

The spinning stops: DADOPTION and Bold Street: tenantspin **2007 Alan Dunn**

2007 the spinning ends

New ending. Think through *tenantspin*. Time to simplify it, get the Sefton Park studio up and running with Patrick and Ed and deliver the Bold Street project.



Bold Street, Liverpool, image by Brian Slater, 2007

Check on all our tenants for whom Christmas can be a difficult time. All present and correct. Chat with Paul Rooney about his red 12" dub project featuring a voice called Alan. Brilliant work, one that I will play each year to Leeds students. Get Laura Yates started on Bold Street research, it being one of the last bastions of independent shops in Liverpool and riddled with punk, pop, fashion and ghost stories. They also say that if you walk from one end of Bold Street to the other and don't bump into someone you know, then you are already dead. Laura will do a mountain of work on this project, along with Patrick and the remaining CP gang. Credit where credit is due.



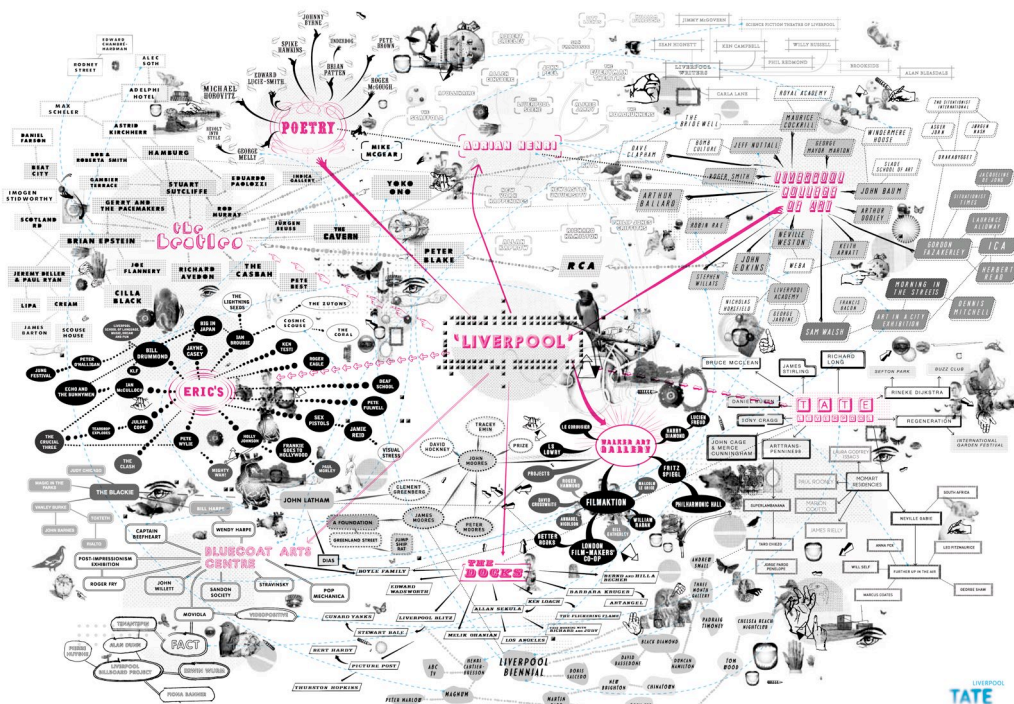
Alan Dunn Central Park Fog, Wirral, February 2007

Bump into Burn Everything who are doing the vinyls for the Tate exhibition, featuring a map of all Liverpool's key avant-gardists. We joke about me slipping them a tenner to (a) get my name in there and (b) upping the font size a little. In the end, I get included on merit, rather than bribery: bottom left, west of FACT and linked to *tenantspin* and the Huyghe, Banner and Wurm works of the *Liverpool Billboard Project*.



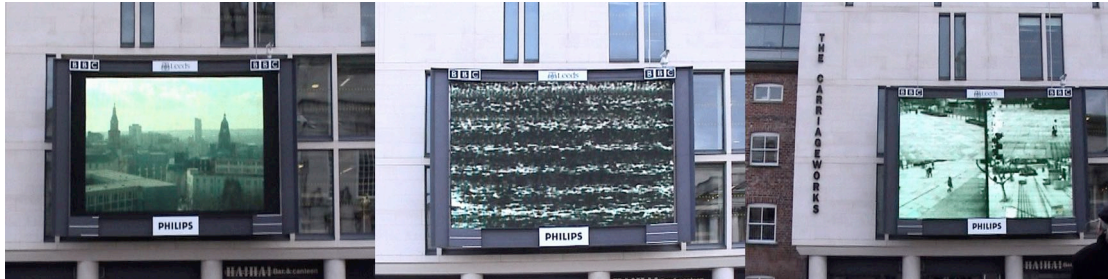
Alan Dunn Green on Red, Wirral, 2007

Ceri Hands in her resignation and we stage a good start-of-year Away Day. Bob Pollard's *Asshole* LP arrives. Hail vinyl. Listen to GBV and watch Wallace & Gromit with the kids. Beyond *tenantspin*, I don't seem to make notes on any other CP projects, as I don't think there really are any. We have a bit of a *tenantspin* clear-the-air meeting to agree who is doing the art and who is doing the housing and who is FACT and who is Arena. I know it can be fluid but we risk losing some of the housing engagement strengths and strategies. I start to see a model of Bold Street, a world in a tiny maquette, full of videos and sounds and ...



