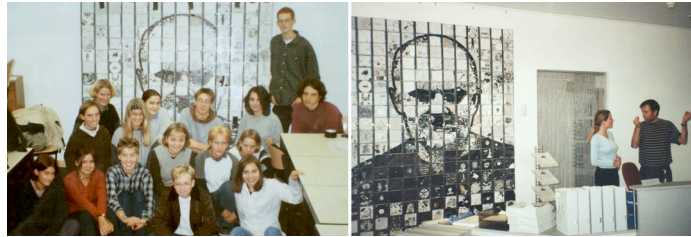
Up to Raffles to catch up and do some running repairs. Over to Birkenhead for first sessions with ARCH and Wirral Drug Services. Barry and Tommy turn up and back over to Tate to wander the shows with them. Change plans for Cologne and start producing *LOGOland*. The World Cup is so boring I sit and watch the advertising hoardings. *LOGOland* is a set of skirting board logos for an art space, but each one is a hybrid such as NIKEA, doCKers and BOSSes,





BRAIN (braun) and (b)old automatic(ally). The ARCH sessions get busier with Denise who knows her pop and one-armed ex-cartoonist ex-prisoner Graham. Meet curator of the first Liverpool Biennial, Tony Bond, and come away muttering dull, dull, dull. Turn 31 and buy Mogwai and Man or Astroman? LPs and call Rick to suggest a race between THE MUSEUM and *The Green Machine*.

Work up some Lime Street proposal with Clement and do weird globe workshop at Bluecoat. I have said it before, but time speeds up. ARCH, Brigitte's brilliant *Global Village* at Atkinson in Southport, *Vinyl Junkyard* catalogues arrive and I fly with Sue Leask to Cologne. Liverpool artists visit their twin city kind of thing. The whole event is named after a Beatles song of course, *8 Days a Week*.



I work at Herder Gymnasium in Buchheim with the young students on a big black & white John Peel CD collage construction with the empty cases donated by Saturn. I introduce the project (reading) in German which gets a laugh. I set up *LOGOland* at Lichthof alongside Dave Mabb and the Singh Twins, both of whom I fall out with for dumping stuff on top of *LOGOland* while they are being filmed. Bit of respect, please. Really drunk with Julien G and Birgit D after Candida Hofer opening at British Council and sit and have a cold beer with Dave Jacques. To Pop-Dom for intimate Phil Jeck performance, Tom Wood opening, screening of the legendary 1965 Cologne-Liverpool match that is settled by a coin toss, set up exhibition of Peel and some Loch Ness Monster stuff that Jürgen likes. Yellow House McKane floats around claiming to be a Cosmic Flyer. Geoff M and Sarah R



openings, lots of good food and beer and arguments in pubs and the Media Park and back home knackered.



Straight into Bluecoat meeting about a Triangle Arts residency in Wales and back to Raffles and start doing our darts and fantasy football Sunday evenings in Kavanaghs with Margit, Alan, Bob S and poets Tony D and Jim M. Bump into Pavel and many beers in Revolution, talking billboards, John Cage, Douglas G and Kosuth. Start new sessions at ARCH, dad gets me to try *Duke Nukem 3D* to test the PC (addictive) and spend evenings training it all the way to Irlam to do an indoor piece in their youth centre, all based on smiling selfies. Up to Bootle to repair tiny bit of St. Elizabeth of Hungary graffiti damage and Tate workshop during which two troubled kids stay outside to beg money. Over to Leeds for unveiling of Ebor's *Hearts & Minds* tiles.



Liverpool Biennial want to meet but I cancel and head up to Glasgow for Scotland 2 Faroe Islands 1. They are improving or we are getting worse. Stay with parents and cars, coughs, computers, cables and chaos. Down to



London for Brigitte's installation in PricewaterhouseCoopers, hanging out with Emma Safe and Mary Maclean. See the funny Ofili show at Serpentine and



Deller is hanging out but of course he doesn't remember me. Knackered, so we fly out to Nice for a break. Hotel Clemenceau, blue skies, coach to Menton via Monaco, find Hotel in Monti, mountains, delicious wild mushrooms, Jean Cocteau Museum and a tiny record shop that has been flooded and getting rid of its stock for next to nothing. New Order *Low-life*, Springsteen *Nebraska* and the *Camille Claudel* soundtrack. Walk into Italy along the coast. Different planet. Amazing storms during flight back.



Meet with Biennial team and Tony (James) Bond wants to fund two of our billboards, Peter Zimmerman and Pierre Huyghe, to the tune of £4,000 and include

them in the Biennial. We think about it. Over to Wirral to see first three ARCH bus shelters installed. They are basic, DIY, punk. Get call from Sarah Fisher, then the Arts Officer at Halton Borough Council, to meet about some community art work in Widnes and on 4th November 1998 I buy a modem and get online for the first time. To Basement opening then on to Kavanaghs for darts, under owner Rita's witches broom, and talk to pissed John Young but

he is not in a good place. They open up Radio City Tower for a day so we head up to see the city from above and I bank an idea. I get an interview with The Big Issue for a three-month residency in Manchester. The offers are



literally flooding in and while I am trying to say yes, I actually do start to turn things down for the first time, purely due to time. More ARCH bus shelter posters go up (KISS) and I get The Big Issue gig. Raffles call to see if I will head back to design them a website covering

all the art projects. In retrospect, I should not accept this. I've had my time there and I should let a younger artist take the chance, but the place is oddly addictive. I confess that I partially do it for the money too, which is wrong in the context. Meet Emma Anderson at ACE about LBP but, compared to



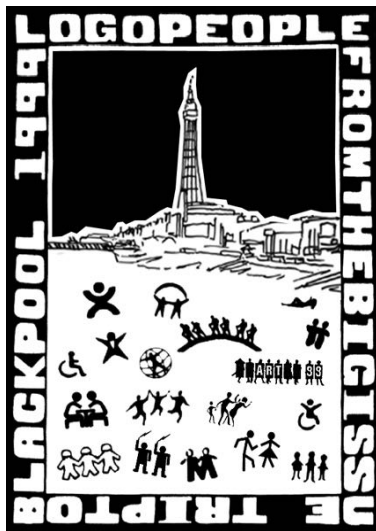
Bellgrove, LBP is a logistical struggle, partly due to sharing curatorial duties with Godfrey but also the expectations of those artists involved, the sites being all over the city and working with more than one billboard company.

Meet Dave J and talk billboards and down to Widnes to meet the lively Veterans' Group and have the idea of big domino hoardings with Veterans on one side and the local school, with whom they have had some issues, on



the other. Tune in to the Singh Twins on TV and luckily you don't see grumpy me stomping about in the background. End a busy year by heading up to Glasgow, to drink in Babbity Bowsters, wander the Campsies, pop down to Raffles and the Brookside psychedelic madness and Terry and Julie offer me another 2days/wk for three months. Fly to Düsseldorf for Christmas and on to Berlin for New Year, taking in the Biennial and staying with ex-GSA Dot and her fella David. Wild fireworks and Champaign in the building site of a city.

1999



January is split between Widnes and a new ARCH group and The Big Issue residency on Oldham Street in Manchester. I collaborate with the vendors on a series of 4-sheets that will be displayed in various places. I refer to The Big Issue as "an encyclopaedia of cultural images" and their marketing department like that line. I meet the magazine co-founder John Bird and work with around thirteen vendors regularly. ARCH is great, full of folk who came through punk and Erics in Liverpool, artists and musicians caught up in the heroin influx of the late 1980's. In The Big Issue I chat with Alex, originally from Easterhouse and, who knows, maybe he painted one of our banners or murals? He is incredibly short-sighted

and wants to be a snooker star so his mum can see him on the telly. The vendors come in first thing each day for some fruit, a chat and to collect their magazines. Some of them hang around for ten minutes or four hours, as we project up different images from The Big Issue and add comments and truisms. Day in Widnes with the Veterans and their dominos then drive round Liverpool with Godfrey and Sue L, spotting potential billboards.

Manchester, working on *Tartan Army* piece and *Blackpool*, in which we take all the little logos from the back of the magazine and give them a day out by the sea. We work on *Robbie Coltrane* and *New Order* ones, all black and white, stunning. Building Director says no to us displaying them in the very prominent window area so we think about other homes for these homeless images. Asked by Tate to do six Richard Deacon talks and negotiate cheap billboards with Neil at Maiden Outdoor. Lucienne C opens new Parking Space in Liverpool and Brigitte installs *Global Village* in the main Bluecoat Gallery. Chat with Rick W and Sarah H at the opening about doing one of the first BluecoatConnect outreach schools projects. Do interview with Manchester radio, catch

up with Pavel for five hours, work on the glorious *Spiritualised* poster, help Neen with her *Anarcho-Celtic* one and bite my tongue once or twice with the aggressive bitter Veterans who stare at me with hate and menace, "Yer supposed tae fucking learn at school, son, no efter." I ask again what this type of work is doing. Sometimes I think all I can do is try to spring and smuggle people out of a dull non-creative lifestyle and have some surreal dada moments while doing so. I think the work is also one big self-portrait and one type of mirror of the country, of how people live, their housing, central





Government's attempts at solutions and of our relationship with art and learning.

People respond to incentives. I introduce a prize system and suddenly the Veterans are all heads down, drawing away, laughing and joking. Fairfield's Junior School on the other hand is a dawdle and the teacher Heidi and Ranger Anthony are a joy to work with. Liverpool is buzzing. Three Month Gallery arrange some guerrilla *Free Tutorials* in local art schools and manage to piss off lecturers. Work on the *Ono* piece in *The Big Issue* and we all head over to Bolton to see a potential space to show the posters. Get a place on the Triangle Arts

residency in Wales and work on the *Jimmy Boyle flexidisc* poster. There is a kind of freedom in *The Big Issue*, and perhaps these are the *conversational* pieces that Roddy B first mentions back in 1989? Head up to Stanley Dock Market to talk to traders and price up getting a stall there for another project.

You are 32 and have no kids. Life is seen through project-glasses and your peers are constantly developing new ventures, displays and ideas to keep you on your toes. Liverpool's arts community is as hard-working as Glasgow's. At *The Big Issue*, the posters are so strong that the management decide after all to let us show them in the window. Mick is dressed to the nines for a meeting, Tony B and Steph are on something and only Leeds Carl helps out. Arrange nine free sites from Adshel for our ARCH posters. Meet with Biennial team and Charles Esche to agree to jointly doing Huyghe and Zimmerman posters. Meet the legendary Tony Chestnut at *The Big Issue*. He is involved with Massive Video, those that trash the Three Month show, and he will write you a poem on the spot for a couple of pounds.

Poor Birgit Deubner is beaten up in Falkner Square and we sometimes forget this side of the city but I don't think it is any worse than any other major uk city. Since the burglary, we've only had washing stolen from our line and we all take greater care at night. Up to Bootle for opening at Orrell Arts Centre and get a call from Terry Raffles about a sour court case with Peter A whose claim may bankrupt the whole enterprise. At *The Big Issue*, young Craig is found dead at the bottom of a car park. February is a dark month. Watch *La Haine*. Watch *400 Blows*. Watch *Lord of the flies*. Watch *La Ceremonie*.

Terry calls back to say Peter A loses his court case. I invite Pavel to produce the first work for Liverpool Billboard Project and for him to select an artist for a panel in Manchester. Kosuth says no, so Bergen's Kurt Johannessen steps in. Pop in to Cornerhouse to see Wentworth's objects and Neudecker's memory maps, and on to Bolton to start hanging *The Big Issue* show. Down to Bluecoat for evening of live art with the standout Frank Chickens. Well, half a Frank Chicken. *The sun has fallen down, And the billboards are all leering, And the flags are all dead at the top of their poles.* These are the last few pre-Biennial months in Liverpool and the city won't be the same.



Some of this work is good but there is nowhere for the documentation to go. No magazines or websites or coverage. In this sense, the work is like Bill Drummond's 17 and you have to be there to be aware of these projects. It is not until 2009 that I feel ready to start disseminating projects in a more systematic

manner. I pass Jarvis Cocker in Lime Street but I never like Pulp. We present the dominoes in public and I do my last day at The Big Issue. Meet with Bill from Urban Splash in Liverpool to look at an empty warehouse for another possible Big Issue showing. Post-project tickets booked for Venice, Raffles and Middlesbrough. In Raffles we set up a new PC in the office to start work on the website. In Middlesbrough, Brigitte sets up one of her ICI residency exhibitions



and then we head up to Newcastle to catch up with Annette and Red Dick. Cool record fare at Tynemouth Station and Evil Knievel, Brian Eno and BBC Horror for a fiver all in. Back over to Riff-Raffles again and everybody is up to 2am watching Springer and asking what a website is.

Bolton Big Issue opening and press and back to Raffles to start making short movies and recordings for the website.

Meet artists Dave and Sharon who live in Raffles and we'll collaborate on an anti-demolition billboard. More ARCH, Raffles, Liverpool Billboard Project, all over the place. Late night darts at Kavanaghs and robbed of a tenner by two blokes on

Coronation Street actor backs exhibition with a Big message

TV Spider has an art attack



CORONATION Street's Eco-Warrior, "Spider", was today unveiling an art exhibition with a Big message. The touring exhibition features the work of four Big Issue vendors, including one from Liverpool, and will travel across the nation. It will reach Merseside in June.

The man is the Urnchild of community artist Alan Dunn, from Sefton Park.

Alan, a graduate of the prestigious Glasgow School of Art, said: "I jumped at the chance to work with Big Issue vendors because I believe what they stand for, and have a sympathy with what they're doing to promote the problem of homelessness through the magazine."

"We have used black and white posters, video, sculptures and collage using images from the magazine."

"It was fascinating and I have learned a lot."

Viewing

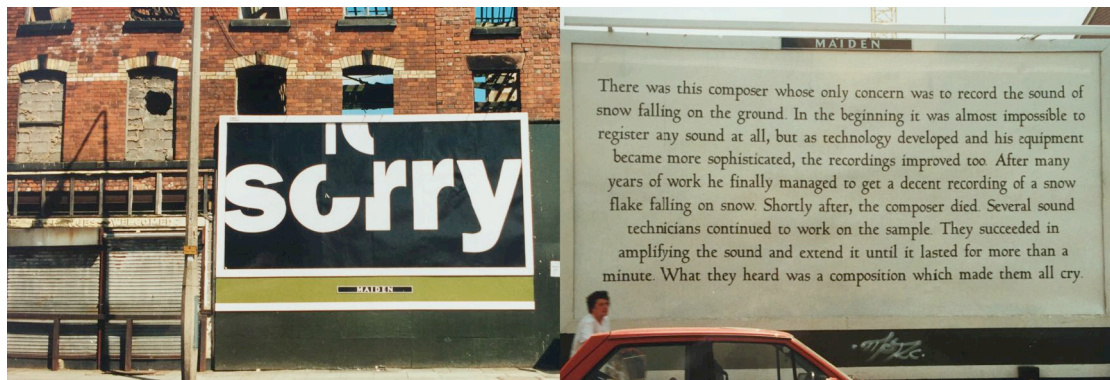
The exhibition, launched by "Spider" actor Martin Hancock, begins in Bolton before travelling to Hull, Leeds and Liverpool where the display will be on show at the Old Market, Victoria Street, from June 18.

