

o w a d a



m a r t i n

on the occasion of the opening of the exhibition
London Orphan Asylum: New Art from London
ACCA in association with THE HISTRIONICS
exclusively present the reformation for one night only of

ADAWO

a tribute to Martin Creed and owada

Friday 8 December 2000, 7 PM

Australian Centre for Australian Art
Dallas Brooks Drive
South Yarra, 3141
Australia

THE HISTRIONICS thank: Neil Kelly, Stuart Koop, Vikki McInnes, Jennifer Duncan,
Craig Fermannis, Melissa McNamara, Annie Grant, Nick Girding, Andrius Lipsys, Jane
Crawford, Tony Kosminas, Callum Morton, Darren Knight and Martin Creed

The Scottish composer and artist **Martin Creed** (b.1968 Wakefield, United Kingdom) writes vacant music which says nothing. Like a Zen form of Minimalism, Creed's compositions are based on a proclivity to say nothing in a profound way, endlessly reiterating the musical and visual attainment of nothing. As pragmatic as it is semantic, his continuous inclination to consider the fundamental nature of nothingness has become the foundation upon which his practice is based. Ultimately, Creed's practice can be distilled down to a series of exercises in creating awareness in the listener's perceptual focus. As such, the more economically this intention can be brought about, the more satisfying it becomes. If it can be achieved by doing nothing at all, it attains some kind of perfection. Creed's equation: the whole world + the work = the whole world measures his achievement of nothing. Rearticulating both the opening proposition of Wittgenstein's(1889-1951) Tractatus (the world is all that is the case) and translating Peter Tyndall's(b.1951) schema $\square=\square=\square$ (A Person Looks At A Work of Art/someone looks at something...) (the equation may be interpreted, in visual art terms as an extension of the figure/ground problem. However, now the issue is the work and its visibility rather than the visibility of relationships within the work. This analogy is significant because Creed makes no distinction between art and music. "Sound is a material", he says. "It makes no difference trying to make something for a wall or a piece of music for a guitar". The presentation of Creed's compositions, whereby descriptive certificates accompanying each work function like sheet music, is indebted to the characteristic Fluxus production of brief scores and recipes, particularly George Brecht's (b.1926) event cards. Furthermore, as a child of Minimalism, Creed's work is informed by early Arte Povera, Process Art and Conceptualism, particularly within their legacy of implied insubstantiality.

Creed eloquently translated his attraction for systematic composition through the rock trio **owada** (Japanese for large circular field) formed in1994. The composer, who himself sings and plays guitar, was joined by bassist Keiko Owada and drummer Adam McEwen. Their 1997 release nothing realised the formal potential of literally depicting musical form. An ascetic music in the pursuit of lessness, it is reductively systematic to the point of abstraction. Songs such as 1234, one whole song and 1-100 are examples of a music that is ultra-pragmatic (Prag Rock) In songs like up+down and 30 seconds with the lights off owada combine mathematical systems to effect the equivalent of a musical palindrome. Although Creed owes a debt to the chance compositions of John Cage(1912-92), whose minimalism by comparison is baroque, owada has as much to do with the highly charged, Dubbo derived syncopated energy of the early Reels. More pointedly, Creed's formal fundamentalism takes its cue from the glowing simplicity of Terry Riley (b.1935) and the dynamic symmetry of Steve Reich (b. 1936) (b. 1936) as proclaimed in the latter's seminal essay, "Music as Gradual Process" (1974). Further connections abound; Creed's literalisation of text and sound is reminiscent of the celebrated word paintings common throughout the oratorios of George Frederick Handel(1685-1759) and J.S. Bach(1685-1750). But it is the transcendently pointless, music degree zero of owada that has led Bob & Roberta Smith to suggest that, "the traditional form of the song: verse, chorus, verse, middle eight, verse chorus, is to Martin Creed what black was to Ad Reinhardt."

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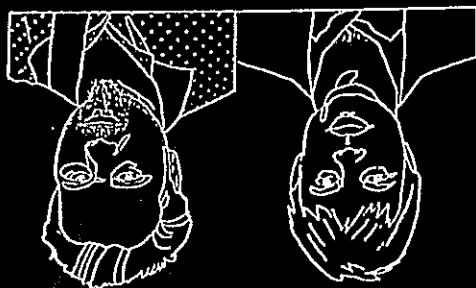
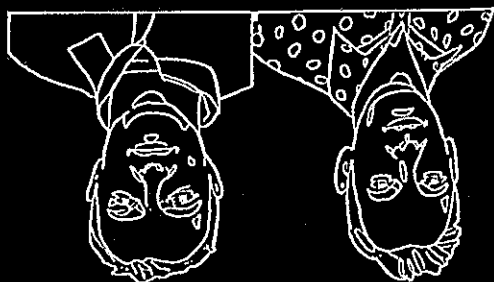
Veteran singer/songwriter, **Jon Campbell** (b.1961, Bristol, Ireland), has maintained a steady presence on Melbourne's alternative scene for almost two decades. Much admired by his more recognised peers such as Dave Grayney and Chris Wilson, his predilection for country rock was awakened at Altona High School, where he was taught guitar by Mandy McGraw. In 1978 Campbell's Neil Young influenced singing potential was recognised by the obscure Altona outfit, Raven, and in 1984 his vocal talent was realised with the formation of the legendary King Jerkies. Performing and touring extensively during these heady days with Jonathan Richman, The Triffids, Los Lobos, Painters and Dockers, Huxton Creepers and Dr. Feelgood took its toll and the Jerkies disbanded in 1987. They reformed again the same year as the Monarcs and played occasionally at the notorious Users Club but strained personal and professional differences became terminal and when they disbanded in 1988 it was final. After a brief stint with the comic cover band, The Colonial V Kares, a disillusioned Campbell took an extensive musical sabbatical, composed new material and re-emerged in 1996 with his own band, Gloss Enamel. In 1999 he co-founded ADAWO.

Guitar stylist, **Antonio Miliello** (b.1967 Footscray, Australia), began instrumental studies in 1976 following the paths prescribed by Mel Bay and William Leavitt. In 1982, to satiate his considerable musical appetite, Miliello commenced saxophone studies and joined the St. Albans Maltese Marching Band. The years 1986-92 spent woodshedding his axe, armed Antonio with an arsenal of guitar virtuosity. Hot and in demand, he was offered the guitar seat with Rockabilly Band Yeah Yeah in 1992. He enjoyed the stay for two years but, feeling that his eclectic tastes and techniques were being stifled, Miliello formed The Greasy Hawaiians in 1994 to showcase his extended technique. A celebration of the surf guitar sounds of the 50's and 60's, the Hawaiians have endured to the present. In the meantime Antonio has performed with Mrs Robinson(1995-6), The Rhythm Snakes(1997), co-formed Redsand Shuffle (1999) and replaced Craig Fermanns in ADAWO in 2000.

Rock'n'Roll historian/critic, **Dave O'Brien** (b.1970 Melbourne, Australia), studied electric bass under the tutelage of Ian Grattidge (ex Marcia Hines, Spellbound, Grand Wizard). Although O'Brien declined a scholarship to study double bass at the Victorian College of the Arts in 1986 he continued to impress listeners, receiving a standing ovation at a concert performance of his 1988 composition Suite for Strings in A minor. Misunderstood as a child prodigy, Dave abandoned classical studies and joined Cross-Cut Country & Western Band in 1989. Disciplined by band master Ray Morre, an uncharacteristically introverted O'Brien gained valuable professional experience eventually performing on the Mike Walsh Show with Jimmy Little. During this period Dave endured many ups+downs but ultimately became frustrated by the repression of session musicianship and abandoned music altogether in 1990 to study law. Over the ensuing 5 years successfully auditioning for Loin Groin. In 1999 he composed their independent national top ten single, 747. O'Brien is an ADAWO foundation member.

Tommy Zdanus (b.1968, Middlessex, United Kingdom) has experienced the highs+ lows and of an erratic, yet illustrious, drumming career. A pupil of Eugene Bullatus, Zdanus suffered an exhilarating four year apprenticeship with eccentrically coloured New Wave adolescents, the Mean Donuts. In 1985 Zdanus joined Catch the Bullatus but success remained elusive. Tommy turned professional in 1988 relinquishing the stability of local residences and moved overseas. With Svajones, a nostalgic Lithuanian popular music troupe, Zdanus undertook a gruelling 26 week, 45 date tour of North & South America and Western & Eastern Europe raising money for charity. He then toured Denmark, Iceland and Sweden with the Christian Horvath Trio. The prodigal son returned in 1990, supporting Bjorn Again as a member of Chicken with Lips. From 1991-94 Zdanus held the drum chair for Miss Dorothy and His Pools in Love culminating in a Logies appearance providing backing for Tom Jones and John Farnham. After a brief ride on Loin Groin's drummer conveyor belt in 1997-8, Tommy joined ADAWO in 1999.

JOE NO



DAVE TONY

ADAWO