

Mercy Flatline: minusTHREE

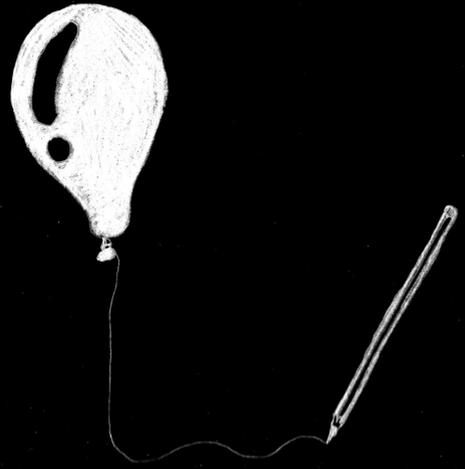


**YOU
DON'T
LIKE
YOUR
NOODLE?**

Featuring:

- + Joe Dunthorne
- + Alastair O'Shea
- + Nick Holloway
- + Bryan Biggs
- + Jonathan Greenbank
- + Nathan Jones

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND



03 **THIS IS THE NEWS**

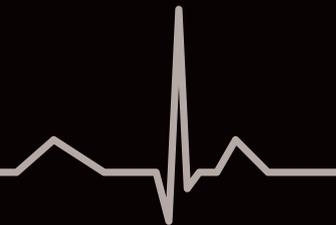
04 **THIS IS NEW:** Joe Dunthorne
First publish of Joe & Alastair O'Shea's collaboration

06 **THIS IS VINTAGE:** New Art News
Our regular column 2004-8, unmasked

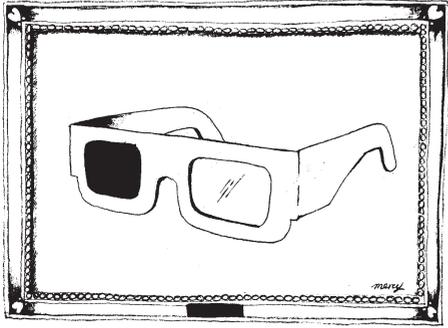
07 **THIS IS REGULAR:** My Gepetto
Bluecoat artistic director Bryan Biggs

08 **THIS IS CLOSURE:** Jonathan Greenbank
Nathan does justice to Jon's missing 2004 illustration

DON'T
BE A
HERO,
CRACKER



THIS IS THE NEWS



Back agaaaaaiiiin.

Whether we can keep to our promise of delivering these bad boys every week 'til Autumn remains to be seen, but hopefully you know us well enough to know we don't shirk a challenge. Especially if it at first appears naive and downright stupid.

It's not as if we've nothing else to be doing; in the last week we've confirmed the super 'maze venue for the debut London leg of **Wave If You're Really There** (see news right), taken the Creative Playgroup to see Guy Sherwin's **Man With Mirror**, and produced a sexy book of flowery-montages that we might show you next week if it doesn't get us the job we're using it to pitch on ...

Anyway, we'd love to hear what you think about nu-zombie-Mercy, so drop us an email about it won't you:

info@mercyonline.co.uk

Mercy hearts BCB, IDST



Mercy and **Book Club Boutique** will be spooning for a couple of very special nights in November, as we do partner shows in Liverpool and London.

Book Club Boutique is the brain-child of Mercy regular Salena Godden and her buddy Rachael Raynor. Salena hosts this event EVERY WEEK in Soho, and in the last year she's had more feature articles than Michael Jackson, for her unique blend of literary sensibility and boozy blues. Come and marvel as we laugh and weep our way under the table.

Dates TBC ASAP – 'til then keep an eye out for the BCB newspaper, and get down to the first event of the new season tomorrow (5th Sep) at Stradbally Hall.

Wave If You're Still Here



Yes. Yers. We had an absolute air-punch, fist-pump, sexy-dance, Roger-Millar-with-the-corner-flag moment this week when we confirmed an outstanding venue for our first London show of the new programme. It's a big old bastard with a familiar cut to its jib, and it's going to provide the perfect backdrop for the most thrilling Marriage since the fall of man.

St Leonard's Church, Shoreditch (above) – run by the lovely Reverend Paul Turp – is more than 700 years old in its current state, and is home to the bones of actors and aesthetes from the age of Shakespeare. We even discovered an old whipping post and stocks from the age of the public flogging on our trip there. Watch out ticket dodgers, Gemma Mercy is already salivating at the thought.

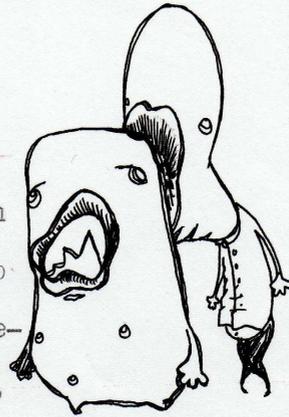


It's a bit to early to start chugging like a tearful Oscar beau, but we already owe some thanks to our buddies daan south for this find. Big Love to the good folk at **We Have Band** for coming up with the jackpot recommendation, after we'd polled just about everyone we know in London. (Thanks too to the folk at Book Club Boutique, **London Word Festival**, **Homework** and **Renaissance One** for their diligent umm-ing and ahh-ing).