● Spider man... Martin Hancock

● Art works... Alan Dunn, the man behind the project

Princes Avenue on the way back. So much for being more careful. Pricks. I have £20 in the other pocket. Meet Terry at Tullie to discuss my *Doctors of Spin* idea. Arts Council say no to Liverpool Billboard Project of course, but we just laugh at them and get on with it anyway. Head for Venice with the Italians to eat pizza and do some little urban interventions. Watch *American History X* in the cinema in Carlisle and feel sick at the kerb scene. Staying with Terry and Julie now in their new house. They arrange another trip to Ardoyne and we watch Scotland win away (!) in Germany (Hutchison) and, a bit like being in Chicago during *Bellgrove*, the first two posters of *LBP* are installed while I am out the country. Belfast this time is fucked up and the Raffles crew are all doped up and off balance and we get a horrible ferry back over-crowded with pissed and aggressive RFC fans. Get back to Carlisle to find all the youth project money has been robbed.

Liverpool Billboard Project, May - November 1999



Pavel's SORRY is a nod to Ross' *Four-letter Wor* with one panel accidentally pasted upside down on the derelict and desolate Park Road, next to a poster that states: *Ideal for the city. More people will get it.* Sorry for the mistake with sorry. Classic Büchler. At the same time in Manchester, Kurt's *composer* is installed next to the Deaf Institute and is the tale of recording the sound of snow falling. Rabid Records' Tosh Ryan is based in the Deaf Institute and I phone him for a chat about Kurt's work. Have conversations with Jon Locus + Bewley and Margaret Harrison and Pavel in Manchester about the first two billboards and groggily up to Raffles as Carlisle's goalkeeper Jimmy Glass



keeps them in the Football League in the last minute. Up to 3am on Brookside listening to shit tales of abuse and fear. They tell me that Terry and Julie no longer trust me and I want to stay but also leave this tangled estate web. These days I take everything with a pinch of salt as I think I know who is really committed to the area, and Terry and Julie obv-

iously are. I am the one that leaves. The fog of community art. The Solksjaer final.

SORRY. Langland & Bell's poster is somehow pasted upside-down and from the wrong fucking file and they are rightly not happy. We quickly arrange a re-install. Black Friday. The Liverpool Architecture & Design Trust call me to say that they are now responsible for maintaining RAY + JULIE. Like an adoption. Meet with Rick W and Sarah H at Alsop "our school is so shit" High, where the Head is known to all as The Beast. Back to Raffles and they contrive to lose



the keys to THE MUSEUM, but it has been out a wee bit. Drink in Fat Fingers with the Cockerdelic crew. I cut the new Raffles website address into a stencil and get two young lads to spray it all the way across THE HOUSE, with the gold bricks now removed. Take THE MUSEUM down to Bitts Park for the day amidst magicians and angry grunge bands and this feels like the last day of Raffles. Back to Liverpool to set up Urban Splash Big Issue show while looking like Devo and drink in the new Dr Duncan's pub, named after the Scot who was the city's first Medical Officer of Health. The Liverpool Echo cover our Big Issue project but photograph one of the vendors between two young Brookside actresses and I don't see the logic in that. Head out to the middle of nowhere, Runcorn, for Kelly Large opening as Brigitte meets Captain Hans Tibor of Coastal Bay who will allow her to sail in his ship all the way to Ireland.



"Research" is a useful ticket at times.

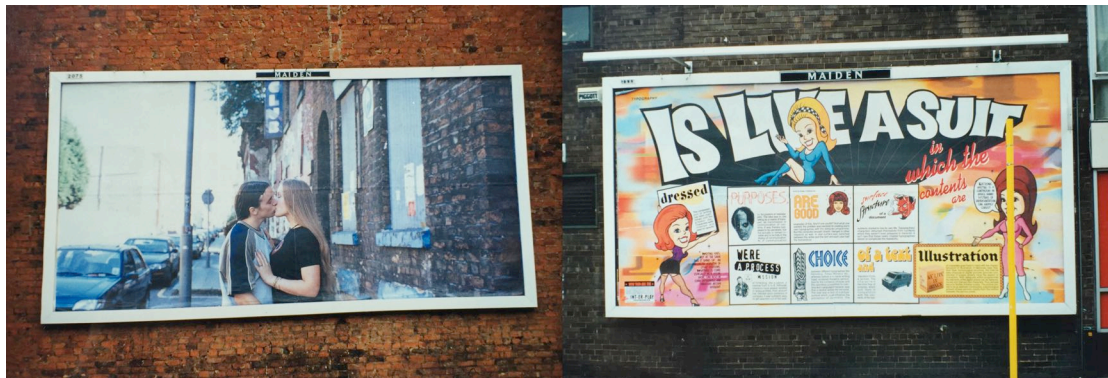


Leo F asks about doing a billboard but it doesn't work out and I have to postpone the Fiona Banner due to technical printing issues. I think the best Leo work I see is his *INSECURITY* security/bouncer's jacket text. Of all the Merseyside creatives it is really only Leo and Paul Rooney

