

80.-

October 19th-26th 1976



SEXUAL TRANSGRESSIONS NO. 5

PROSTITUTION

PROSTITUTION, an exhibition by Coum Transmissions.

I.C.A., London. October 19th-26th 1976.

'When COUM Transmissions mounted their show Prostitution at the ICA in 1976 the Daily Mirror accused them of "prostituting Britain," while the Evening Standard called one of the group "a degenerate mollusc." Questions were raised in the Houses of Parliament. One MP called COUM "wreckers of civilization." Coverage in the media rivalled that of the Sex Pistols.' (Artscribe; no.18)

'All that about making money out of the Arts Council was rubbish. We got £200 from the ICA for framing and, in fact, it cost us £350 to set up the exhibition. So we were out of pocket.

'It wasn't just that, because we played there as well, and you know, it takes money to transport equipment and set it up. What we really wanted to do was play at the ICA - that was really the whole purpose of it.

'You see, we couldn't get a gig so we thought we'd play at the ICA. The Marquee wouldn't have us.' (Genesis P-Orridge, Melody Maker; November 20, 1976)

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October 19th-26th 1976



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PROSTITUTION

COUM Transmissions:- Founded 1969. Members (active) Oct 76 - P. Christopherson, Cosey Fanni Tutti, Genesis P-Orridge. Studio in London. Had a kind of manifesto in July/August Studio International 1976. Performed their works in Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels; Musee d'Art Moderne, Paris; Galleria Borgogna, Milan; A.I.R. Gallery, London; and took part in Arte Inglese Oggi, Milan survey of British Art in 1976. November/December 1976 they perform in Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art; Deson Gallery, Chicago; N.A.M.E. Gallery, Chicago and in Canada. This exhibition was prompted as a comment on survival in Britain, and themselves.

2 years have passed since the above photo of Cosey in a magazine inspired this exhibition. Cosey has appeared in 40 magazines now as a deliberate policy. All of these framed form the core of this exhibition. Different ways of seeing and using Cosey with her consent, produced by people unaware of her reasons, as a woman and an artist, for participating. In that sense, pure views. In line with this all the photo documentation shown was taken, unbidden by COUM by people who decided on their own to photograph our actions. How other people saw and recorded us as information. Then there are xeroxes of our press cuttings, media write ups. COUM as raw material. All of them, who are they about and for? The only things here made by COUM are our objects. Things used in actions, intimate (previously private) assemblages made just for us. Everything in the show is for sale at a price, even the people. For us the party on the opening night is the key to our stance, the most important performance. We shall also do a few actions as counterpoint later in the week.

PERFORMANCES: Wed 20th 1pm - Fri 22nd 7pm

Sat 23rd 1pm - Sun 24th 7pm

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS LIMITED
NASH HOUSE THE MALL LONDON S.W.1 BOX OFFICE Telephone 01-930-6393

PROSTITUTION

by

COUM TRANSMISSIONS

No-one under the age of 18 years will be admitted.
The security officer on the door may request proof of age.

Material consisting of photographs from widely available magazines will not be on open display but can be seen on request.

MEMBERS ONLY

ADMISSION 25p.

YOU ARE INVITED TO A PARTY TO CELEBRATE
'PROSTITUTION'

AN EXHIBITION BY COUM TRANSMISSIONS AT
The I.C.A. Arts Centre, The Mall, S.W.1
on MONDAY 18th OCTOBER, 1976 at 6pm.
Private View runs continuous with drinks,
escorts, exhibits.

PARTY programme runs thus:-

- 6.45pm "Music From The Death Factory"
1984 rock by THROBBING GRISTLE
- 8 OOpn Professional Striptease
- 9.00pm L.S.D. rock band

Please Coum, stay late, dance, have fun

Exhibition 19 - 26 October
Performances Wed 20 1pm Fri 22 7pm
Sat 23 1pm Sun 24 7pm



SEXUAL TRANSGRESSIONS NO 3

PROSTITUTION

In this article I deal with the many offences connected with prostitution. It is no offence as such to be a male or female prostitute with whatever type of customer. English law is generally not concerned with "class" or "status" - it is concerned with acts. Some things, however, on the other hand punish the man being a prostitute. The difference is explained in detail at once, especially as it is a common misconception that in England law merely being a prostitute is a crime.

It is essential to note however of prostitution comes into two parts, according to the one or the other. Most of the law in fact deals with female prostitution since traditionally and not surprisingly there have been more of them with more potential nuisance value.

The primary law against female prostitutes in public is the Street Offences Act 1959. This is the Act which followed the Wolfenden Report on prostitution and homosexuality and which charged laws off the

street (though perhaps they're none returning prostitutes). What does the Act actually say?

It prohibits "any man prostitute" from soliciting or loitering in public section 1 of the Act. The prohibition is given to the very bare outline. It has been left to the courts to expand and tailor the bread.

What to recognize is that the soliciting or loitering in public is not an offence if done by any person. That person must be a female common prostitute. What, though, does this old term "common prostitute" mean? Broadly speaking it means a professional prostitute rather than the one night variety of girl who takes money for a single performance. But it is more specific than that. To be charged in court with the offence a woman must have solicited or loitered contrary to the Act in both times before and been endorsed by the police and the caution entered in a police caution register. There is no prior offence than the offence if caught someone that a woman is a

common prostitute for the purposes of the Act.

This means that a woman who has not solicited on the street before has, generally, a long career there before she is actually convicted and sentenced for an offence in some area. It might be several years before a woman achieved the two London necessary for a prosecution and those are the areas which are currently most popular for the sort of streetwalking.

There's another point, too, which the professionals of the trade don't ignore. That is the caution registers are not effectively controlled and soliciting and loitering done in any London area may not be noticed on the registers of the Local Police. For example, since the registers are controlled by the Home Office, the necessary responsibility for registration on sex offences registers, has not yet been transferred to the local police.

As for the action necessary to bring a conviction, there must at least be some positive movement to

The Daily Telegraph.
20 October 1976.

Love thy neighbour

WHILE no one feels more hurt about the new "Prostitution" exhibition at the ICA gallery than the British taxpayer, the Mall Gallery next door is feeling a little bruised about it, too.

A show of paintings by Meriel Campbell opened there yesterday with none of the fanfare that greets dirty nappies or pornography, and none of the Government money — £90,000 — which the ICA gets every year.

The gallery is kept open by the artists themselves, who must finance their own exhibitions. Understandably their style is conservative and generally sells well—Mrs Campbell broke even on the first day.

Though relations are good between the two, occasionally such publicity as the ICA received this week becomes a strain. I asked Mrs Campbell how she felt about her neighbours: "I feel nothing about them," she replied, adding after a moment's thought, "I hate them."

The Daily Telegraph.
20 October 1976.

QUEUES TO SEE 'PROSTITUTION' ART SHOW

Long queues built up yesterday for the controversial art show "Prostitution" containing cases of chains and bloodstained women's clothing when it opened at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in the Mall. But many people were turned away because admission is being restricted to ICA members over 18.

"There's nothing to stop people joining for sensationalist reasons, but we felt this additional precaution would help cut this element down," said Mr Ted Little, artistic director. Membership costs £3.

The show was branded as "disgusting" by Mr Roy Shaw, director-general of the Arts Council yesterday.

Evening Standard.
20 October 1976.

Row over sex show grants

A ROW was growing today over Genesis P. Orridge, organiser of the ICA "porn" show, who has been putting on shows in Europe at the British tax payers' expense.

It was revealed today that Orridge was given £32,500 in 1974 by the British Council for a show in Germany, £273,58 for an avant garde festival in Paris and £650,40 for an arts day in Milan.

His show—Prostitution—at the Institute of Contemporary Arts — could lead to a withdrawal of public funds for his work.

Page 5

Daily Mail.
20 October 1976.

Rash decision

I AM sure many of your readers share my disgust at the latest exhibition at the ICA gallery of 25 glass cases of dirty nappies. I can't think of anything more revolting.

The curators must be in the wrong job, as they do not seem to have any idea of art as most people recognise it.

By the way, I would not like to be around when they open those glass cases!