Burn Everything and Tate Liverpool Centre of the creative universe map, 2007

Send off another big Arts Council application. I have contacts there and for a few years I am a over-reliant. GBV *Demons are real*. The history of the squeak. Take tenants to see *Babel* and discuss after. We are joined by culturepool and another PhD student. I track down Michelle Wren whose work I see on the cover of AN and chat about her creating the Bold Street model. I take some time out to work with Level 5 students in Leeds, including Claire Potter and Fraser Stewart, on videos to be shown on the BBC Big Screen.



Alan Dunn & Contemporary Creative Practices, Leeds Metropolitan University & BBC Big Screen, March 2007

I think about the white billboard near The Four Bridges that has faded to almost nothing. *Clear*. Our Head of Development resigns. Fact. I bring Michelle together with Katy Lips and we start planning the tech-cardboard monster Bold Street model. I slice up the cover of my 7" of *O Superman* to see if the sound leads anywhere. Head of CP is sadly already overworked and in crisis and it is incredibly upsetting and annoying watching artists and creatives being sapped and stretched by cultural institutions. I see it so often. You employ us for our energy, ideas, flexibility, rebellion and visions of the future and then you hand us various boxes to fit in, with piles and piles of admin. Fly away. Put on 3kg in Germany from Bier und Wurst. Countered with swimming and return relaxed and happy. Listen to Grinderman.



tenantspin, including the notorious Liverpool A-Z cover, 2001-7

Give a talk on *tenantspin* to Cultural Policy Arts Managers at LIPA. The kids are another story but Wibke helps out a lot. Over to Tate opening, *Centre of the Creative Universe: Liverpool and the Avant-Garde*. Really proud to be included on the wall map and the book after giving a lot to this city in just over ten years. Mike Stubbs comes in as new FACT Director. Having eBay at hand satisfies nostalgia for albums I crave but can never afford at the age of 13 or 14, of *To The Shores of Lake Placid*, *WARGASM*, *Urgh! A Music War* and *The Elephant Table Album*, obscure dangerous-sounding sounds of Big In Japan, Coil, 400 Blows, Flux of Pink Indians, Mau Maus and Poison Girls.



tenantspin & Arena Housing Anti-Social Behaviour, Sefton Park studio, 2007

I listen to Johnny Cash's gallows song *25 minutes to go*, in which he leaves out five verses. I can get a Cash soundalike and write my own verses. DeadFrog can piece it all together. Can Can Can. Fucking line managers. I call mine Mullett these days. As in "I will need to mull it over" and Mullett, the boring nemesis of Inspector Frost. I know management is not easy, but just make a fucking decision. We invite Nick Ghosts, Kurt & Courtney Broomfield to work with *tenantspin* and screen his 1979 film *Behind the rent strike*. We fill The Box and actually have to turn people away. Less projects, more engagement.

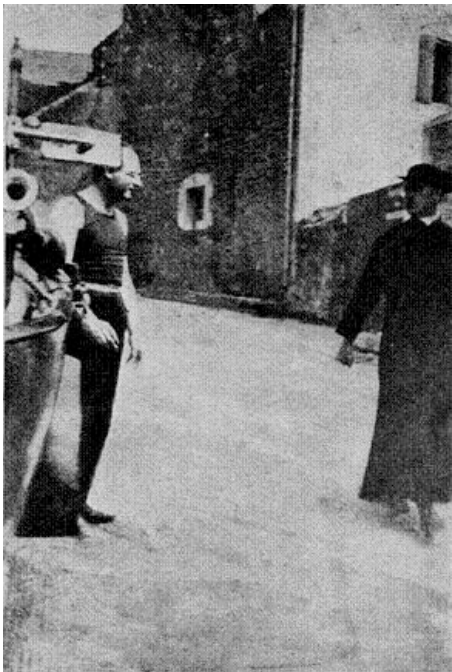


tenantspin An audience with Nick Broomfield's *Behind the rent strike*, full house, including Nina Edge, 2007

We get Alex Cox to agree to contribute to our Bold Street project. I have managed to focus everything around *tenantspin*, and it is right under our noses. Bold Street runs parallel to the FACT Centre and represents something that tenants and cultural workers can relate to. And it is not all nostalgia as it also seems to contain clues to a future city, a counter to the large bland shopping centres. I spend three hours catching up with Jayne Casey on punk, adoption, love, Bold Street and the Bunnymen.



tenantspin Bold Street: Chris Bernard & Alex Cox on Bold Street, with sound recording by Laura Yates (in straw hat), 2007. Below: photograph originally published in *La Révolution surréaliste*, 1926, with the caption 'Our colleague Benjamin Péret in the act of insulting a priest'.