See below and watch [here](#) for an idea of what we're gonna do the place, along with our megateam of Karen McLeod, Scott Spencer, Becky Grove, Adam Sloan Brychan Tudor and of course our sonic co-directors Wave Machines.



She found his affection-
repugnant. He had taken
to kissing ~~on~~ her on top
of her head, on her fore-
head and, worst of all,



on the eyelids. She thought of Big Brother 8 while he
sweated his way
to yet another
weak, insipid
orgasm.

WE
MAKE
IT
ALL
UP

New Art News

Just The Facts, Ma'am ... Just The Facts

First published in
Mercy 32: March '07

+ Words by Nick Holloway

The curse of magazine lead times, especially for one published bimonthly, is that what's news at the time of writing isn't usually news by the time it goes to print, let alone by the time it finds its way to the reader. A writer happily slagging off a football team might find himself vilified if, by the time his rant hits the shelves, they've all been killed in a plane crash, for example. But how was he supposed to know?

It's easy for me, writing *New Art News*, to avoid such problems. By which I mean: I make it all up. This way, I'm never less than bleeding edge. No rival reporter beats me to a story and, when what I've written finds its way into the world, no rival paper has already exhausted the issue. How could they, unless they had the power to read my mind?

Some people, of course, would call this lying. Or laziness, which I never understood: believe me, it's much harder to make something up from scratch than it is to just write about what's in front of you. I prefer to take a leaf out of Isidore Isou's book and call it 'infinite aesthetics': a work of art that, while it might only exist on paper, can still provide aesthetic rewards by being contemplated intellectually.

Why am I telling you this? Well, it seems over the last three years some people have thought that, yes, *New Art News* was genuine. So, I'm here to set the record straight. There were never any guerrilla gardeners in Blackburn. Never a poetry group, styling themselves 'The Bowel Movement', operating out of a basement flat in Toxteth. Or a much lauded restaging of Zeno's Paradox to demonstrate the impossibility of kicking a city pigeon. It was not much lauded; it did not take place. None of it did.

With one exception. Ben Parry's milk float / music box, *Ballet Mechanique*: that *did* exist, and there are several hundred witnesses who will confirm it. It wasn't, as I claimed at the time, "constructed from the scrap of the cars that killed Nikola Tesla, Roland Barthes and Frank O'Hara on absent-minded walks." But it was none the less for being real.

My Gepetto

A series of interviews exploring the influences of some of our favourite artists and clever clogses.

This week: Bryan Biggs, artistic director of a key venue in Liverpool's arts scene, the Bluecoat.

What artist / human / thing(s) are you most influenced by?

Malcolm Lowry, the Merseyside writer born 1909. To be honest, there are other artists who have influenced my thinking on creativity equally – from William Blake and Goya, to John Heartfield, the Beats and their 1960s British equivalents, a million and one musicians, and more recently WG Sebald.

However as this year is Lowry's centenary it's pertinent to celebrate him.

What is it about him that you find intriguing?

Lowry was born in New Brighton and described Liverpool as "that terrible city whose main street is the ocean". He left the area when young but Merseyside continued to inform his writing, even though he never returned. You can see echoes of his Wirral youth - his lost 'Eden' – in his love for the coastal landscape of Dollarton, outside Vancouver, where he lived in a squatter's shack for 14 years (in fact shacks, as one burnt down, destroying some of his manuscripts).

He travelled first to the Far East as a teenage deckhand in 1927, then to Europe, the US, Mexico and Canada (with many global trips in between), meant he was virtually unknown in his homeland. I am interested in the possibility of 're-claiming' Lowry for Merseyside, of adopting a psychogeographical approach in examining his relationship to Liverpool, which during his time there was hugely important as a port connected to the world, and for Lowry represented both Hell and a means of escape.

If you were to pick his most important work, what would it be? Why?

Under the Volcano (1947). It's set in Quauhnahuac (Cuernavaca), Mexico in the shadow of the twin volcanoes, and takes place over 12 hours in a single day (the Mexican Day of the Dead) in the life (and death) of an alcoholic British Consul (pretty much Lowry himself), who is visited by his ex-wife and half brother.

Lowry said that the reader may read the book several times and still not get its full meaning. And it is indeed multilayered: guilt, remorse, ceaseless

struggle, alcoholism, cabbalistic themes, cinematic structure and filmic and music references, autobiography (including vivid descriptions of the Wirral), insights into the Mexican character, and the underlying politics of the period, with Europe descending into war.

There is also much humour and poetry - Lowry regarded himself as a poet, but despite producing masses of (many unfinished) poems and such gems as his own epitaph:

*Malcolm Lowry
Late of the Bowery
His prose was flowery
And often glowery
He lived, nightly, and drank, daily,
And died playing the ukulele.*

END

*To receive issue minusFOUR
next week, make sure your
email address is on our list*