Uppminster, Essex.
Maple Avenue,
DOREEN MAYERS.

The Times.
21 October 1976.

British Council will give 'sex artist' £496 grant

The British Council last night dissociated itself from the present artistic activities of Mr Genesis P. Orridge, whose exhibition entitled "Prostitution" at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London has brought accusations of obscenity. The council will, however, be honouring its commitment to a £496 grant for a forthcoming tour by him to the United States and Canada.

In a comment on Mr Orridge's ICA exhibition, which features used personal clothing and photographs of sexual acts as well as unpredictable live performances, the council said:

"Performance art is largely spontaneous, and therefore no one can foresee exactly how a single performance will turn out. However, the British Council would not assist any manifestation of performance art calculated to offend reasonable public taste."

The council said its own financial backing for Mr Orridge (born Neil Megson, 26 years ago), was for activities "not directly related to the ICA exhibition". It has paid £975 towards public appearances by Mr Orridge during the past two years, in addition to the £496

WAY OF THE WORLD

A Palace of Art

THERE is, of course, nothing particularly new in the exhibition called "Prostitution," now appearing at what is called the "Institute of Contemporary Arts." Such filthy rubbish has always been available in holes and corners for those willing to pay for it; and there have always been people ready to make a living by purveying it.

What is new is, in the first place, the fact that State funds are available to help pay for this rubbish and support its practitioners; and in the second place, the extraordinarily pompous and bogus language these practitioners use when their activities (invariably referred to as "art") are in any way questioned or criticised.

The exhibition, organised by a man who calls himself "Genesis P. Orridge," is said to include sanitary towels, bloodstained clothes and photographs of sexual and sado-masochistic goings-on.

"Personally," says Miss Linda Lloyd-James, described as an administrator at the ICA, "I think this is an area of art that is very little understood by the general public. And I think that what Genesis is trying to do is very interesting."

A woman who posed for the photographs is reported to have said: "I don't think the pictures are pornographic at all. They just show how I was used as an object for corruption by the media" — a ludicrous example of jargonised doublethink as I have ever come across.

On a higher administrative level, Mr Ted Little, who is described as Art Director of the ICA, is reported to have said in noble defiance of his detractors: "We will not be blackmailed."

It now appears that Genesis and some of his fellow-artists were sent on a tour of Europe with their travelling-show and that this was paid for by another State agency, the British Council. "I think it was a good investment, sending these young people round Europe," says Mr Little. "It shows the rest of the

world that not everyone in this country has their artistic taste buried in the 19th century. . . . We are not Left-wing or reactionary. We simply express all forms of art and points of view."

Yes. What form of art, what point of view will these people express next? Will they express a rather common point of view by closing down their Institute (perhaps selling it on fire—isn't pyromania a perfectly good form of art?) and taking themselves artistically off as far away as possible and at their own expense?

Grudge Hits Out

WHO will get the job of Chairman of the Race Relations Industrial Training Board when the present incumbent, Mr Matthew Goth-Jones, brother of Sir William Goth-Jones, Vice-Chancellor of Stretford University, leaves to become Chairman of the Community Discrimination Advisory Council in the New Year?

It looks as if it may be Mr Arthur Grudge, the veteran Labour M.P. for Stretford North, who has recently been showing inexplicable signs, at times verging on desperation, of wishing to retire from Parliament.

Mr Grudge has always taken a keen interest in the race



relations industry and has been making more and more speeches about it lately.

In a speech at Nerdley the other day he said that nobody could be more opposed to censorship—it had been aptly called "the ultimate obscenity"—than himself. But he thought newspapers and the media generally must consider very carefully the social consequences of reporting such things as the

growing number of unprovoked attacks being made by old age pensioners on young coloured British citizens.

The salary of the Chairman of the Race Relations Industrial Training Board is £15,000 per annum.

For the Scientist

A NEWSPAPER photograph showing the arrival of President Tsedenbal of Mongolia at Moscow Airport has been examined in detail by the "Way of the World" Sociological department.

An expert reports: Apart from Mr Kosygin, the Soviet Prime Minister, who is wearing a fur



hat, all the figures in the photograph—as tests by electron microscope confirm—are wearing the regular trilby hat, though at varying angles, ranging from the 1-207-degree left-hand tilt of the wall-eyed man standing immediately behind Kosygin to the downward turn (0-736 on the Zorza scale) of the unidentified man behind President Podgornov and the pronounced right-hand tilt (1-563 recurring) of President Tsedenbal's hat, of which the higher crown, with its pronounced indentation, may well be the most significant feature of the photograph.

Microscopic examination of the withered bouquet held by President Tsedenbal, who appears to have two left hands, suggests that vegetation of extraterrestrial origin may be present. Since this would involve a revolution in our ways of thinking about the universe and the end of civilisation as we know it, we need to carry out a great deal more research before we can come up with an answer.

Peter Simple

Mr PORRIDGE IN A STIR

By JOHN PEACOCK
FORN SHOW producer Genesis P. Orridge has been touring Europe—with the British taxpayer picking up his bill.

The British Council gave him almost £1,000 to stage his exhibition called "Prostitution" in Milan and Paris, it was revealed yesterday.

He is getting a further £496 from the council towards a tour of America and Canada starting next month.

The council received £10 million from the Government last year to promote art abroad. The Arts Council, which contributed towards Mr. Orridge's show at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts, re-

ceives more than £37 million from the Government.

Tory M.P. Nicholas Fairbairn last night called on Home Secretary Merlyn Rees to find out just how much money the British Council has given Mr. Orridge altogether.

top; The Daily Telegraph
21.10.76
left; The Daily Mirror
21.10.76

British Council attacked for 'porn subsidy'

By NICHOLAS DE JONGH,
Arts Reporter

THE OUTBURST of indignation which has greeted the sensational exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts by performance artist Genesis P. Orridge, and containing sadomasochistic objects, reached a crescendo yesterday. There were allegations that the British Council had been subsidising pornography at the taxpayer's expense, and an MP called for increased scrutiny of the council's work.

The secretary-general of the Arts Council, Mr Roy Shaw, is reported to have found the exhibition "disgusting," as has the Conservative MP, Mr Nicholas Fairbairn.

The British Council, a Government-funded body which sponsors British art of all kinds abroad, denied that it had sponsored pornographic exhibitions by Mr P. Orridge in foreign countries. A number of critics here and abroad regard Mr P. Orridge as a leading young performance artist.

All council supported tours are funded after recommendations by its fine art panel, headed by Professor Peter Lasco, of the Courtauld Institute.

In 1974 Mr P. Orridge was given £82.50 to perform in a festival of street theatre in Rottweil, Germany, and in 1975 he was chosen by an international jury to exhibit in Paris. A total of £273.58 was given to him for material, fares, and subsistence. Neither exhibition was regarded as pornographic.

Also in 1975 Mr P. Orridge exhibited at the Milan exhibition and was paid £650 for two days: £300 for fees, £50 for materials, £180 for fares, and £120 for subsistence. Photographs of this occasion, and Mr P. Orridge's description of it, suggest that there was nothing salacious about it. The exhibition consisted of an aerial mime or ballet.

Mr P. Orridge has been invited to appear at eight galleries in America, and the council has approved a grant of £496 towards his expenses. A council spokesman said that it was "sensitive to public opinion"

Mr Ted Little, the ICA's arts centre director, commenting on criticisms of the show, Prostitution, said: "Genesis has succeeded admirably. The show was concerned with show how information is distorted. One has got to look at his show in the context of everything that is happening at the ICA."

There were, he said, regular film programmes, a series of musical concerts, serious academic talks and exhibitions of silk screen posters, stuffed quilts, and children's book illustrations. "We are presenting what is happening in the arts and society. Inevitably sometimes we upset some people and cause controversy (though not for its own sake), and this happens very occasionally. Some people say we are far too staid and middle of the road."

Mr Fairbairn, who was once chairman of the Tarverse Theatre Club in Edinburgh, where the plays are not infrequently avant garde or sensation, described Mr P. Orridge yesterday as a "destroyer." He said: "Now we are getting the lid off the maggot factory. Here, at the expense of the taxpayer, the British Council apparently sends these spurious and bogus destroyers around Europe to destroy the values of Western civilisation." It was not a matter of art. It was a question of attempting "to destroy the difference between good and bad, and right and wrong for the benefit of the Left."

North American tour set

Britain may cut grant to pop-and-porn art show

LONDON (CP) — Controversy over a so-called pop-and-porn art exhibition has caused the government-backed British Council to reconsider a grant toward taking the exhibition to Canada and the United States.

A spokesman for the council, which gave organizer Genesispillow Orridge, 26, about £1,000 (\$1,650) toward his recent European tour, says the council will re-examine the £496 grant proposed for the North American tour. The show is scheduled for Chicago, Toronto, Los Angeles, Calgary, Portland, Ore., and New York.

"We are very sensitive to public opinion," the council spokesman said in reference to public and newspaper criticism of the show.

The trouble started over Orridge's exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) here entitled Prostitution, and including displays of whips, soiled sanitary towels and used contraceptives. But main criticism has been of photographs showing sexual intercourse and oral sex.

The council, dedicated to promoting British art and culture abroad and assisting foreign students in Britain, said the grant was recommended by the Fine Arts Advisory Committee, an independent body.

Several members of Parliament have called for increased security of the council's work, charging it is using taxpayers money to sub-

sidize pornography. All the artists and the council deny the shows in Europe were pornographic, and conflicting reports leave unclear exactly what type of show Orridge and his group gave in West Germany, France and Italy.

A council spokesman said that in Milan, Italy, the team performed a sort of aerial ballet on scaffoldings, adding: "They were fully dressed and it was in no way obscene."

But photographs at the London show, labelled Milan 76, include photographs of either real or simulated sex acts.

When the local storm developed, allegedly pornographic photographs of model Cozey Fanny Tutli, one of the troupe, were suddenly locked away, to be shown only on request. They were back on display Wednesday.

The London show is outside normal legal controls because it is on private premises and open only to ICA members — who pay a £3 annual membership, plus 25 pence admission fee.

The ICA gets a £80,000 annual grant from the Arts Council and politicians already are urging that this grant also be reconsidered.

ICA art director Ted Little says, "We simply express all forms of art and points of view to suit all tastes." Only last week there was criticism of another ICA exhibition, featuring a display of babies' soiled nappy-liners by artist Mary Kelly.

The organizer — he was born Neil Magson and later changed his name to Genesispillow Orridge — is from Manchester and last April he was fined £100 for sending five indecent postcards through the mail.

Although he and his associates insist their European show was not pornographic, The Sun, in an editorial, charges that "Mr. Orridge is prostituting Britain — and sending us the bill."

A spokesman for Orridge said it was not known what type of show was planned for the North American tour since "details haven't been finalized yet."

Pop-and-porn art may lose grant

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REGINA CHAPTER



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PRESENTS...



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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23 & P M

OPTIMIST CLUB of REGINA

Presents

Up With People

Member of the International Association of Optimists



THANKS to the newspapers, Genesis P. Orridge has become a household name and there are queues for his exhibition in London. Should he be subsidised by public funds? Caroline Tisdall argues the point in Arts Guardian, page 10.

CAROLINE TISDALL

Genesis and Cossey will owe the success this publicity guarantees them to those who have leapt to the defence of public morals and the taxpayer's money... In the face of such apoplectic rage it's not surprising that public bodies like the Arts Council and the British Council react so nervously'

THANKS TO THE press, Genesis P. Orridge and Cosy Fanni Tutti have now become household names. They themselves will carefully document the outraged headlines. Publicity is what they seek and publicity in abundance is what they are getting. The rich fruits of days one to four of the current sex show scandal are already on display as part of their exhibition at the ICA. By the time the current art controversy dies down their scrapbook will be fat enough to ensure gigs a plenty here and abroad for them, their rock band Throbbing Gristle and any professional striptease artiste they care to take along with them.

Genesis and Cossey will owe the success this publicity guarantees them to those who have leapt to the defence of public morals and the taxpayer's money. Even the contributions to their careers made by the British Council, the Arts Council and the ICA pall by comparison to the debt they now owe to Tory MP Nicholas Fairbairn and the famed shock of Fleet Street.

What they have been skilful enough to do is to set off a mechanism that never fails to work in this country. Art hits the headlines when one of several red flags are waved. The traditional ones are record prices paid for art works or forgeries that undermine the property value of art works and upset

the market. That's old hat: and usually only affects dead artists anyway. For the living, the results are immediate if there is something the press can be shocked by, or something that can be mocked.

The Genesis P-Orridge row belongs to the shocking category. The Tate's Carl Andre brick controversy was the field of the mockers, the "any child could do it" syndrome. Shocking and mocking are both quickly linked up to the trump card, and that of course is the Taxpayer's Money.

It was this vital ingredient of taxpayer's money that prevented the nappy incident, also at the ICA, hitting the headlines last week. Mary Kelly's serious and non-publicly seeking investigation of her child's development drew the mocking attention of cartoonists and Guardian leader writers alike. But because it was modest in scale and not obviously financed by public or state bodies, there was no fury to be unleashed. Otherwise the treatment she got was much the same on a smaller scale. She had touched a taboo subject: shit, like sex, is still not acceptable in the visual arts.

For a crash course in the kind of prejudice such taboos arouse, the outburst of Nicholas Fairbairn, MP, in the Telegraph could not be bettered. It was all there. There was the general suspicion of Modern Art: "Like all modern exhibitions it was an excuse for exhibitionism by every crack, queer, squint and ass in the business." There was the outrage that anything nasty should go under the guise of art. And most pronounced was the perennial belief that our state subsidising bodies have been taken over by degenerate leftists. Fairbairn called for the disbanding of the Arts Council. His argument, if it can be called that, was that state subsidy and public money should be replaced by private patronage, abolishing the "spooks with soft-belt intellectual arrogance... anxious to promote every will-bin attitude they can to degrade, language, meaning and thought."

In the face of such apoplectic rage it's not surprising that public bodies like the Arts Council and the British Council react so nervously. When they are not fending off attacks from conservatives they are being bludgeoned by radicals for dragging their feet in the support of contemporary developments with which our public is so patently unfamiliar.

If Nicholas Fairbairn was familiar with the performance art of the past 10 years he would have witnessed things more shattering than used tampons (an old trick used by the feminists of New York to draw attention to the male-

dominated structure of the art-world). He might also have seen self-mutilation in Paris, the legendary chopping of a Viennese penis, masturbation in New York and Kassel, and the total spectrum of Eros Ghenos and Thanatos complete with detailed documentation of psychopathic sex crimes in Bologna.

Sooner or later, since art reflects society and such things exist in society, reflections of sex were bound to crop up in English art too. Inevitably they become part of the thousands of applications the Arts Council and the British Council receive each year. Part of the brief of both organisations is to support contemporary art. Both err if anything on the side of caution in the way they treat their applications. The implication of the criticisms currently levelled against them is that control should be increased to the extent that only the sunny side of art is allowed through. That would be a grossly distorted reflection and implies an intolerable degree of censorship.

The role of censor is currently played by the press anyway, and makes itself directly felt in the caution with which state bodies act. It is crudely applied and often grossly inaccurate. Under the front page headline of "Sex Show Man's Amazing Free Tour," the Evening News correspondent stated on Wednesday that "The British Council paid travel, hotel and meal bills on the two year tour" (of Europe). It was not a sex show that the British Council subsidised, but variations of balletic performance, albeit featuring Cossey in transparent Lurex top, that went down well in Rotweil, Paris and Milan.

The British Council does not hand out money to anyone who asks. Applicants must be firmly invited by a foreign institution and in no way did the British Council pay for a two year tour. In 1974 they gave Genesis and Cossey £52.50 to participate in a street theatre festival in Rotweil, Germany. In 1975 they were invited by an international committee to take part in the Paris Biennale and received £273.58 for fares, subsistence and materials for an exhibition installation.

For their two day performance in the main shopping arcade of Milan during the survey of 50 British artists sponsored by the British Council and the City Council of Milan this year to the tune of some £50,000 each, Genesis and Cossey received £600.00, broken down into a fee, fares, subsistence and materials. This should be seen in the context of the British Council's annual spending of £207,000 on Fine Arts and £115,000 on exhibitions, ranging from William Blake to Henry Moore—and Genesis P-Orridge.

Yesterday in Parliament

END AID FOR ICA DEMAND

By Our Parliamentary Staff
THE "Prostitution" exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art was described in the Commons yesterday as a prostitution of taxpayers' money.

Mr PATRICK CORMACK (C, Staffordshire, SW), who admitted in response to Labour shouts that he had seen the show, said the Home Office should have urgent talks with the Education Department with a view to stopping the grant to the institute, which was squandering public money.

Urged by Mr Cormack to see the exhibition for himself, Mr JOHN, Minister of State Home Office, replied: "As a matter of departmental responsibility, this exhibition is outside my control. As a private citizen my leisure time is so limited that I do not choose to go to that exhibition."

Mr NICHOLAS FAIRBAIRN (C, Kinross and West Perthshire) asked Mr John if he was satisfied with a law which allowed Government bodies such as the Arts Council and the British Council "to spend taxpayers' money on sending Cosy Fanny Tutti to have a bath in polystyrene chips in Milan."

Genesis Pillow Orridge, organiser of the ICA exhibition, and a model called Cosy Fanny Tutti went on a trip to Milan sponsored by the British Council earlier this year.

'Matter of taste'

Mr JOHN said no body of human beings would make correct decisions in every case.

"But the correctness of decisions are matters of individual taste, and many of the things you say are those with which I would not agree."

"These are matters for the Arts Council, which has autonomy, and the Government does not interfere in them."

Answering Mr Robert McCrindle (C, Brentwood and Ongar), Mr John said the Home Secretary had no plans at present for legislation making fundamental changes in the law on obscenity.

When possible the Government wanted to legislate to give effect to the Law Commission recommendations proposing amendments in the Obscene Publications Act to compensate for the abolition of the common law of obscenity.

SPIC: CORNACK

NO FUNDS LEFT FOR DANCERS

By ANN MORROW

RESENTMENT at the way money has been made available for exhibitions like "Prostitution" at the Institute of Contemporary Arts was expressed yesterday by Mr Dennis Stoll, who has been forced to cancel a trip to Egypt of a serious group of dancers.

The Ancient Egyptian Temple Dancers were to have left London today, but the £1,500 needed to cover their fares was not forthcoming from the British Council, who announced bluntly that there was not enough left in the budget.

The troupe of ten re-enact complicated 3,000-year-old dances with music in the ancient idiom composed by Mr Stoll—son of Sir Oswald. He said with some bitterness yesterday: "I feel if they called themselves Dancers of Lesbos they'd be given a special plane."

But a spokesman for the British Council said: "At no time was money promised."

Share of criticism

The Arts Council has also had more than a fair share of criticism this week.

The controversial "Prostitution" exhibition now on at the ICA in fact has had no grant from the Arts Council though the erroneous impression was given that it allocated £200.

The Secretary-General, Mr Roy Shaw, explained: "The Arts Council makes a grant to the ICA for its total programme. The responsibility for funding this event (Prostitution)... is solely that of the ICA."

End aid demand

OUR PARLIAMENTARY STAFF writes: The "Prostitution" exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art was described in the Commons yesterday as a prostitution of taxpayers' money.

Mr PATRICK CORMACK (C, Staffordshire, SW), said the Home Office should have urgent talks with the Education Department with a view to stopping the grant to the institute, which was squandering public money.

Mr NICHOLAS FAIRBAIRN (C, Kinross and West Perthshire), asked Mr JOHN, Minister of State, Home Office, if he was satisfied with a law which allowed Government bodies such as the Arts Council and the British Council "to spend taxpayers' money on sending Cosy Fanny Tutti to have a bath in polystyrene chips in Milan."