We secure a studio in Static for Michelle and continue gathering Bold Street material. At home, drawings of guns held to heads appear. The adoption team run out of ideas and suggest going to the GP for sedatives. For the kids, or you? Over the next ten years I will become increasingly frustrated at the lack of precise and appropriate post-adoption support offered by Wirral Borough Council and their affiliated agencies, including MST, CAMHS, YOS, EDT, Response and the Police. We film Alex Cox dressed as a priest walking up and down Bold Street with Chris *Letter to Brezhnev* Bernard. They pop into Hairy Records to buy Jimmy Cliff's *The harder they come* soundtrack LP. A young man stops them at the bottom of Bold Street to confess something. It reminds me of Benjamin Péret.

Daily domestic breakdowns, screams, tantrums, violence, scary voices and tears. In fact, Social Services are already so out of their depth that their faces say so at every meeting. Listen to Secret Mommy, FM Einheit and Bonnie 'Prince' Billy. I write: "finish 25 minutes to go lyrics to send to DeadFrog, churning out cryptic works, nothing too explicit but strong ideas buried in there." Higher up the FACT chain, they don't see Bold Street as an exciting example of highly local curating - can't get much nearer - that is also outward looking. They quickly take it apart and try to construct a five-year *Bold Street Festival and Business Plan* and of course within weeks they have sapped it of any energy. Vultures. Naïve and selfish vultures. They are left with a pile of meaningless bits on their floor. Fly away.



Germany, 2007

We land in either Switzerland, France or Germany, depending on which exit door we take from the airport. Museums and farmhouses, forest screams and Tinguely. Scary possessed retraumatized babbling and frothing. Thrown rocks and blood. Grimm. On Friday 13th I create, or don't, an artwork that exists only for twenty-four hours. It is called *Clear*. It is not on the website either.



Alan Dunn *Clear*, Friday 13th April only, 2007

Sadly, tenant Mark H takes his own life in his car in the tower block garage. Mark, Mark, with your thing for Charlize Theron and your favourite film *Chungking Express*. Amidst all this, I get another £6,500 from ACE and begin planning *DADOPTION* and *Soundtrack for a Mersey Tunnel*. I sit in FACT in a meeting with my head elsewhere and words of resignation start forming in my mouth. I get half way through the sentence but notice that she is not listening anyway. Maybe I am not talking aloud. I look at one of Z's Swizzels Double Lollies and the Radio City Tower and bank an idea.



Alan Dunn Idea for *PRIVATE*, Wirral/Liverpool, 2007

Mark H's funeral. Lift from Steve T who is distracted, as we all are, and he starts driving down the wrong lane on Springwood Avenue and Mavis is screaming. It is Spoons' birthday and we sit in the pub and watch Chelsea beat Liverpool 1-0 in the first leg of another Champions League semi. We are all elsewhere.



RAY + JULIE Work starts on *The Lord Warden*, 2007

Work begins on the Lord Warden and scaffolding surrounds the chairs. At the weekend, we gather in Sean H's flat as he creates a large pinhole camera portrait of thirty of us. Hard to keep the young ones still. We record an audio walk up and down Bold Street with Roger Hill to be available as a download. Liverpool beat Chelsea 1-0 in the second leg and we jump around the house as they win on penalties. Never in doubt. SS call round to say they may take one of the kids back (!) or that Wandsworth may cover me to take a career break to give us all time to attach as a family. Words cannot really describe the hell that we are already going through, all four of us.



Alan Dunn Royden Park, Wirral, 2007

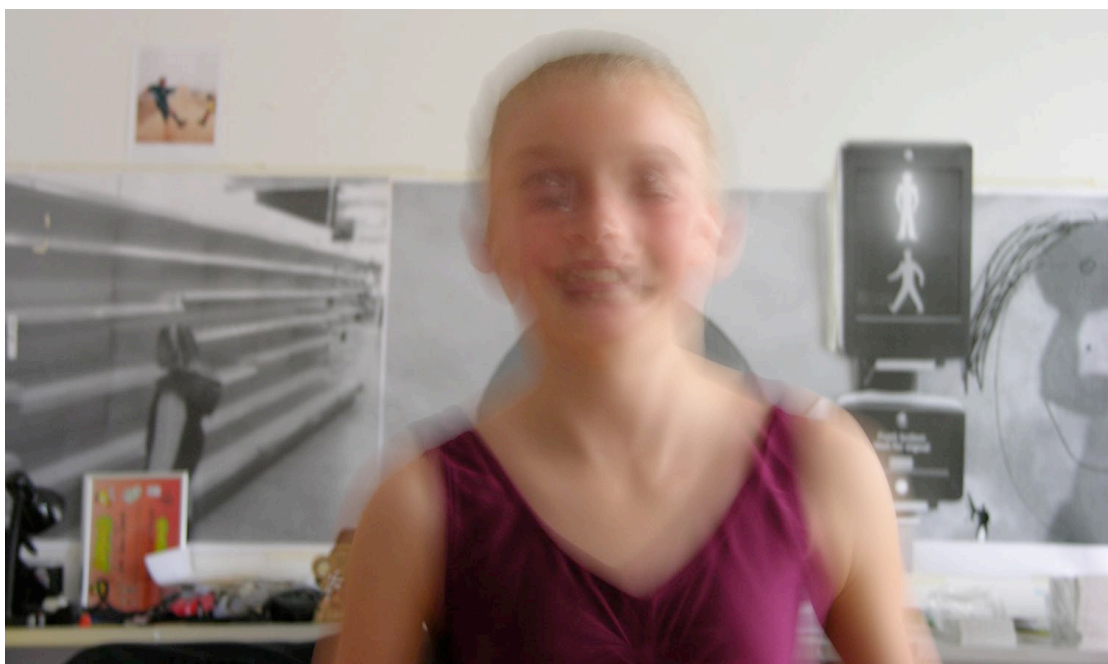
I have an idea for *DADOPTION*, a four-billboard 80ft long collage, a chaos of cuttings and clippings running right along the bottom of Leece Street, opposite the bombed-out Church. It will only include contributions from dads and adopters/adoptees. I contact Guy Ben-Ner to use a still from his great 2004 video *Wild Boy* made with his son. Patrick F accepts another job with Rotunda. Old Env Art Nathan C is short-listed for the Turner Prize and it will even be staged in Liverpool. We are surrounded by psychiatrists, social workers and mental health experts. Drunk darts, fight or flight, home pissed with *Something in the way* on repeat. David *Talking Heads* Byrne declines involvement in *DADOPTION* but Jegsy Dodd pops into *tenantspin* to run through his track *3am in Bold Street*. Liverpool lose the final to AC Milan. Strangely flat. Wander into our local Shelter and there are six amazing rare Johnny Cash LPs sitting there. I cut up the sleeves, hearing the groans of all my vinyl-precious addict friends, and use them for *GALLAS*. As in gallows. All day at Arley Hall Country Fair with the Cheshire set. It is all jousting and ferret racing. Bump into Gaby and head to Tate for great show of new art from China, including Xu Zhen's *8848 Minus 1.86* (2005), his sawn off 1.86cm section from the top of Everest. Meet with BBC. Prepare Bold Street material. Michelle chats with tenants and constructs a wild festival of distorted buildings. I write

of Madonna's adopting process: "The initial Malawi coverage beautifully illustrated the West's on-going comfort with a *Madonna with Child* image. Rarely do we see a *Guy (Ritchie) with Child* image."



Alan Dunn GALLAS, edition of 15 CDs, cantaudio022, 2007

I secure use of Dmitri Gutov's image from his series *Mom, Dad & the Champions League*. He dresses his elderly parents up in Champions League kits and invites them to play with a suspended ball in the bleak Russian landscape, void of crowds, wages or rules. I write up that tale of Riquelme, Garcia and Nakamura all being born on the eve of the 1978 final. I rip all these images to fuck and reassemble with Arnold Böcklin's 1873 *Centaurs* that I see in Basel. Loudmouth in Sheffield do the invite card again.



Alan Dunn Heidi with DADOPTION in studio, 2007

Bold Street is a different type of *tenantspin* project, a station on the line of webcasts and a template for how a project may be assembled. Hirst's £12m diamond encrusted skull. Anti-globalisation protests in Rostock. New Pollard/GBV double-CD *Crickets*. Bump into Jayne Casey, The Farm and Frank Cottrell-Boyce on Falkner Street. Bill Drummond introduces me to a moody Dave Balfe in FACT. They are all into *Bold Street*. Do a tour of the Mersey Tunnels with Wibke as research. It is loud and greasy and the whole of the Liver Building plot is on stilts. They point out ghost rowing boats bobbing in the distance between the arches.



tenantspin Bold Street: A short film by Olivia Greenberg featuring Jeff Young and Pete Wylie, 2007

Spend the next day on Bold Street with Jeff and Pete Wylie, filmed by Olivia Greenberg. Down to London for launch of *The Art of Negotiation*. Goldsmiths event with Declan McG saying how important it is to document this type of social practice. Chat with Faisal and David Butler. revolution999. Another revolution work, duplates, old cut-up 7" singles and white sleeves, ink stamps, vinyl lettering cut in Static, given away free of charge on Friday 13th, the prototype for the *Artists' uses of the word revolution* CD of two years later.

Where are you?
In the bin
Why are you in the bin?
Dad put me in the bin and took me to the dump
Did he push the bin all the way to the dump?
Yes
What else is in the bin?
My friend mouse and my toys
What was at the dump?
My bedroom
What like is it? What's in it and what colour is it?
The walls are black and my mouse friend is in it
How was school today?
Dad made me go back in for my violin and I got
told off and lost three minutes of golden time

Why did you leave your violin?
I wanted to
What did you do after school
Zak threw me in the pond in Central Park
Why did he do that?
I asked him to
Were you scared?
No
What did you see in the pond
Fish and a shark
How did you get out of the pond
I got a ladder
Were you soaking wet?
No I had on a special suit
How are the biscuits you are baking?



