

**SLAVE PIANOS**  
**INTERNATIONALE BIENNALE 2000**

**AUSTRALIAN PAVILION**

**NON-OBJECTIVE BRASS**

# **NON-OBJECTIVE BRASS**

ANTI-MUSIC performed by  
**The Burley Griffin Brass Band**

Canberra School of Music Brass Ensemble  
Thomas Burge (director)

Wednesday 26 July, 2000  
North End – Main Foyer  
The National Gallery of Australia  
Parkes Place Canberra 2600

# **PROGRAM**

**NIXON** (as The Clock)  
*Red +Black* 1981

**CLARK** (as The Living Rococo)  
*Untitled* 1981

**TYNDALL** (as Slave Guitars)  
6 1981

**John McDONALD**  
Head of Australian Art, National Gallery of Australia  
*Introduction*

**Professor David WILLIAMS**  
Director, Canberra School of Art  
*Opening Address*

**HARRIS**  
*Australian traditional*

**FUSINATO**  
*EP in E* 1997

## **NIXON**

(b. 1939, Sydney)

Nixon established his musical path via an awareness of the punk music scene from the mid 1970's. His retrieval of DIY attitude first associated with punk lead him to develop Anti-Music, an umbrella term for a number of anonymous collaborative music/art recording groups. Since 1979 Nixon has produced a prolific number of sound cassettes, in more recent years founding the recording label, Circle Records, with fellow artist Julian Dashper. The music recorded is best described as experimental (rock) with a strong leaning towards non-musicianship. Other influences include Pere Ubu's first LP ('The Modern Dance') along with Futurist, Dada and film music. In 1997 he founded SOLVER a visual artists project group dedicated to the exploration of musical form. Using classical rock instrumentation, the noise music produced maintains the vitality of punk's energy but is mediated by the sound excursions of bands like Sonic Youth and by what could be called musique concrète - a 'truth to materials' approach which disavows all musical virtuosity. The music develops as free improvisation, each track being only briefly considered prior to recording.

## **CLARK**

(b. 1954, Canberra)

Clark was a founding participator in the activities of Anti-Music beginning in 1979. His involvement coincided with a renaissance in his own art practice brought about through an interest in classicism.

With Nixon he began to explore operatic forms which Clark described as Anti-Music/opera. Clark initiated operas in Latin although he had never studied the language. This curious practice could be explained as the linguistic equivalent to Anti-Music's stated preference for non-musicianship.

By using the intonation of Latin as a shell devoid of meaning, Clark revealed a new musical form that distorted classical models. Similarly he performed existing musical compositions with only the most basic knowledge of notation.

## **TYNDALL**

(b. 1951, Melbourne)

Tyndall's interest in music crystallised in 1974, a time when he began to lose faith in abstract painting as a suitable base for his art practice. Through composers such as John Cage he became fluent in cryptic Oriental thought - brief but contained wisdom that constructed a world view grounded in simple, everyday life. From his home at *Bonza View*, Hepburn Springs in Victoria he became involved in the Melbourne music scene of the late 1970's. During this time Tyndall performed his *Slave Guitars of the Art Cult*, a sound/performance piece that was a direct working out of his conceptual art practice. In partnership with Nixon and Clark et al, he participated in the various activities of 'Anti Music' and contributed his Cagean notions of chance, structure and everyday life in the associated newsletter 'Pneumatic Drill'.

## **HARRIS**

(b. 1930, Perth)

Harris established himself in London during the swinging sixties. His multi-disciplinary approach encompassed painting performance and song as children's entertainment for film and television. The Rolf Harris Show, broadcast extensively on British Commonwealth television from 1969, presented a range of performative acts varying from musical repertoire scored for voice and other vernacular instrumentation. Most notable was his 'wobble board', a thin wooden sheet which oscillates kinetically producing rhythmic accompaniment. Harris' faux-naive appropriations and recuperations of Indigenous and folk Australian, nationalist, masculinist and 'pop' themes were worked into an intermedia variety concert format, placing him with Bartok and Shostakovich in the mainstream Modern European tradition of progressive pan-cultural assimilation, with refracted yet ultimately determinant political reference.

## **FUSINATO**

(b. 1964, Melbourne)

Fusinato began composing from his interests in rock, experimental and noise music. He cites the early works of Glen Branca and the New York no-wave scene as being particularly important to his practice. Fusinato has developed a repertoire that investigates the harmonic relationship between music and colour (pitch and hue). His concentration on the chord of E parallels his signature red palette. Fusinato's composition *Mono* was performed with fellow artists for ten electric guitars. With Nixon he has collaborated in several recording groups include SOLVER and SCALA. His music drafts a formal/conceptual framework for improvised electric guitar performance.

## ON ANTI-MUSIC

THESE GROUPS ARE SEEN PRIMARILY AS RECORDING GROUPS. ROOMS IN HOUSES/BORROWED EQUIPMENT/AD HOC PROCEDURES/THE USE OF NON-HEIRARCHICAL (sic) (UNORTHODOX) MUSICAL PROCESSES/AND THE USE OF TAPE AS AN INSTRUMENT IN ITSELF.

EACH GROUP IS CONCERNED WITH DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF ANTI-MUSIC, ALL USE 'PRIMITIVE' (sic) MUSICAL EQUIPMENT AND CASSETTE RECORDING EQUIPMENT. CASSETTES ARE USED FOR THEIR IMMEDIACY AND AVAILABILITY AND LOW COST. PRODUCTION AND EDITING ARE KEPT MINIMAL. SUCH STRATEGIES/USES ARE SEEN AS POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY PROGRESSIVE IN THAT CONTROL OF THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION AND THE FINAL PRODUCT ARE MAINTAINED BY EACH GROUP. ANTI-MUSIC IS COLLECTIVES/CONTINUING GROUPS/ONE OFF VENTURES.

ANTI-MUSIC USES SIMPLE, PRIMITIVE SKILLS ESTABLISHING THE BROADEST BASE FOR HARSH SOUND/POETIC SOUND.

ANTI-MUSIC IS AN INDUSTRIAL FOLK MUSIC.

ANTI-MUSIC IS OUR LOGO FOR PRACTICE.

ANTI-MUSIC CAN POTENTIALLY INCLUDE AND (sic) SOUND /NOISE WITHIN ITS PRACTICE.

FREE RHYTHEM (sic) + SOUND + EXPRESSION FROM (sic) 'IMPOSED' ORTHODOX BOUNDARIES.

ANTI-MUSIC IS FORGED FROM THE GIVEN CULTURE WE LIVE IN (AUSTRALIA/THE WORLD/HISTORY/PRACTICE/COMMUNITY).



Slave pianos is a preservation society devoted to the collection, analysis, performance and recomposition of works in sound by visual artists.

Founded in 1998 by Danius Kesminas, Michael Stevenson, Neil Kelly and Rohan Drape, associate members include Barney McAll and Anthony Pateras.

Slave pianos seeks to broaden the knowledge, appreciation and understanding of sound works by establishing an audio archive of visual artists' recordings. Original material from the archive has been re-composed, arranged and transcribed for piano, string quartet, jazz ensemble, rock band, computer, DJ, brass-band and other ensembles.

SLAVE PIANOS is represented by Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney.