

# NOTES ON ART PRACTICE

## ART PROJECTS MELBOURNE 1982

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# SALON DES INDÉPENDANTS: JOHN NIXON AS CURATOR AND PUBLISHER IN THE 1980s\*

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John Nixon is widely known as a painter of geometric abstractions and monochromes, and this area of his production has dominated the critical and institutional response to his work. However, Nixon himself refers to and enacts what he calls an 'expanded model of work for the artist' involving writing, publishing, establishing gallery spaces, curating and design.<sup>1</sup> These 'side projects' are the object of study of the present article.<sup>2</sup> While this text is chiefly historical, aiming to fill a gap that exists in writing on Nixon's work between the pure information of the artist's CV and the loose reflections of the catalogue essay, it is also intended to suggest the outlines of a position from which some of the major criticisms of Nixon's work can be addressed through a focus on the artist's activities in the 1980s as curator, gallery director, publisher and writer.

In 1977–8, John Nixon spent six months living in London, where he exhibited at a small commercial gallery, Barry Barker Ltd., the office and gallery space of which were housed in a single small room in an office block in Museum Street.<sup>3</sup> On returning to Melbourne, in 1979 Nixon opened his own gallery, Art Projects, in a run-down office block on Lonsdale Street. Although Art Projects positioned itself as an 'alternative' gallery space and was received as such—a 1979 review in *The Sun* characterising it as 'in every sense an anti-establishment radical gallery'<sup>4</sup>—it was not an 'artist-run space' in the contemporary sense of the term. Although an artist, Nixon directed the gallery and its initial establishment was partially funded by some of the artists who were to exhibit there.<sup>5</sup> Art Projects functioned, like the Barry Barker gallery which served as its immediate inspiration, as an 'independent private gallery.'<sup>6</sup> The roster of Art Projects was made up of artists Nixon considered to be his colleagues, representing, among others, Jenny Watson, Peter Tyndall, Robert MacPherson, Tony Clark and Imants Tillers.

If, like Bruce Pollard's Pinacotheca gallery, where Nixon had exhibited alongside the majority of Melbourne's conceptual artists from 1973–7, the roster of Art Projects was determined by considerations other than those of a straightforwardly market-financial nature (that is, primarily by the desire to represent a 'family of like-minded' practitioners),<sup>7</sup> the gallery in no way represented a romantic attempt to place the production and consumption of art outside the market. Partially in reaction to Pinacotheca, where Pollard had attempted to develop successful market profiles for his hand-picked group of conceptualists without participating in many normal promotional channels (exhibition invitations, advertisements and so on),<sup>8</sup> Art Projects conducted an aggressive marketing strategy of invitations, mail-outs and letters to curators and collectors, also maintaining a detailed photographic record of all exhibitions as a slide library kept on-hand at the gallery's reception desk.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, these promotional efforts were successful enough that by the late-1980s the *Sydney Morning Herald* critic John McDonald was complaining that Nixon and his colleagues were 'overly influential on the curators of Australia's public art collections.'<sup>10</sup>

Art Projects, despite its willing (and practically unavoidable) participation in the art market's networks of private and public collectors, can, however, be considered to have meaningfully represented an alternative to the mainstream gallery system simply because it was founded and maintained by artists, who, to use the terms of Nixon's neo-avant-garde rhetoric, 'no longer waited for the arts bureaucrats' but rather 'took control of their lives.'<sup>11</sup> As Carolyn Barnes points out, Art Projects did not exhibit 'emerging artists'—the program included exhibitions by Robert Jacks and Ti Parks, both of whom had been exhibiting since the mid-1960s<sup>12</sup>—and the majority of artists who showed with the gallery had experience with standard commercial galleries. If all the artists who showed with Art Projects were dissatisfied with standard commercial galleries, this was not primarily because of any sort of ideological opposition to the functioning of these galleries or even the art market as a whole.<sup>13</sup> Rather, they resented how the relatively marginal position they occupied in the conservative art world of late-1970s–early-1980s Australia resulted in a paucity of exhibition opportunities. By taking advantage of the poor economic situation of the time and its attendant cheap rent to start his own gallery representing a small group of his artist-friends, Nixon ensured that they would have solo exhibition opportunities more regular than the two- or three-year rotations of most commercial galleries. This effect of the foundation of Art Projects can be seen clearly in Nixon's own exhibition history: while he had four exhibitions in five years at Pinacotheca, at Art Projects he averaged two solo exhibitions every year and participated in thirteen other shows between 1979 and the gallery's closure in 1984, either in group shows or as part of the Anti-Music and Society for Other Photography collectives. This frequency of exhibitions was not restricted to the gallery's director: Peter Tyndall, for example, held seven solo exhibitions at Art Projects between 1980 and 1983.

Escape from the traditional rhythms and cycles of the display of artworks was only practicable to a certain degree at Art Projects, operating as it did, in Nixon's words, as a 'normal gallery';<sup>14</sup> and it was even less so at the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane, where Nixon served as director in 1980 and 1981, re-orienting the program towards solo shows by contemporary Australian artists.<sup>15</sup> Alongside these two 'official' programs, however, Nixon was also active in a number of highly prolific projects that stepped much further outside the boundaries of traditional exhibition practices. Inspired by the logic of musical performances (specifically the punk and experimental gigs which he frequented) whereby 'you either go to see it now or you miss out', Nixon began to independently organise one-day exhibitions in a variety of spaces in Melbourne and Brisbane.<sup>16</sup> In Victoria, over thirty exhibitions were organised between 1979 and 1983 under the rubrics of the Art Projects Annex and V Space, taking place mainly in other parts of the Lonsdale Street building that housed Art Projects. Other exhibitions utilised

more guerilla tactics: one 1983 V Space exhibition occurred outdoors (consisting of a single example of Nixon's cross painting displayed on a tree), and when Nixon and Imants Tillers participated in Documenta VII in Kassel (1982), Nixon also staged a one-day show of issues of Nixon's magazine *Pneumatic Drill* displayed alongside posters for rock gigs on poster columns and walls in the street, this time under the title 'Institute of Temporary Art'.

The Q Space and Q Space Annex projects were the most productive and well documented, and thus provide the most fruitful object of study. Q Space was a derelict woolstore on Albert Street in central Brisbane used without the permission of its owners; Q Space Annex was the official title for exhibitions taking place in Nixon's Brisbane apartment. In 1980 and 1981, seventy-two one-day exhibitions were organised at either one of these sites, with the works usually hung for the duration of a normal gallery day (10.00am–6.00pm), invitations having been sent out to a select mailing list.

The use of non-traditional exhibition spaces, especially of a domestic nature, has precedents in the historical avant-gardes, in the lineage of which Nixon has always been concerned to place himself: a text on the Q Space Annex written in March 1980 describes its functioning as 'somewhat in the manner of the Constructivists and Dadaists who used domestic (apartment) and public (café, hotel, shop) space for the exhibition of work.'<sup>17</sup> The one-day exhibition also has precedents within the Russian avant-garde: in 1918, Vladimir Mayakovsky and two other Futurist poets staged a one-day exhibition of posters and texts on a central street in Moscow, and in 1920 Naum Gaubio and Antoine Pevsner staged a similar one-day exhibition of paintings and sculptures.<sup>18</sup> These exhibitions were notable for their spectacular nature, with confrontational displays of iconoclastic art and design accompanied by readings and performances; Nixon's temporary exhibitions, however, were simple displays of objects. Indeed, as Peter Cripps noticed when he grouped them together with other contemporaneous examples of what he called 'recession art', many of the works displayed at Q Space and Q Space Annex, most of them by Nixon and Robert MacPherson, are notable for their unassuming appearance, stemming from their reductive formal qualities and use of cheap everyday materials. In the documentation of the exhibitions that survives, many of the works can only be located with effort. Nixon's small monochrome block painting hung in his kitchen and MacPherson's installation 3 *Inherent for MS* (composed from 'cut newspaper', 'marble' self-contact vinyl) and a 'plastic column' command the viewer's attention little more than their surrounding environs, and the pile of arranged detritus ('papier mache/stick/paper bag/plastic/bottle-tops') that makes up John Davis's *Connection* must have been easy to miss in the domestic context of its display.

Initially one might sense a discordance between the materially impoverished and unassuming works exhibited by Nixon at Q Space and Q Space Annex and their hyperbolic titles, which often refer to the



# ANTI-MUSIC

(CASSETTE TAPES)

Proceedings 1980-1981 (July-Feb)

FEB 25-MARCH 27 1981

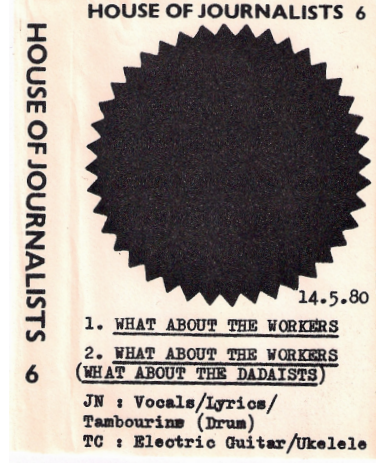
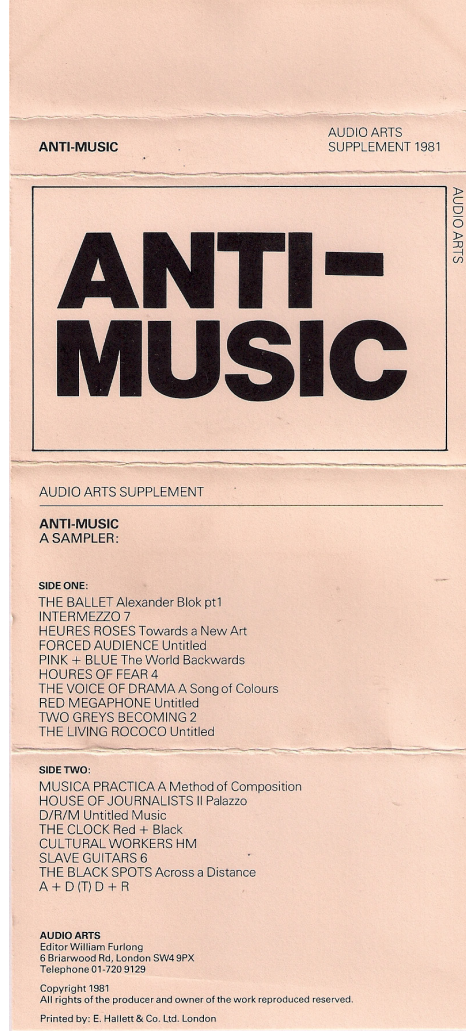
# ANTI-MUSIC

This Exhibition is being held as part of  
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Cassette cover designs for ANTI-MUSIC groups. Main picture: ANTI-MUSIC A Sampler published by Audio Arts, London, 1981 offset printing on card.  
Others: The Ballet, A+D, and House of Journalists, one-off master copies. Letterart, typesetting, photocopy. Design by John Nixon





most polemical moments of the historical avant-garde movements and the leftist politics associated with them. A five foot square black monochrome on corrugated cardboard is entitled *Salon des Indépendents* or, *The Vanguardist (DaDa!!!)*; a small construction of plastic and cardboard, almost invisible in the installation shot which serves to document it, carries the title *Unity: 'Workers of the World Unite'*; a 26 inch square monochrome on plywood, presented as simultaneously an original work and a remake of a 1921 Rodchenko painting, is entitled (*Black on Black*) (*The Salesman, or, Living in the Modern World*): *Spit on Stylish Ornamentation*.<sup>18</sup> These titles, while certainly playful, should not be seen as referring only ironically to the avant-garde project. Rather, taken alongside the resolute cheap materiality of the objects to which they refer, they should be understood as inscribing these works in a particular lineage of neo-avant-garde practice (represented most clearly by Beuys and the Italian Arte Povera artists) which demonstrates one of many possible responses to the problem posed by the historical avant-garde.<sup>19</sup> Theorists of Arte Povera, such as Germano Celant, thought of the 'poverty' integral to the work of these artists not simply in terms of the everyday 'non-art' material they used but also, in reference to Jerzy Grotowski's concept of 'Poor Theatre', as signifying the somewhat romantic desire for a relatively unmediated contact with, or experience of, these materials (and, in more general terms, with the physical conditions of life, or nature, itself).<sup>20</sup> Rather than aiming to collapse the practice of art into a revolutionary life praxis, Nixon's work in Q Space and Q Space Annex (and, more broadly, his work in the 1980s) transforms the gallery space into such a 'poor theatre', in which a somehow 'essential' experience of the world outside the exhibition is brought about through the aggressive assertion of the simplicity of the material grounds of art production.

In a discussion of Nixon's temporary exhibition projects, Peter Cripps notes how 'documentation took on a new importance ... the recording-side and exhibition notice-card authenticate the exhibition'<sup>21</sup> The necessarily limited attendance at Q Space and Q Space Annex meant that, as Nixon expresses it in a retrospective text written in 1986, 'Q Space resembled something of a fiction for most people'.<sup>22</sup> For most, the only existence of these exhibitions is as photographs, invitations and the lines they inhabit in the artists' CVs. This is not necessarily to be understood as simply a downside of the small-scale of these projects. Rather, the temporary exhibition's afterlife in the form of information irons out its difference from the 'official' gallery exhibitions (they are listed side by side in the CV) and allows the artists to, in Cripps' words, 'determine the contents of their own artistic biographies and introduce event information'.<sup>23</sup> These temporary exhibition projects and their related documentation thus represent one of the clearest possible examples of the 'do-it-yourself' ethos with which Nixon aligns his work—and which, importantly, is often associated in his writings and interviews with the conception of complete authorial control communicated by the term 'auteur'.<sup>24</sup>



V. SPACE, Melbourne, 1983.

The hand of the artist is very much in evidence even in the photographic documentation of these exhibitions, which (like Nixon's photo-book documenting his exhibitions and studios, *Song of the Earth*, 1990), refusing the impartial slickness of professional photography, are often out of focus and poorly lit, with their 'poor' formal qualities paradoxically transforming them from simple documentation to first order artworks. This same logic, whereby the distinction between documentation or commentary and the work of art itself is blurred, is clearly demonstrated in Nixon's publishing projects of the 1980s. Beginning in the early-1980s, when cheap offset and Xerox printing became available in Australia for the first time, Nixon edited and co-edited a number of small-run magazines of artists' pages (that is, works of art in the form of printed pages): *Press* (1981–3), *Kerb Your Dog* (originally edited by John Young, co-edited by John Young and John Nixon, 1988–93), and *Z International Art* (1995–2002). However, the pages of the three issues of *Notes on Art Practice* (the first two published by Art Projects in 1982 and 1983, the third published as a special edition of *Kerb Your Dog* in 1990), and the 1992 *Kerb Your Dog Textbook* occupy an ambiguous position between works of art and artists' commentary on their work. The editors' introduction to the *Kerb Your Dog Textbook* describes it as an 'invaluable clarification of artists' work, process and differing philosophical outlooks'.<sup>25</sup> While some artists are represented by the reflections and manifestos one might expect to find, others chose to contribute drawings or other word-less images (Jenny Watson, Tony Clark), lists of titles (Robert MacPherson), diaries (Mike Parr) or quotations (Carole Roberts, Susan Norrie); Nixon's own contributions range from lists of terms bearing a relation to his practice ('monochrome', 'bread', 'standard', 'revolution', 'earth', 'potatoes', 'cardboard box', 'black') to pages occupied by single words set in large capitals ('COMMUNE', 'EPW') to lithographic entries in his long *Self-Portrait (Non-Objective Composition)* series.

These publications are notable for their plurality: far from the attempts to programmatically construct unified movements that mark many of the avant-garde groups with which Nixon associates his work, they clearly demonstrate Nixon's belief in the importance of informal communities of artists, whose individual 'life's projects' provide the hidden depth to art production, without which it would be 'merely surface'.<sup>26</sup> In a sense one could say that, for Nixon, the specific aesthetic or political values of a particular

artwork are less important than the fact that art is made by communities of people who in some sense devote themselves to making art (and this provides a perspective from which to understand his statement that, for him, 'the value of an artist's work is how much other artists can take from that work').<sup>27</sup> Some critics, such as Rex Butler, have seen the high volume of printed material produced by Nixon and his peers as an attempt to fix the terms of the interpretation of their work which inevitably has restrictive effects on criticism.<sup>28</sup> However, these publications can also be seen as a way for artists to 'take responsibility' for their presence in printed matter, an effort that is directly analogous to the DIY approach of galleries and exhibition projects like Art Projects and Q Space.<sup>29</sup> What is most interesting in Nixon's publishing projects is how, with their flexible conception of what might act as a 'clarification' of an artist's work, they allowed artists to take a part in the literature on their work not as critics or aestheticians (we are far from the early-1990s model of the artist-theorist), but precisely in their capacity as artists.

Perhaps the most remarkable publishing project initiated by Nixon was *Pneumatic Drill*, the single-sided one-page 'newsletter of Anti-Music' that ran for sixty issues between 1981 and 1983.<sup>30</sup> Anti-Music was the heading under which around 400 cassettes were produced at this time, the majority involving Nixon either solo or in collaboration with other artists such as Jenny Watson, Gary Warner and Tony Clark, a number of tapes also being recorded solo by Tony Clark and Peter Tyndall. In a similar way to how Dieter Roth's *Selten gehörte Musik* project (Seldom-heard Music, active 1973–9) attempted to make a virtue of the technical 'nonability' of Roth and his collaborators,<sup>31</sup> Anti-Music understood itself as aiming to 'attack and construct "another" musical practice' through the use of 'unskilled/deskkilled (informal)' techniques.<sup>32</sup> Anti-Music did not attempt any significant crossover with the existing post-punk or experimental scenes, but was rather involved in the self-conscious creation of 'artist's music'.<sup>33</sup> This can be seen clearly from the fact that none of the Anti-Music groups played live (*Pneumatic Drill* 23 stated clearly that Anti-Music was a 'non "live performance" music') and that, as the 'revised general catalogue' of Anti-Music published as *Pneumatic Drill* 33 states, 'all tapes are masters only', that is, they were unique objects, produced in editions of one. Anti-Music also polemically refused the personality-cult of mainstream rock music, repeatedly emphasising the importance of anonymity within the project.<sup>34</sup> (However, *Pneumatic Drill* issues 8 and 33 both contained Anti-Music catalogues which identified the members of each group by initial, and thus it could be argued that Anti-Music was less involved in a 'denial of authorship' than in a cliquishness in which only those 'in the know' knew who was responsible).<sup>35</sup>

The Anti-Music sampler cassette published by the London-based Audio Arts label in 1981 demonstrates a remarkable breadth of approaches to amateur music production, legitimating Nixon's claim that Anti-

Music's production 'ranges from fairly simple piano music to screaming music'.<sup>36</sup> Many pieces consist of abrasive improvisations performed with non-standard techniques on traditional instruments, often underpinned by primitive rhythms, and sometimes enriched with simple musique concrète effects (such as sped-up and slowed-down tape). All Anti-Music cassettes were self-recorded by the artists involved, in a clear application of DIY ideology. In Anti-Music, according to one of the many manifestos printed in *Pneumatic Drill*, 'ad hocism is viewed constructively';<sup>37</sup> and the collective's iconoclastic embrace of the limits of their technical skill recording technologies often has invigorating and humorous results: in the excerpt by the group Musica Practica heard on the sampler, a simple phrase is crudely looped for six minutes, cutting off mid-phrase every thirty seconds before a tape-thump announces its repetition. Other pieces are amateurish attempts at 'melodic' music and song-craft, and many feature lyrics, such as the 'Song of Colours' by The Voice of Drama (the lyrics of which, unsurprisingly, enumerate a list of colours) and the piece by The Ballet, which repeatedly voices the name of the Russian Symbolist poet Alexander Blok, accompanied by a drum-machine and a single clanging guitar chord.

The contents of *Pneumatic Drill* resonate clearly with the concerns of the projects discussed thus far. The DIY ideology of Anti-Music is made particularly clear, the raw cut and paste design aesthetic of the publication (and its occasional spelling mistakes) gesturing towards the punk fanzine. The process of music making is resolutely de-mystified: many of the issues feature photocopied packaging from the blank cassettes on which the music was recorded; issue 54 is occupied by an appropriated advertisement for the cheap Casio consumer 'VL-Tone' keyboard, reproduced upside-down in a sort of humorously naive reification of the desire, expressed in issue 32, to 'free rhythm [sic] + sound + expression from "imposed" orthodox boundaries'; issue 21 consists of a simple hand-drawn diagram of a basic recording situation. Anti-Music's understanding of itself as occupying a place in a historical lineage of avant-garde sonic practices is clearly visually represented in issue 5, which juxtaposes the well-known photograph of Italian Futurist painter Luigi Russolo posing with his 'noise orchestra' with an installation shot of the 1981 Anti-Music exhibition at Art Projects (consisting of a pair of wall mounted speakers playing cassettes), with the former annotated 'c. 1913', the latter '1981'. The fact that *Pneumatic Drill* was distributed for free at the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane and Art Projects without the possibility of subscription made it very unlikely that many casual readers would obtain every issue, and thus repetition between issues was very common.<sup>38</sup> The collected issues read as permutations of a number of elements, variations on the themes that one finds everywhere in Nixon's work of the 1980s.

Nixon is often construed, as Brandon W Joseph does in a recent essay touching on Nixon's collaborations with Marco Fusinato, as 'one of Australia's

preeminent high modernists',<sup>39</sup> or, more damningly, as Rex Butler does, as an artist who has made a career of aggressively asserting the avant-garde credentials of a practice which merely reiterates the successes of high modernist painting.<sup>40</sup> However, if we do not view his work only from the limited purview of his painting practice, but rather place it in the perspective of the 'expanded model of work for the artist' on which he places so much emphasis, taking into account his work as a curator, gallery director, publisher and (anti-)musician, such a characterisation becomes difficult to maintain. Indeed, it could be argued that focusing on these practices outside of painting allows us to see that, despite the influence of Clement Greenberg's theory of medium-specificity on his approach to painting,<sup>41</sup> Nixon's output of the 1980s is an attempt to refuse the high-modernist appropriation of the avant-garde practice of the monochrome by the tradition of painting, and place it rather in a distinctly 'low'-modernist line of avant-garde art which stresses the material and technical simplicity of the art object; a lineage which, like Duchamp, views the painting itself as little more than a ready-made.<sup>42</sup> It is from this perspective that we must begin any serious appraisal of Nixon's practice in the 1980s, as a complex network of practices that raises important issues about the relation between 'official' and 'unofficial' systems of display, between artists and the critical reception of their work, and between medium-specificity and a broader conception of the artist's work.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The author would like to thank John Nixon for his help in the preparation of this article.
- <sup>2</sup> See John Nixon and David Pestorius, 'An interview with John Nixon in early 1999', in *John Nixon: Music 1979–1999*, Berlin: Kunstlerhaus Bethanien and David Pestorius Gallery, 1999, p. 8.
- <sup>3</sup> Nixon and Pestorius, 'An interview with John Nixon in early 1999', p. 9.
- <sup>4</sup> On Barry Barker Ltd., see Carolyn Barnes, 'Art Projects', in *Pitch Your Own Tent: Art Projects, Store 5, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor*, exh. cat., Melbourne: Monash University of Art, 2005, p. 8.
- <sup>5</sup> See Barnes, 'Art Projects', p. 8.
- <sup>6</sup> See Nixon and Pestorius, 'An interview with John Nixon in early 1999', p. 7.
- <sup>7</sup> See John Nixon and Ashley Crawford, *Interview*, pamphlet, Melbourne: City Gallery, 1992, unpaginated.
- <sup>8</sup> For a general account of the organisation of Pinacotheca, see Jonathan Sweet, *Pinacotheca 1967–1973*, Melbourne: Prendergast Publishers, 1989.
- <sup>9</sup> Barnes, 'Art Projects', p. 10.
- <sup>10</sup> For a somewhat sympathetic discussion of this criticism, see Rex Butler, 'The Case of John Nixon', in *A Secret History of Australian Art*, Sydney: Craftsman House, 2002, p. 70.
- <sup>11</sup> Nixon and Crawford, *Interview*, unpaginated.
- <sup>12</sup> A complete list of all exhibitions held at Art Projects can be found in *Pitch Your Own Tent*, p. 34.
- <sup>13</sup> On this point, see Nixon's comments in Nixon and Pestorius, 'An interview with John Nixon in early 1999', p. 7.
- <sup>14</sup> Nixon and Crawford, *Interview*, p. 8.
- <sup>15</sup> On Nixon's tenure as Director of the IMA, see Sue Cramer and Bon Lingard (eds), *Institute of Modern Art: A Documentary History 1975–1989*, Brisbane: IMA, 1989, pp. 53–60.