Alan Dunn *revolution999*, edition of 20 x 12" dubplates, cantaudio023, 2007

Etc etc. Snap awake. FACT. Manage slight disputes between Katie and Michelle. Kim and Olivia editing. Emily working with Mark D on Bold Street content. I disagree with everything Stubbs says in the CP meeting. Gallery Guide and Arena Reports. Wylie gets mugged. Kung-fu kicks and punches. I throw the last ever dart at PKs before the smoking ban, a ban that will rip our darts and fantasy football crew apart. Sad. My mum rips into my parenting skills and Mark D rips into me about *tenantspin* becoming a *top-down project*. Our artists get together to compare fees which is understandable but can lead to trouble. Head spinning. Maybe they are all right about how the family and *tenantspin* are unfolding.

Down to Tate for Peter Blake PV, and the big *Bold Street* opening. I invite Urban Strawberry Lunch to do some drumming and we sprawl food out in the square that links FACT and Bold Street. The tenants are dressed to the nines and enjoying all the attention. They are, after all, far more interesting than most of the young artists and project managers.



tenantspin Bold Street: Private View with USL, 2007

On the Monday, I hand in my notice.



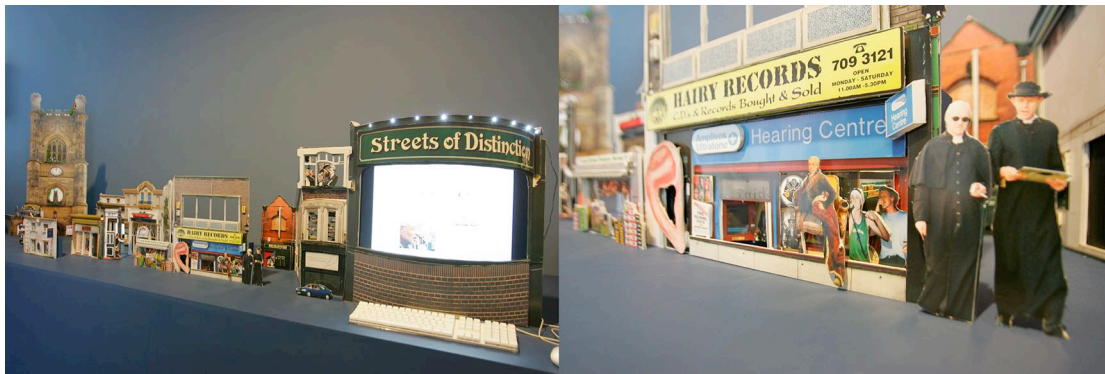
tenantspin Bold Street: Private View, 2007



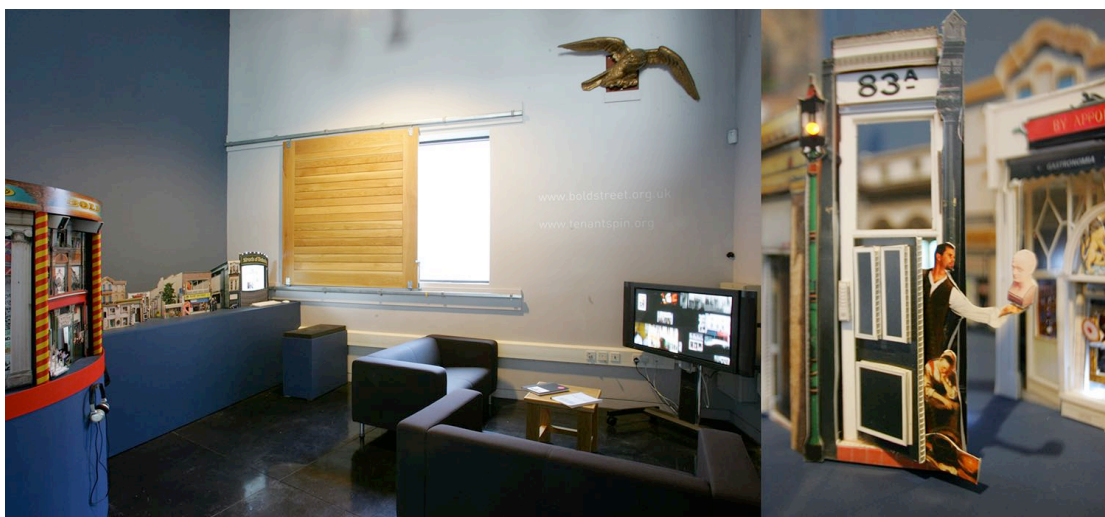
tenantspin with Katie Lips and Michelle Wren Bold Street, 2007



tenantspin Bold Street: Private View, 2007



tenantspin with Katie Lips and Michelle Wren Bold Street, 2007



tenantspin with Katie Lips and Michelle Wren Bold Street, 2007



tenantspin Bold Street: Private View, images by Brian Slater, 2007

Roger McK scoops an award for his Jackson Pollock book and Fernando Torres, Liverpool's Number 9, arrives. Patrick is phoned to offer his *tenantspin* job back. First few tracks for *Soundtrack for a Mersey Tunnel* start arriving and meet Paul K about possible project in St. Helens. Meet Frank Rogers at Mersey Tunnels about gaining access to record down there. Take the kids to Birkenhead to see *Shrek 3*. Fall asleep twenty minutes in. Fly away.



Zak with Fernando Torres, Liverpool's No.9, 2007

Land in Krakow very late and met by young driver who finally finds our house in the middle of a forest in Ponikiev. The sun blesses us like never before and we walk, play and BBQ in the huge garden. I read *Millions* to them every night and we sit in terror at the attic scene. Wadowice, streets full of toyshops and at last we can all relax and laugh together. Home to turn 40, gracefully.



Sutton Manor Blue brackets supporting local school against subsidence, St.Helens, 2007

Jeff and I meet a group of retired miners in Sutton Manor. The Colliery closes in 1991 and is to host the major new public artwork by Jaume Plense. The whole area is held upright by big blue brackets. Paul is interested in us working with the community around the future of the area. We wander about and notice the only remnant, the gates with metal text.



Alan Dunn Sutton Manor Colliery (closed 1991), 2007

We sit in the pub and devise *Motto for a future St.Helens*, using only the letters from the gates, and training the miners to work with others on new mottos for



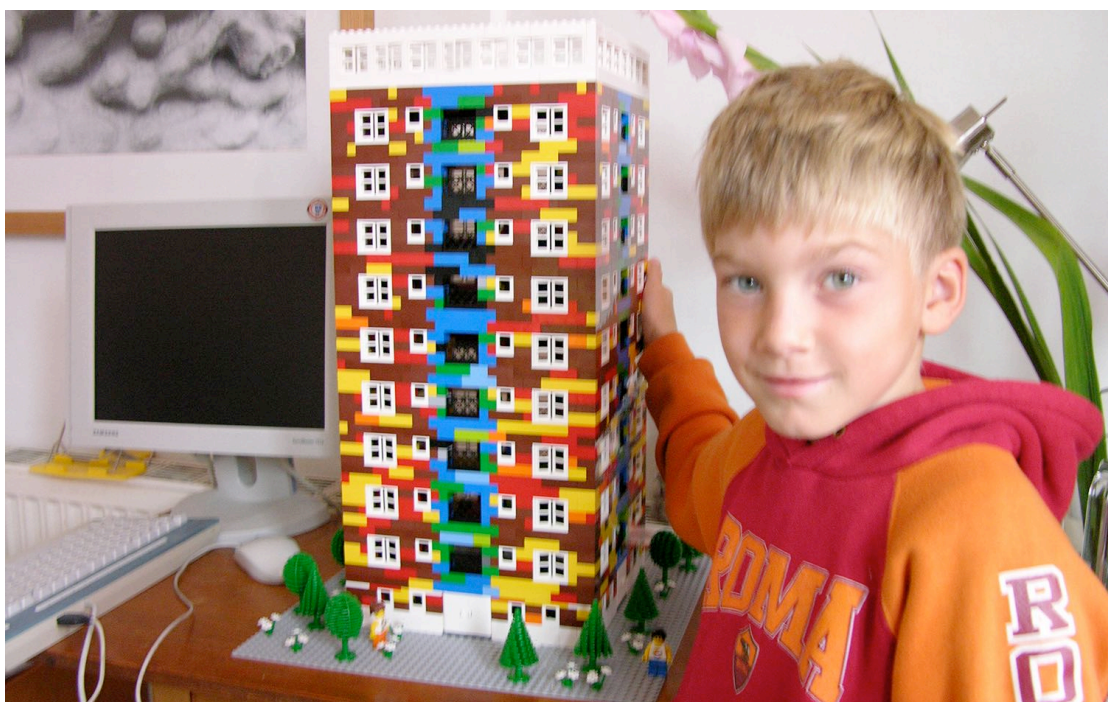
the area from anagrams. We will book every billboard in the area and flood it with proposed maxims. Get asked by Markus Soukup to contribute work to *binary jam* and dig out recordings of me asking for GBV material in record shops and make up the edition called *MISTRIBUTION*. Jeff hanging out with Jah Wobble and I bank an idea around the bass and background. Listening to a lot of New Order and Fugazi again. Paul K gives us a behind-the-scenes look at *Turning the place over*, one of the better public works to emerge but why does it need a huge vinyl banner in front of it? Parenting, doodling and downloading. I find numerous angles on one of my favourite ever goals, Zlatan's for Ajax against NAC Breda. I frame different sections and lay Minor

Threat tracks over it but it stops there and gets filed away.



