

Alastair Snow

Alastair Snow was asked to programme the banquet event at the NRLA at Riverside Studios London in 1987. Torrential rain followed the original speaker's unexpected departure from the event. Silvia Ziranek devised the menu, prepared and served by a legion of distinguished staff from Baron Alban's catering schools in Bracknell and Swindon with fine support from staff at the Riverside Studios. Mona Hatoum became the honourable guest speaker. The banquet was held under canvas on the water's edge to enable a riverside intervention by The Guerrilla Squad – an unexpected cabaret assault of the Riverside Studios with pyrotechnics by Le Maitre Fireworks.

Alastair Snow devised The Guerrilla Squad in 1986 as a remarkable concept in concussed percussion, sparked by the tactics of confrontation and deterrent in an uncertain age of reason. It consisted of up to 25 percussionists and amplified ironing-boards played with timpani sticks, a highly charged domestic metaphor to promote home centred society under fire and under threat. A disco version was presented at the Hippodrome Night Club in London, followed by a sonic arrival on the Flying Phantom,* a fire tug on the Clyde at the Glasgow Garden Festival.

Following the riots in Korea, the performance took on more of a militaristic identity given by a locally recruited and rehearsed company of artists, dancers, musicians and enterprising members of the general public, many new to or unfamiliar with the confrontational aspects of live art.

May 2009