




Australian Centre for Contemporary Art  
4 May – 16 June 1996

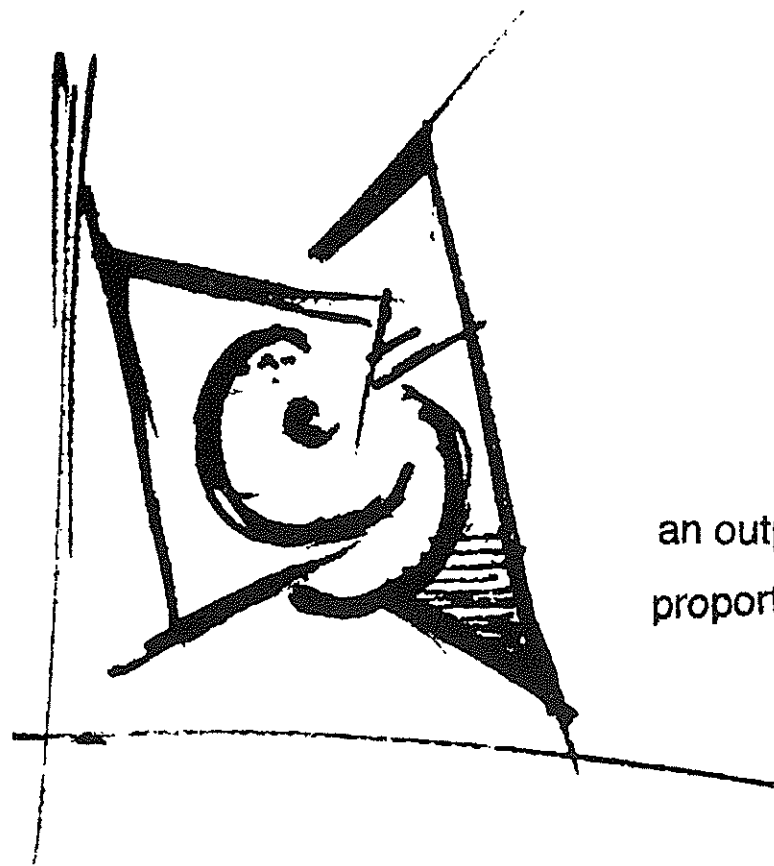


flower  
show

David Chesworth

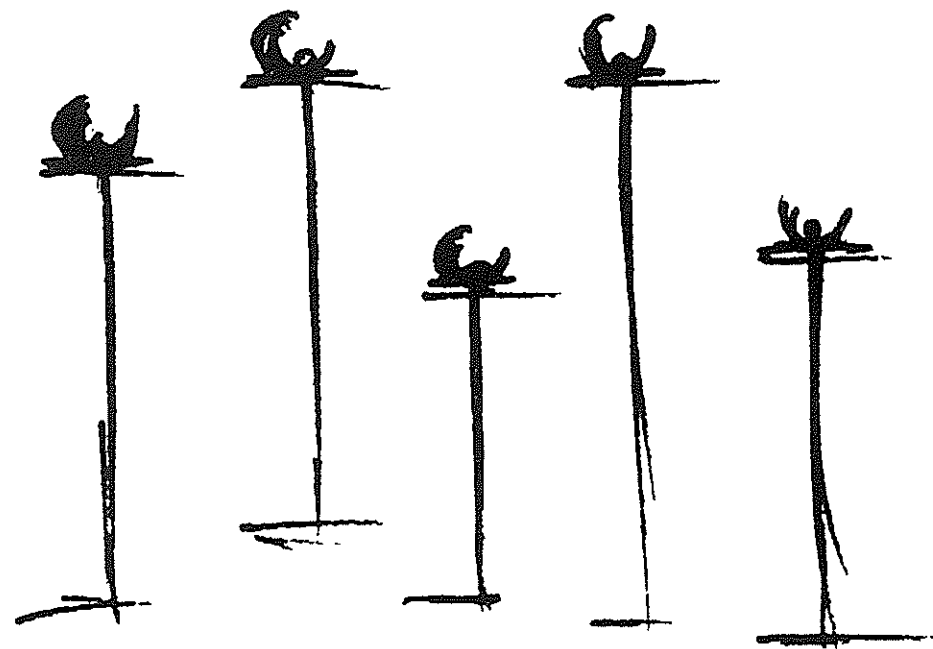
Noni Nixon

David Rosetzky

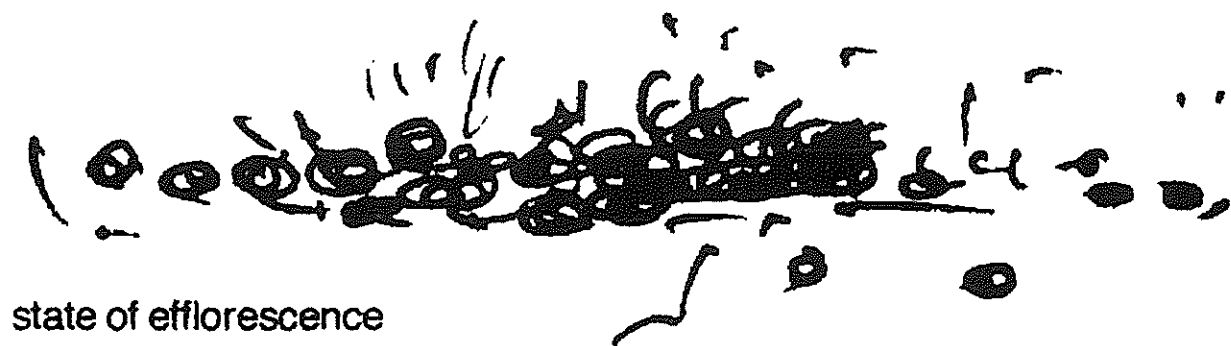


an output directly  
proportional to the input

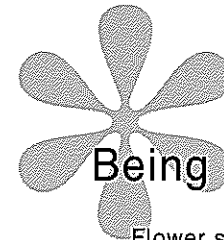
Noni Nixon  
Figure of Speech 1996  
preparatory drawings



open to various interpretations



state of efflorescence



## Being There

Flower shows are very big lately. I recently went to one myself, set in a regional Town Hall in Tasmania. It was a dahlia show and it was beautiful. The pom poms and cacti were carefully displayed with little prize plaques placed in front of them. Just about every entry received some sort of prize, although it seemed to me some were more spectacular than others. It was a very lively affair and everyone was having a really good time. I could see that some of the enthusiasts were quite expert. There was much horticultural discourse happening, with offerings of opinion and scrutiny of petal detail. Importantly, it was a social occasion and I helped myself to a booklet in case I wanted to join their society at a later date. I also took the opportunity of buying one of their little enamel lapel badges on the way out.

Now as much as I love flowers, the idea of staging a flower show without any flowers appealed to me enormously. The way I thought about it was almost as if the object of the flower had disappeared, clearing the way for something else to occur. In her book *The Natural Philosophy of Plant Form*, Agnes Arber approaches her study of the flowering plant through a broad-based understanding of morphology. She rejects the notion that form relates simply to characters of superficial shape but rather takes into account the external and internal organisation of the plant, from the beginning to the end of its life-history; the whole of its intrinsic nature.

