



'Our real inspiration came from fanzines and tiny independent record labels'

remake/remodel

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Best known for their re-enactments of David Bowie's last stand as Ziggy Stardust and The Cramps' gig at the Napa Mental Institute in California, Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard are rock 'n' roll's very own CSIs. Accuracy is hardly the point, though, as far as they're concerned:

"It's rarely the event or action being repeated that we're interested in reconsidering. Repetition works like a catalyst, and it's in our relationship to the imitation and the act of creating and witnessing the 'copy' that something

interesting happens. Failure is hugely important to us, and understanding its importance is vital to our work. In copying anything, the copy never reproduces the original completely. And this shortfall is where the real emerges, where understanding can begin. Good art always, at some level, fails."

Iain and Jane started working together in 1993, after meeting at Goldsmith's College. As avid music fans, they wanted to find a way to make art more like gigs, records and fanzines.

"One of the things that really brought us together, creatively, was a shared love of the way music impacts on its audience, the emotive immediacy of the live event and the intimate power of the song. These were exactly the sort of issues we tried to address when we began publishing *Words & Pictures*, an object-based art magazine-in-a-box, which was the first project we made together. For each issue, artists would contribute a limited-edition 'thing'. Of course we drew some influence from Fluxus, but our real inspiration came from fanzines and tiny independent record labels."

Another ongoing project has been filming people talking about a specific mixtape they've made for someone they love or have loved. Is there something in the fan's perspective that exceeds the content or value of the object of his or her desire?

"The song selection becomes a personally curated mnemonic archive and the tape acts as a souvenir of a remembered person and time, evoking experiences and feelings lodged firmly in the past, yet relived and re-experienced in the present. Music, within the context

of memory and romance, transcends cliché and begins to act as an extra-linguistic communicative bond."

For *File Under Sacred Music*, their reconstruction of The Cramps' secret asylum gig, they ended up not only representing the fan's viewpoint but actually putting together a band featuring Alfonso Pinto from The Parkinsons as Cramps' vocalist Lux Interior, Holly Golightly as guitarist Poison Ivy, Bruce Brand as guitarist Bryan Gregory and John Gibbs from The Wildebeests and Holly's current band as drummer Nick Knox, to perform in front of real mental patients [and various media people - Ed].

"We spent days watching *The Cramps At Napa* tape - we watched it with our band, with our film crew and with members of Core Arts who made up the audience in our film. Each time, the dynamics and intentions of it shifted. It's possible to view it in so many ways, each time filtered through varying shades of cynicism or open-mindedness. We found nothing documenting how or why the original performance came about, so it's easy to believe it to be wildly different things."

Can fine art ever have the democratic reach and appeal of popular music?

"Probably not. The next question, of course, is: should it want to?"

Iain and Jane will be presenting new work in their first exhibition in Ireland. The show, Rhythm-A-Ning, is curated by Declan Sheehan and also features work by Ciara Finnegan and Fintan Friel. It's at Walton's New School Of Music, 69 South Great Georges Street, Dublin, from 2-30 April.

For more information, visit: www.iainandjane.com.