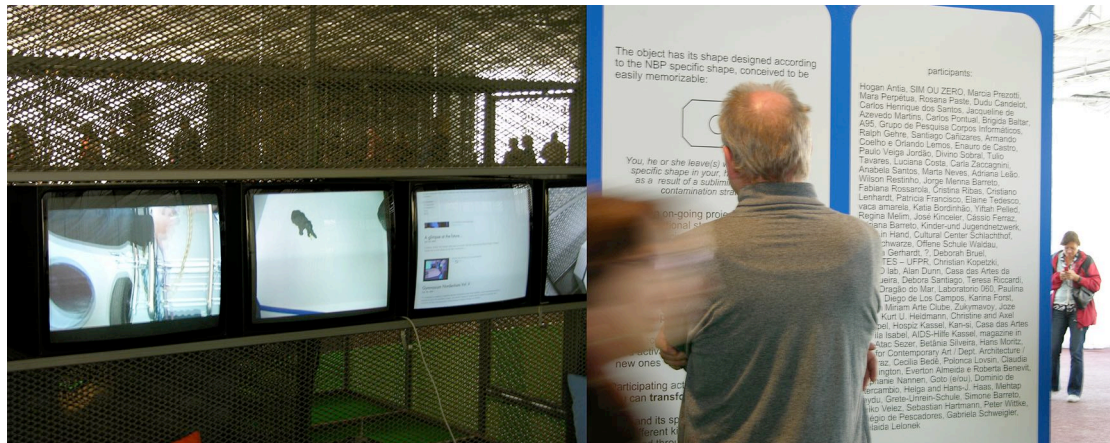
Zlatan Ibrahimovic goal for Ajax against NAC, watched by a grumpy suspended Rafael van der Vaart, 22 August 2004

On 4th September I get offered Leeds part-time hours. 6th Sept is my last day at FACT. Few leaving drinks with FACT and tenants and Wibke's brilliant high-rise lego tower present that survives (just) to this day. I hate these events and toasts. *tenantspin* is never just about me, I hope that is by now clear.



Zak with The Leaving of *tenantspin* Lego Tower (design and build by Wibke Hott), 2007

Fly away. Münster and Kassel. It is slight and hard-edged, but somewhat cold. Formal. Amongst this, it is a joy to see our safari park in Ricardo's installation.



Ricardo Basbaum *Would you like to participate in an artistic experience?* Edition of 20 objects used and filmed by various artists and families, Documenta, 2007 (see <http://www.nbp.pro.br/blog.php?experiencia=52>)

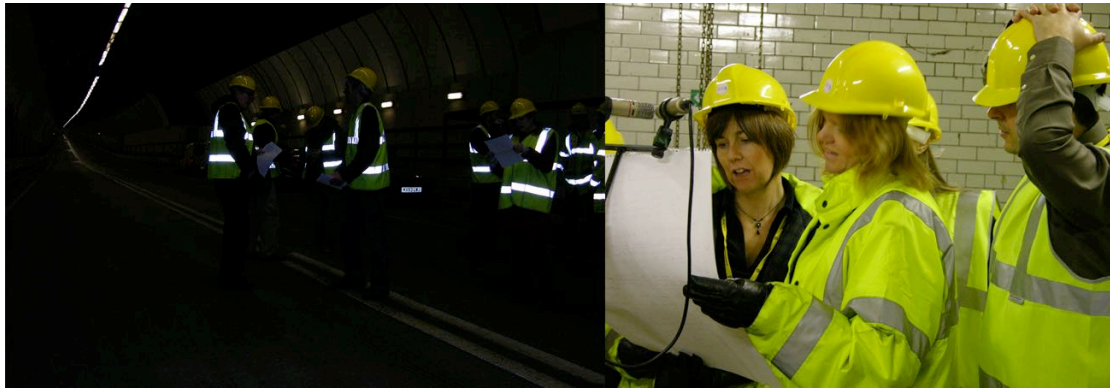


Dan Graham *Fun House für Münster*, 2007



George Brecht *VOID*, Münster, 2007

The South Wirral show is all pig racing and lawnmower racing. I speak to Geoff the photographer and he asks which part of Ireland I am from, so I devise a "Lost my accent" project. Kids and tears and blood and swearing and violence towards us. We head deep down into the bowels of a Mersey Tunnel and Wibke sets up, composes with and records a choir with tunnel workers. We are woken at 5am every day by the aggressive neighbour opposite revving up his black Subaru. Dickhead.



Alan Dunn Soundtrack for a Mersey Tunnel featuring Wibke Hott's choir with Mersey Tunnel staff, 2007



Alan Dunn The early morning Subaru (parked outside somebody else's house), Martins Lane, Wirral, 2007

DADOPTIONS

Billboards go up and look stunning. Over the next two weeks they will be doodled on, ripped and stuck on, all adding to their patina. Work on

/seconds idea of sci-fi audio set. Leave some *DADOPTION* fliers lying on RAY + JULIE where someone has chained their bike. Jeff chats to a vulnerably-housed individual who explains every section of *DADOPTION* to him. That story means a lot to me.