... to arrive at the fullest understanding of any plant form, we have, first, to realise it accurately by means of sensuous perception; secondly, to get the completest possible picture of it with the mind's eye – a picture which receives sculptural solidity from the data gathered by touch, and internal concreteness from knowledge of anatomical structure; and thirdly, to advance beyond this representation so as to grasp its underlying and surrounding context of significance and to see it in its living aspect, and in relation to other forms.<sup>1</sup>

It occurs to me that Anne Arber's approach might well be applied to *Flower Show*. Early on, David Chesworth, Noni Nixon, and David Rosetzky

became acquainted with a proposed outline of the show. This outline was both open and specific and from there they developed their work. They have created objects (or non-objects) which use a range of different elements and each work has been constructed with its own distinctive focus, inviting individual readings and sensory responses. The work is then positioned in a context which takes in both the others' work and the site of the backyard at ACCA. And then we have the viewer. I am particularly interested in the viewer and how the orchestration of the elements throughout the site might act upon the viewer entering the garden. In a way, this is when the show begins.

I like to think of *Flower Show* as a prime-time leisure/lifestyles project, where the public can come and use the garden in the way that gardens and backyards are generally used. To sit and think, be with friends, talk about politics, have a smoke, roll around or whatever. It's a populist idea and in this case we are complicating it with art. Here the flower-going public may have an opportunity to contemplate the garden in a different way:

... to lie upon the daisies  
and discourse in novel phrases  
of a complicated state of mind.  
The meaning doesn't matter  
if it's only idle chatter  
of a transcendental kind.<sup>2</sup>

The viewer is part of the aestheticising of the site. The work of the three artists leads us in to an abstract space like a negative film image or Mortitia Adams snipping her roses. In responding to this space, the invitation is there for the viewer to actually be there somewhere; to take time with the detail of the work and to see themselves in it, as part of their own narrative.