that I don't manage to collaborate with in some form. But the careers are young. Begin making mini-billboards for Wales and Art Monthly makes a



condescending reference to our Billboard project, commenting that Obrist has "been doing billboards since 1991, longer than most." I just laugh at them all and get in the van. Back up to Tullie in Carlisle for a *Doctors of Spin* project. We invite Raffles and members of the public to come in to Tullie, most of them for the first time, to respond to the group show that has a Hirst spin painting. We have constructed numerous spinning devices and covered the



gallery in protective material and we just go for it. It is one of the most enjoyable projects of all time. We look great, the work is self-explanatory, the atmosphere is expectant, the chat is flowing, we laugh a lot, we improvise and we can see lots of peoples' minds shifting, including Tullie staff. They go from wary to curious to joining in to laughing to taking ownership. We rush out to buy loads of cheap 7" and 12" to spin onto. The young people try to DJ with them. All the old Raffles crowd come in at the same time as a group from Wisconsin. They chat with each other. Rush back to Lime Street and brush past Irvine Welsh supping Lucozade outside WH Smith. Brigitte gets offered a Newcastle University job and we decide to move.



Sue Leask's poster is installed. It is inspired by nearby dayglo spiritual signs. One church on Park Road has a sign "Owen – God. Ronaldo – God. Jesus Christ – Superstar." We manage to coat the paper with special dayglo green ink and she constructs a dayglo pink pyramid we secure in the middle. As I write: "On sunny days, the huge impact of these colours, basic geometric shapes and distinct lack of text questions the nature of billboards as emitters. The work surrenders to its surrounds, attracting bird droppings from the derelict building and gathering traffic pollution which gradually deadens the colours."

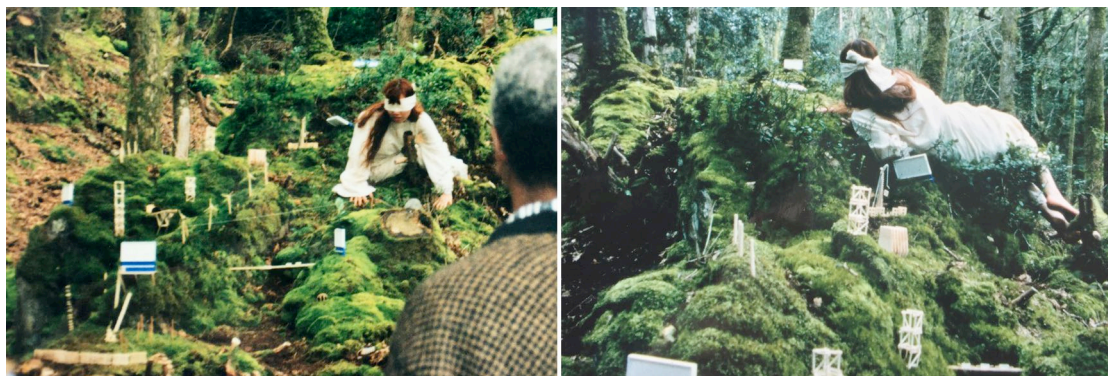


In July, Dave Jacques' work with the group of young people *Unheard Voices*, *Unseen Lives* is a delicate hand-painted nod to the 1911 General Transport Strike. During this period, Park Road is one of the city's thoroughfares controlled by the strike committee. After one day, the billboard is ripped down. Dave suspects a rival local community arts project and we decide to meticulously hand-paint the work again and re-install it on another major thoroughfare in the north of the city.

New name for a kids' goth band TV programme: Sesame & The Banshees. Darts in St. Monica's Social Club in Bootle. Decide to apply for things in North East and get 12-month residency with ISIS Arts – Sharon B and Clymene – at St Thomas More Catholic High School in North Shields. Immediately I set off for Wales with Paul C and South African Garth E, with Dave L driving. Dave fills



the van with diesel instead of petrol half way down and then doesn't see the low bridge in Barmouth on a Saturday night. Huge crowd and cheers but nobody hurt. Check in to our Plas Caerdeon accommodation and await the





arrival of the other international artists for the Triangle Arts residency, including Ricardo B from Rio, Suzann V from Singapore and big Elvis from who knows where. I have this idea of creating a tiny city of miniature bill-

