

Pursuing our policy in Environmental Art, at Glasgow School of Art, of exposing our students to the experience of making and presenting work outside the studio and the school, Sam Ainsley arranged for Nikki Milican to come and look at some students who had been doing performances and installations. She came to the 'home' of the department, the fabled and ruinous Old High School for Girls. This is not the place to explore the effect that that building had on the work of the students but one has only to look at the title, 'tradition-debilitation' to discern some links. As a result Douglas Gordon, Craig Richardson and Euan Sutherland were invited to create a collaborative performance for the Riverside in London in 1987. They had been influenced by Alastair Macdonald and this is reflected in both the duration and the title of the performance, 'tradition:debilitation'. A group of staff and students attended and I recall being quite astonished at the commitment, conviction and sophistication of the three 'young' students. The performance was very well-received and a memorable event for the department.

This was the beginning of a number of 'professional' performance works for Gordon, Richardson and Sutherland. 'tradition:debilitation' was performed by the three at the Third Eye in Glasgow (outside of the NRLA). Gordon and Richardson under the name of 'The Puberty Institution' presented, 'Antehyperaesthesia', a new performance at Transmission gallery in Glasgow at the invitation of the director Malcolm Dickson. This was later worked up into a more metaphorical and durational performance with increasing levels of dereliction and despondency entitled, 'Forget names and Places' for the AVE Festival in Arnhem and elsewhere. At the 1988 NRLA at the Third Eye 'Puberty Institution' and Sutherland were invited to participate under the 'A Year On' arrangement. The former presented 'Refuse' on the rooftop of the Third Eye, the title and location reflecting a feeling that as Richardson says, 'we thought the NRLA was getting very theatrical and creative tensions between art and drama students was something Nikki and Neil Bartlett were keen to encourage'. Sutherland presented a massive installation/performance in the side alley of the Third Eye entitled, 'Ecology Concern One'

The final work by 'Puberty Institution' at this time was presented as part of their Environmental Art degree show submission. It was hosted by 'Transmission Gallery and took place in the then completely disused and long- forgotten space under Glasgow Central Station now better known as The Arches'.

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