**John Meade**

<sup>1</sup> Arber, A. *The Natural Philosophy of Plant Form*, Cambridge University Press, 1950, p.4.

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert and Sullivan, excerpt from *Patience*.

## List of Works

### David Chesworth

**In the dark wood ...at the bottom of the garden** 1996 soundscape

### Noni Nixon

**Figure of Speech** 1996 steel and glass

### David Rosetzky

**Buttercup** 1996 mixed media

## Biographies

### David Chesworth

Born Stoke, England, 1958

Lives and works Melbourne

Works in many areas of contemporary music and its related forms, including orchestral and electro-acoustic music for performance, installation, dance, film and opera. His compositions and soundscapes have been performed and broadcast extensively in Australia as well as the Americas, Europe and Japan. Major festivals which have featured performances or his work include the Festival D'Automne de Paris, Edinburgh Festival, Covent Garden, Summer Festival, Ars Electronica, Melbourne International Festival, Adelaide Festival, Sydney Biennale and Sound Culture.

Artistic Director of the David Chesworth Ensemble which recently released its first CD, *Exotica Suite* with Warner Classics. Performances include the Melbourne International Festival and the Sydney Spring Festival of New Music.

**1978-83** Coordinator of the Clifton Hill Community Music Centre, Melbourne; Performer, both solo and with groups such as Essendon Airport.

**1986-present** Completed his first opera *Insatiable*. Since then has worked regularly with Melbourne's Chamber Made Opera: *Recital, Lacuna*, and *The Two Executioners*, and with the Melbourne International Festival: *Domepiece* and *Sabat-Jesus*.

**1987-92** Worked with Sound Design Studio, Melbourne, composing soundscapes for public and exhibition spaces. He has continued to work in this area recently composing a major soundscape for the Museum of Sydney.

Producer of five albums and three CD s of his own music. Co-producer of The Underground Lovers' CD, *Dream It Down*.

#### Selected Group Exhibitions: Sound Art

**1995** *Sound in Space*, Museum of Contemporary Art,

Sydney; *Sydney sound environments*, Museum of Sydney. **1993** *Meridian*, Xebec, Kobe, Japan; *Ars Electronica*, Linz, Austria; *Sound Culture*, Performance Space, Sydney. **1989** *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney.

**1987** *Evenings Without Andy Warhol*, ACCA, Melbourne. **1985** *Factory, Do The Metaphysical*, ACCA, Melbourne. **1983** *Indefinite Objects*, ARC, Paris Autumn Festival. **1982** *Do The Metaphysical*, Roslyn Oxley Gallery, Sydney; *Popism*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; *Biennale of Sydney*, Art Gallery of New South Wales. **1981** *Noise and Muzak*, Ewing and George Paton Galleries, Melbourne. **1978-83** Various. Clifton Hill Community Music Centre, Melbourne

**Awards** *Southgate*, scored for the 1991 Southgate opening in Melbourne, received an international Prix Ars Electronica award. *Sabat-Jesus* was selected to represent Australia in the 1994 Paris International Rostrum of Composers. *Insatiable* received the 1988 A.T.O.M. Award for Most Innovative Film, and *The Two Executioners* recently received the inaugural Age Performing Arts Award for The Most Outstanding Fringe Performance.

### Noni Nixon

Born Sydney

Lives and works in Canberra

**Education** **1996** Candidate for Masters of Arts (Visual), Canberra School of Art (CSA), Institute of the Arts (ITA), Australian National University (ANU), ACT. **1990-93** Bachelor of Arts (Visual) Honours (1st Class), major in Sculpture CSA, ITA, ANU, ACT.

**Group Exhibitions** **1995** *Approaches To Drawing*, Student Work from Canberra School of Art; Institute of the Arts SIA, Singapore, curator Meg Buchanan.; *3x3 A series of one day exhibitions held at 4/35 Fletcher St., Tamarama*, Sydney, then touring Christchurch, Auckland, Berlin, Canberra and Beijing, curator Matthew Johnson; *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, curator Judy Annear; *technothelylogia*, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne, curator Zara Stanhope; Group 11, *Art Implant*, Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra, National Sculpture Forum, Group 11 curator Claire Martin; Group 11, *Site Specific Installations*, Gorman House, Canberra Festival of Contemporary Arts, Group 11 curator Claire Martin; *God Save the Queen*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space Gorman House, Braddon, ACT, Trevor Smith. **1994** *Brush With the Bush*, Canberra Contemporary

Art Space Gorman House, Braddon, ACT, Trevor Smith. **1993** *A Souvenir from Canberra*, No Vacancy, 189 Little Collins Street, Melbourne; *Interval*, CSA, ITA, ANU, ACT; *Cover*, CSA, ITA, ANU, ACT.

**Selected Solo Exhibitions** **1996** "Distal Row" a series of four installations: 1. (*OXO*), 2. *A Small Block of Sugar*, 3. *Raised to the Third*, 4. *Any Number of Slim, Long-Tailed Frequently Migratory Birds*.

Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Gorman House, Braddon, ACT. **1993** *Profoundly Deaf*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Manuka, ACT.

**Selected Solo Performances** **1993** *Switch*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Manuka, ACT.

**1993** *Manipulator*, CSA, ITA, ANU, ACT.

**Selected Group Performances** **1993** *Ate/Eight*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Manuka, ACT.

**1992** *Canned Laughter*, CSA, ITA, ANU, ACT.

### David Rosetzky

Born Melbourne, 1970

Lives and works in Melbourne

**Education** **1987** Foundation Year, Victoria College, Melbourne. **1989-92** Bachelor of Fine Art (Painting), Victoria College, Melbourne.

**Group Exhibitions** **1996** *Super Models*, curators Jacinta Schreuder and Andrew McQualter, 1st. Floor, Melbourne; *m,m,m*, curators Brenda Ludeman and Jan Nelson, Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne; *Specular Bodies*, curator Lucy Elliot, 1st. Floor, Melbourne. **1995** *Monash University Art Prize*, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne; *David Rosetzky, Megan Woodward*, 1st. Floor, Melbourne; *Blow Up*, curator Natalie King, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney; *David Rosetzky, Jacinta Schreuder, Lyndall Walker*, 1st. Floor, Melbourne; *Personals*, IMT at Tolarno, Melbourne. **1994** *1st. Floor fundraiser exhibition*, 1st. Floor, Melbourne; *ReProductions*, IMT at Tolarno, Melbourne; *T.A.R.T.S.*, Centre Place, Melbourne; *Descriptions*, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne; *1st. Floor group show*, 1st. Floor, Melbourne. **1992** *S.W.I.M. fundraiser exhibition*, Linden Gallery, Melbourne; *Hearts and Minds*, curator Melinda Harper, Store 5, Melbourne. **1990** *10 Animals*, curator Kathy Temin, Store 5, Melbourne. **Solo Exhibitions** **1996** *Romance*, R.M.I.T. Gallery, Melbourne. **1995** *Little Hans*, The Building 40 Project, Melbourne. **1994** *Fields of Joy*, 1st. Floor, Melbourne.

#### Cover illustration

David Chesworth and David Rosetzky, ACCA, February 1996. Photography: Andrew MacDonald



## flower show

David Chesworth, Noni Nixon, David Rosetzky

Curator: John Meade

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art

Exhibition dates: 4 May - 16 June 1996

Catalogue published by  
the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art  
May 1996, Edition 300 ISBN 0 947220 55 0

© Copyright The author/Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. Images copyright the artist  
No material, whether written or photographic, may be reproduced without the permission of the artist, author and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. The opinions expressed in this catalogue are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

This project has been generously supported by System Sound, Melbourne  
John Meade gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Next Wave Festival, Samantha Comte, Clare Williamson and Kathleen Stewart.  
Noni Nixon gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Climatrol Airconditioning, Canberra.  
David Rosetzky gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Chris White and Andrew MacDonald.



\* flower show is an exhibition in collaboration with the Next Wave Festival

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art

Dallas Brooks Drive, South Yarra 3141

Telephone 61 3 9654 6422

Affiliated with Monash University

Director: Jenepher Duncan

Curator: Clare Williamson

Administrator: Jennifer Colbert

Secretary/Assistant: John Cross



ACCA acknowledges the financial support of the Victorian Government's Arts 21 policy, through Arts Victoria. ACCA is assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.