- <sup>16</sup> See Nixon's text in *Q Space + Q Space Annex*, exh. cat., Brisbane: IMA, 1986, p. 4.
- <sup>17</sup> Reproduced in *Q Space + Q Space Annex*, p. 3.
- <sup>18</sup> On these exhibitions and their place in the broader history of the Russian avant-garde, see Anatoli Strigalev, 'The Art of the Constructivists: From Exhibition to Exhibition, 1914–1932', in *Art Into Life: Russian Constructivism 1914–1932*, exh. cat., New York: Rizzoli, 1990, pp. 15–40.
- <sup>19</sup> Beuys and Arte Povera appear numerous times in the lists of influences and 'family-trees' composed by Nixon in the 1980s and 1990s. See the numerous examples reproduced in the catalogue for Nixon's 1994 Australian Centre for Contemporary Art retrospective, *Thesis*, exh. cat., Melbourne: ACCA, 1994, unpaginated.
- <sup>20</sup> See Germano Celant, 'Arte Povera: Notes for a Guerrilla War' and 'Arte Povera', in Carolyn Christor-Bakargiev (ed.), *Arte Povera*, London: Phaidon, 1999, pp. 194–6, 198, 200.
- <sup>21</sup> Peter Cripps, 'Recession Art', in *Peter Cripps: Toward an Elegant Solution*, exh. cat., Melbourne: ACCA, 2010, p. 113.
- <sup>22</sup> In *Q Space + Q Space Annex*, p. 4.
- <sup>23</sup> Cripps, 'Recession Art', p. 113.
- <sup>24</sup> See Nixon's comments in Nixon and Pestorius, 'An interview with John Nixon in early 1999', p. 7. The term 'auteur' also appears in a number of the poems, word-lists and conceptual maps included in *Thesis*, unpaginated.
- <sup>25</sup> John Nixon and John Young (eds), *Kerb Your Dog Textbook*, Sydney: Kerb Your Dog, 1992, unpaginated.
- <sup>26</sup> See Nixon and Crawford, *Interview*, unpaginated.
- <sup>27</sup> John Nixon and Ben Carnow, 'Interview', in *Thesis*, unpaginated.
- <sup>28</sup> See Butler, 'The Case of John Nixon', pp. 70–2.
- <sup>29</sup> See Nixon and Crawford, *Interview*, unpaginated.
- <sup>30</sup> The collected *Pneumatic Drill* was republished in a single volume by David Pestorius Projects and the IMA in 2008.
- <sup>31</sup> On Roth's musical works, see Dirk Dobke and Bernadette Walter, *Roth Time*, Baden: Lars Müller, 2004, pp. 204–7.
- <sup>32</sup> See *Pneumatic Drill*, issues 1 and 29.
- <sup>33</sup> Although some concerts were staged (which consisted simply of cassette play-back) and two split cassettes with 'real' rock groups (The Go Betweens and Out Of Nowhere) were released in limited editions and sold at independent record stores. See Nixon and Pestorius, 'An interview with John Nixon in early 1999', pp. 10–12.
- <sup>34</sup> See, for example, *Pneumatic Drill*, issue 42: 'Our anonymity [sic] is important'.
- <sup>35</sup> See *Pneumatic Drill*, issue 4.
- <sup>36</sup> *Pneumatic Drill*, issue 23. This cassette has recently been reissued on CD by Nixon's Document Records.
- <sup>37</sup> *Pneumatic Drill*, issue 23.
- <sup>38</sup> For example, issue 31 is identical to issue 5, and the issue 52 is a collage of elements from issues 25, 26 and 48.
- <sup>39</sup> Brandon W Joseph, 'Dark Energy: Brandon Joseph on the art of Marco Fusinato', *Artforum*, Vol. 49, No. 6, February 2011, p. 199.
- <sup>40</sup> See Butler, 'The Case of John Nixon', pp. 67–72.
- <sup>41</sup> For passages of Nixon's writing that demonstrate ideas of medium-specificity clearly indebted to Greenberg's work, see 'Painting 1995–1999' and 'Minimal Art', in *John Nixon: EPW 2004*, exh. cat., Melbourne: ACCA, 2004, p. 13.
- <sup>42</sup> See Marcel Duchamp, 'Appropos of Readymades', in *Salt Seller: The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1973, p. 142: 'Since the tubes of paint used by the artist are manufactured and ready made products we must conclude that all the paintings in the world are "readymades aided" and also works of assemblage'.