boards. It is escapism and an excuse to sit quietly in sunny mossy woods and have a break. We play pool and listen to dub each evening and I help Ricardo screen-print his *YOU ME* football shirts. On the last day, Suzann crushes all the mini billboards, rolling down blindfolded as part of her final performance. I get news that the next LBP poster, by myself and Kirsten Klöckner, is successfully installed. It is a weird hand-painted exquisite corpse exchange of images with only 24-hours to come up with the next one and post it back. Robert Loder turns up for the Triangle opening, along with Duncan C, Cath O and Bryan B. The collaborative billboard in Raffles is also installed. Pierre Huguhe arrives in Liverpool and we take him to the site on the corner of Seel Street and Slater Street and he photographs a couple kissing. That is the work. A few years later while at *tenantspin*, I meet a friend of one of the kissers who tells me "it was out first ever kiss, but the relationship didn't last." All the way down to Bristol for an Engage evaluation of *Doctors of Spin* and set up a small photographic exhibition from the Welsh residency in Bluecoat.



Maiden are a terrible company to work with at this time. They change sites at the last minute, switch from "free billboards for your art project" to extortionate charges and they never ever paste on time. Godfrey negotiates with Andrea Rosen Gallery for permission to recreate Felix Gonzales-Torres' *Untitled* that we hand-paint. New work by Willie Doherty and a redesign from Fiona Banner, the fantastic *love double*, listing all the English-language songs that begin with *I LOVE YOU*. The spirit of this Billboard Project is all wrong. I think Godfrey sees it as a launchpad to a career in curating and Neil at Maiden starts to thrive on throwing stumbling blocks in front of us, each one of which we delicately negotiate. Artists send in artworks in all sorts of complicated formats with instructions as to how we design and print it and I wonder what my role is. Despite that, the final works are good. What I don't like is the fact that they are all over the city. They really just get lost amidst everyday life and commercials.

Call from Gary Power to do a day's teaching in Sunderland. Start working in Alsop with Rick W on our *Identikit* project and it is a bit chaotic. It is a bad sign when the teacher immediately leaves the room after introducing you. We get the Zimmerman billboard installed on Hanover Street and Erwin Wurm's on



Canning Place, project over. Rush up to Newcastle to choose a flat, Salters Road in Gosforth, and bump into Simon Son of Sam Ainsley of all people.



The first Liverpool Biennial is what it is. The great and the good descend on the city, plenty of ex-GSA and ex-EA and I meet Bill Drummond again and Jonathan Swain and Nina Edge and see Philip Jeck's psychedelic car park performance. We rent a stall at the Stanley Dock Sunday Market and sell art shit direct to the public. I make George Wyllie anagram t-shirts and witty collage postcards. Whiz between Newcastle and North Shields and Alsop High. We are tracked down by LIPA student Bettina who uses RAY + JULIE as the basis of her final



project. We chat about the chairs' history and she goes out that night and re-sprays the original names back on the wall. I get a studio space in a Thomas More classroom and start working with all years, but mostly older kids. My idea is to develop some 3D billboards and give the whole area free pairs of red/green glasses via The Metro. I build a little wooden unit to allow us to use digital cameras to make anaglyphs and they start to work. We put Miss in a bin and photograph her. I pin up an image of a Raphael, writing: "The School of Athens fresco of 1510 depicts an imaginary meeting of philosophers and scientists, gathered together to consider the worlds of mathematics, astrology and music."



There is a great atmosphere in the classroom, of experimenting with 3D glasses and we produce a total of four 3D billboards all loosely based on *The School of Athens* but exploring dunce caps, Boulby Dark Matter, the Shearer no.9 on the back of *The Angel of The North* and so on. We explore Photoshop and create feint figures and levitating bodies.

Head over to Raffles for a day of paintballing and the young people take it all a bit too viciously of course. We pull THE MUSEUM out of storage once more and it is looking great. But that fog of sadness permeates Raffles and not sure what difference any of it makes. Head over to Leeds to check on Ebor Gardens tiles, all looking good, and Dom Hans van der Laan at Henry Moore Institute and on to Tate Liverpool for evening workshop. Stay over and head



to Manchester to visit Brigitte's sound piece *The possibility of a potato* in the Holden and back to Liverpool for Bill Drummond's tribute to Roger Eagle, *Dead White Man*, in Parr Street. I read the amazing story of 17-year old Colin Roberts who is carving wood in his shed and stumbles upon what is recognised as the first new geometric shape in ages, the sphericon. In North Shields we make lots of sphericons and photograph them in 3D.



Meet a pissed Bewley of Locus+ and Mark Daniels and I have an idea for a 'three foot' project. For one day, we move as many things as possible three feet in one direction. England beat Scotland in the Euro play-offs (we would have had a last minute equaliser if I had moved Seaman three feet) and as Brigitte heads to New York, I get the bus each morning to

North Shields via the other New York. I chat with Oakie the chemistry teacher about setting up some experiments to capture in 3D. The young lads watch *Predator* and introduce elements into the designs. Back to Alsop and Liverpool and spend the evening with Nick Cave in the Philharmonic. He revels in the fact that he is allowed to smoke on stage while none of the audience are, and *Wild World* is outstanding, memories of that first kiss in Mount Vernon and listening to those Birthday Party 12". I listen to my Birthday Party bootleg on the Walkman and play it to the Pantera and Slim Shady-listening pupils but they just laugh.



We conclude *Identikit*. We split the pupils into groups and each of them creates identikit faces that represent candidates in an election. They have to develop policies and we persuade The Beast to make at least one of the winner's policies a reality.

Our final two candidates are Sam Sugar and Toxi Turner. Over to Sunderland to give a talk to Gary Power's MA students and book some billboards for the 3D experiments. Back to Liverpool for Alan's name-changing event in Beluga and catch up with Michelle and Kev and watch *Ballerina*, *Buffalo 66*, *24:7*, *Two days in the valley*, *Things to do in Denver when you're dead*, *U-Turn* and *The Big Lebowski*. Sam Sugar wins the final vote and we have a cracking awards night upstairs at the Bluecoat.



Christmas in Glasgow and although the Tynemouth residency continues until July 2000, we can see the four designs in our mind. Yet throughout our time in Newcastle, I long for Liverpool again. The artistic community in Newcastle is great but I don't feel as welcome as I did in Liverpool. Perhaps once you are in the North East, you stay there and there is less movement, I don't know.

As for Raffles, it takes a few years to get in touch with the folk there again. Partly this is getting drawn in to the next projects but also going back to Jon Pounds' comment and trying to find a way to keep things fresh, keep the twinkle in the eye, keep entering situations at the 'sceptical' end of hospitality. That is, when your host looks at you with utter confusion or resentment and you all begin that alchemy towards collaboration, trust, fun and joint ownership. That certainly works in Raffles but I also feel that after three years the process starts to reverse itself, back towards mistrust and scepticism. Is that inevitable in such an intense context? Through writing these texts I get in touch with people from Raffles, Hamilton, Derby



and Kilmarnock and so forth. I wonder if I am being too negative about some elements of my time there but I am soon reassured that, although there were undeniable small-town prejudices towards anything cultural, these were far outweighed by surreal moments, a broad range of 'styles', new experiences for thousands of people, colour and the brilliant anecdotes associated with each project.

Images



Raffles Fire Parade (Kevin Notman pushing wheelbarrow), 1996



Alan Dunn *THE HALL* (Proposal for Raffles), 1996



Raffles (Julie Nugent on right), 1996



Alan Dunn & Newtown Primary School mesh (with helpers Titch and Haggis), Raffles, Carlisle, 1996



Carlisle News & Star, 19 October 1996



Alan Dunn *THE HALL* (Denise R painting stained glass panel), Raffles, 1996



Alan Dunn *THE HALL* (Yr7 Homework Club painting stained glass panel), Raffles, 1996



Alan Dunn *Anfield '77* (part II), 346 Duke Street, Glasgow, 1996



Raffles Fire Parade (Lisa driving flamocar), 1996



Alan Dunn & Newtown Primary School mesh (with helpers Dave G and Jamie), Raffles, Carlisle, 1996



Alan Dunn, Sefton Construction Curriculum Centre and six schools *Portholes*, Bootle, 1996



Alan Dunn, Sefton Construction Curriculum Centre and six schools *Portholes*, Bootle, 1996



Alan Dunn & Newtown Primary School mesh, Raffles, 1996



Alan Dunn *THE HALL* (blinds), Raffles, 1997



Alan Dunn *THE HALL* (Andrea H dressing ill' Kev), Raffles, 1997



Alan Dunn *THE HALL*, Raffles, 1997



Alan Dunn *THE HALL*, Raffles, 1997



Alan Dunn *Bootle mural* (Rawson Road Primary School), 1997



Alan Dunn *BAF*, Edition Klöckner, 1997



Alan Dunn *Bootle mural* (Linacre County Primary School), 1997



Alan Dunn *THE HOUSE*,
Raffles, 1997



Alan Dunn *THE HOUSE*,
Raffles, 1997



Alan Dunn *Bootle mural*
(Crosby Road North
Primary School), 1998



Steve Hardstaff & Rick
Walker *Sgt Pepper, It
was thirty years ago
today*, Bluecoat,
Liverpool, 1997



Alan Dunn *The Bin Issue*,
1997



Alan Dunn *Bootle mural*
(St. James RC Primary
School), 1997



Alan Dunn *THE MUSEUM*
(with helpers Jill B and
Stuart), Raffles, 1997



Alan Dunn *The Bin Issue*,
1997-8



Alan Dunn & six libraries
banners and mash,
Salford Arts & Leisure,
1997



Alan Dunn *The Bin Issue*,
1997



Alan Dunn & ARC *The
Launderette*, Bootle,
1997-8



Alan Dunn *Just a
season*, Bluecoat, 1997



Alan Dunn *XXXX DANCE*,
LET'S ART, Belfast, 1998



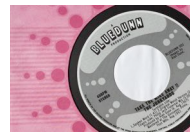
Alan Dunn *THE MUSEUM*,
Raffles, 1998



Alan Dunn *THE MUSEUM*,
Raffles, 1998



Alan Dunn *take the mic
away*, with Phillip Jeck
remix, 7" picture disc,
Liverpool, 1998