Start meeting folk by *DADOPTION*, Jacques to write a review, Wylie filming it and Ian J listing it in *Art in Liverpool*. Invite Leila to create another wonderful set of images although I feel she is better amongst crowds. Words of support from Bill D, Becky and Nina. David H in town for Nathan's Turner Prize thing, catch up in front of *DADOPTION* and in Heebie Jeebies. Split, and I buy a tiny replica 433 bus. Meet Dave J and Libby Rotunda and invited to Naples/project. Meet new Bluecoat curator Sara-Jayne by *DADOPTION* ("it's like scanning across radio stations" she says).



Alan Dunn *DADOPTION* invite left lying on RAY + JULIE, 2007



David Jacques, Danilo Capasso (Napoli.est) and Libby (Rotunda) meet inside Gross Max's Rotunda Pavilion, Liverpool, 2007



Alan Dunn DADOPTION, in collaboration with Dmitri Gutov, Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901), Cristian Roldan, Rafael Alvez, Leah Alconcel, Heidi & Zak, Guy Ben-Ner and Alex Dempster, Liverpool, 2007



Alan Dunn DADOPTION, Leece Street, Liverpool, image by Leila Romaya, 2007



Alan Dunn DADOPTION, Liverpool, images by Leila Romaya, 2007

Spend an afternoon recording in an empty Mersey Tunnel with Jeff, Roger and Wylie.



Alan Dunn Soundtrack for a Mersey Tunnel, location recordings, 2007



Alan Dunn *Proposal for Crosby Beach*, 2007

St.Helens sessions with Jeff and yes, yes, this is career break and all done while kids are at school. Get kid-sitter and give a 67projects talk on sound art in mello mello and get John O'Shea to record it all. Jeck in the audience and comments on my hard work, describing me "as prolific as James Brown." I feel that *Soundtrack for a Mersey Tunnel* needs to start with a Repo Man-esque instru-

mental and I track down It's Murder Beams on MySpace. Fly away. Liverpool to Rome to Naples with Rotunda team and Jacques. Naples is hot, rubbish strewn and mad. Twitchy mad. We catch up with Padraig and napoliest and take in MADRE. I buy a Maradona top of course. Fireworks. Back to spend some quality time with the kids and gather some *Soundtrack* sounds and Dennis Hopper presents Turner to Mark Wallinger in Liverpool. I propose dressing up the Gormleys. Get the kids up, fed, packed and walked to school. Avoid inevitable stares from the two teachers. Rush over to Liverpool to meet Rob Knifton about the *Art in a city revisited* book. I write *Shoulder-to-shoulder and face-to-face* about *tenantspin* for some online journal. Wander along to school and usually have to be spoken to by two teachers about behaviour. Daily. Take photographs of Zak at the closed bit of the tunnel.



Alan Dunn *Soundtrack for a Mersey Tunnel*, Zak with model 433 bus by boarded-up Tunnel entrance, Birkenhead, 2007

DO YOU THINK YOU ARE MORE INTELLIGENT THAN THE AVERAGE PERSON?

The Biennial want to put this text next to *RAY + JULIE*. Sat in Manchester with Alma and John, also knackered, disturbed sleep, obsessions, tantrums and aggression. Called in by Biennial to meet some Seoul curator who it turns out just wants a fucking venue organising and already has his artists. Fuck this. Watch Sophia Loren's Naples film. Fly away for Christmas. Düsseldorf. Glasgow. Liverpool. Two years of energy and funding, of part-time and parenting. We have to build a new work-life balance and the work becomes more important to balance the insanity.

Years later I sit in the pub chatting with D about *VOLUMES* and whether they should end when the spinning ends. That is, with my last involvement with *tenantspin*. What follows after all is covered in the PhD text, but does include other projects and parenting and teaching which in itself is still unfolding and evolving. Yet in the other ear is the other D's words about the need to share documentation of works that slip under the radar by their nature. Excepting *The sounds of ideas forming* PhD research between 2008-14, there are also the major projects that I collaborate with Paul Kelly, Jeff Young, Rotunda and RE-DOCK on, including the afore-mentioned *Motto for a future St.Helens*, *La Dolce Vita*, *CANAL&* and *The Ghost Telegrams*. *RAY + JULIE* continue to entertain and bemuse towards their twentieth anniversary and there are the large *GAUMONT*, *Democratic Promenade*, *TAPE BRITAIN*, *Heatshield on a silver moon*, Metal Pop Group billboard and even the *tenantspin* archive project. Let's see how strong the lure is, but on this final point, and in case you are looking for one, there is no final word on *tenantspin* here, no need for it. Get in the van, get on the train, move on to the next project.



Alan Dunn *Soundtrack for a Mersey Tunnel*, model 433 bus in empty Tunnel, 2007