Alan Dunn *take the mic
away*, with Philip Jeck
remix, 7" picture disc,
Liverpool, 1998



Alan Dunn *Licht(hof)
Fire*, 1998



Alan Dunn *Iran Ally*,
SoccerArti, South
Bank/LWT/Channel 4,
1998



Alan Dunn *Ally's Army*
(Johnstone scores in
final), 1998



Alan Dunn *Ally's Army*,
1998



Rick Walker & S.A.S. *The
Green Machine*,
Manchester, 1998



Alan Dunn *City Globes*,
Kids' Art Week,
Bluecoat, 1998



Brigitte Jurack *Global
Village*, 1998



Alan Dunn & Herder
Gymnasium *Magical
Mystery Discs (Peel)*,
Cologne, 1998



Alan Dunn *LOGOland*,
Lichthof, Cologne, 1998



Alan Dunn *LOGOland
and The Bin Issue*,
Lichthof, Cologne, 1998



Alan Dunn & Raffles
Youth Project *Spin
paintings*, Andromeda
Festival, Carlisle, 1997



Alan Dunn & Ebor
Gardens Primary School
HEART & MIND, Leeds,
1998



Alan Dunn & Ebor
Gardens Primary School
HEART & MIND, Leeds,
1998



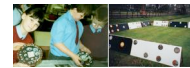
Alan Dunn & ARCH
Initiatives, Birkenhead,
1999



Alan Dunn & ARCH
Initiatives, Birkenhead,
1999



Alan Dunn & The Big
Issue, Manchester, 1999



Alan Dunn, Victoria Park
Veterans & Fairfield
County Junior School
Dominoes, Widnes, 1999



Alan Dunn & The Big
Issue Logo people from
The Big Issue trip to
Blackpool, 1999



Alan Dunn & The Big
Issue Ladies and
gentlemen, this is not an
ad, 1999



Alan Dunn & The Big
Issue Has anyone seen
the horizon? 1999



Dave Chapple & Sharon
Woods Revolting Julies,
Carlisle, 1999



Alan Dunn & The Big
Issue, Bolton, 1999



Alan Dunn & The Big
Issue, 1999



Alan Dunn & Godfrey
Burke Liverpool Billboard
Project: Pavel Büchler
sorry and Kurt
Johannessen
Composer, Liverpool,
1999



Alan Dunn & Godfrey
Burke Liverpool Billboard
Project: Sue Leask
Untitled and Langlands
& Bell Frozen Sky (Night
and Day), Liverpool,
1999



Alan Dunn & Raffles
Community
Development
Partnership THE HOUSE
website, 1999



Alan Dunn & The Big
Issue, Victoria Street,
Liverpool, 1999



Alan Dunn & Tullie House
Doctors of spin, Carlisle,
1999



Alan Dunn & Tullie House
Doctors of spin, Carlisle,
1999



Alan Dunn & Godfrey
Burke Liverpool Billboard
Project: Pierre Huyghe
Untitled and Peter
Zimmerman
typography, Liverpool,
1999



Alan Dunn & Godfrey
Burke Liverpool Billboard
Project: Willie Doherty
TO DIE FOR ... TO KILL
FOR and Felix Gonzales-
Torres Untitled, Liverpool,
1999



Alan Dunn & Godfrey
Burke Liverpool Billboard
Project: David Jacques
and Unheard Voices,
Unheard Lives The 1911
General Transport Strike,
Liverpool, 1999



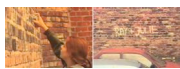
Alan Dunn STRIKE,
Triangle Arts, Wales,
1999



Alan Dunn & Suzann
Victor A rolling stone
gathers no moss,
Triangle Arts, Wales,
1999



Alan Dunn & Godfrey
Burke Liverpool Billboard
Project: Alan Dunn &
Kirsten Klöckner
conversation, Liverpool,
1999



Bettina RAY + JULIE, 1999



Alan Dunn & Godfrey
Burke Liverpool Billboard
Project: Erwin Wurm
Untitled and Fiona
Banner love double,
Liverpool, 1999



ALUK (Corbelli, Dunn,
Jurack & Simeoni)
Stanley Dock Market,
Liverpool, 1999



Bettina RAY + JULIE, 1999



Alan Dunn & St Thomas
More Catholic High
School *The School of
Athens*, North Shields,
1999-2000



Alan Dunn & St Thomas
More Catholic High
School *The School of
Athens*, North Shields,
1999-2000



Raffles (Kev N, AD &
Dave Chapple), 1999



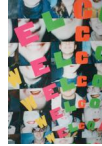
Alan Dunn & Rick Walker
Identikit, Alsop High
School, Liverpool, 1999-
2000



Alan Dunn & Rick Walker
Identikit, Alsop High
School and Bluecoat,
Liverpool, 1999-2000



Alan Dunn *Proposal for
The Strand Bus Station*,
Bootle, 1998



Alan Dunn & Irlam Youth
Centre *SMILE*, 1998

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