Genesis Pillow Orridge, organiser of the ICA exhibition, and a model called Cosy Fanny Tutti went on a trip to Milan sponsored by the British Council earlier this year. Mr JOHN said no body of human beings would make correct decision in every case.

1cc
DURRANT'S**DURRANT HOUSE**
HERBAL HILL
LONDON E.C.1
01-276 1733**WHAT'S ON**6/4, ARGYLL STREET,
LONDON, W.1ISSUE
DATED

22 OCT 1976

SATURDAY, October 23

Ski show and demonstrations at the National Hall, Olympia.
Dog shows: London and Home Counties toy poodle show at Brent Town Hall; English sheepdog show at Alexandra Palace. (47)
Do-it-yourself exhibition opens at the Empire Hall, Olympia. (47)
Exhibition of Jean Hugo theatre designs opens at the Victoria and Albert Museum. (47)
Old bottle fair takes place at Ashburnham Primary School, Chelsea. (47)
Illustrated lecture on water birds at the Horniman Museum. (49)
Sightseeing: *Hidden London*, a guided mystery tour starting from Holborn Underground station. (52)
Art: Coum Transmission Performance at the ICA; the Royal Institute of Oil Painters exhibition opens at the Mall Galleries; paintings, collages and sculpture at the Serpentine; etchings by Alan Green at the Tate.
Gregorian Association Annual Festival at Westminster Cathedral.
Concerts: The London Bach Society at St John's, Smith Square; the John Bate Choir with the London Soloists Ensemble and Chamber Orchestra at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. (38)
A Beecham Lullipop: The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with solo pianist Ilana Vered at the Fairfield Hall. (38)
Choral concert with the London Welsh Male Voice Choir at the Royal Albert Hall. (38)
Recitals: Jean Deplace (cello) with Andree Plaine (piano) at the Wigmore Hall; (38) Jeack Pickett (soprano) with Sitouna Mahlo (flute), Sharon McKinley (cello) and Annette Heilbron (harp/sichord) in the Purcell Room. (38)
The Gay Tyroloese: programme of yodelling, zither music and dancing in national costume at the Royal Festival Hall. (38)
Autumn concert by the Southfields and Daventry Folk Choirs at Southfields Central Hall. (38)
Rock: Peter Frampton and Gary Wright at Wembley; Patti Smith at Hammersmith. (40)
Pop and poetry: Pam Ayres and Dai Francis at Lewisham Concert Hall. (40)
Sport: League matches; hockey; basketball; rugby union fixtures; athletics; judo; motor racing; fencing; sailing; ski-ing; greyhound race meetings including the Grand Prix at Walthamstow. (44)

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22 OCT 1976

SUNDAY, October 24

Films: *The Gumball Rally*, *Futureworld*, *From Noon Till Three*, *No Deposit, No Return* and *Dr Syn alias The Scarecrow* all on general release. (19-28)
Japanese dance *Gagaku* at the Royal Albert Hall. (32)
Special services to commemorate the Battle of Trafalgar in Trafalgar Square. (45)
A London village—one of the many organised walks in and around London this afternoon. (52)
Art: Coum Transmissions performance at the ICA. (37)
Poetry: *Bewilderment in the Wilderness of Westminster*, performed by Clive James and Russell Davies at the Shaw Theatre. (51)
Music in the afternoon includes piano recitals by Jeffrey Siegal at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and Frederic Aguessy at the Wigmore Hall; concert for children and parents by Michael and Doreen Musckett in the Purcell Room. (38)
Evening recitals: The Robles Trio at Conway Hall; the Consort of Musicks in the Purcell Room; Frances Howard (soprano) and Jennifer Tavener (piano) at St Bartholomew-the-Great. (38)
Tchaikovsky programmes: The English Symphony Orchestra and Bands of the Grenadier Guards and Blues and Royals at the Royal Albert Hall; Mstislav Rostropovich conducts the London Philharmonic Orchestra, with piano soloist Ilana Vered, at the Royal Festival Hall. (38)
Concert by the Apollo Chamber Orchestra at St John's, Smith Square. (38)
Scandinavian evening with works played by the Royal Artillery Orchestra at Woolwich Public Hall. (38)
Flamenco recital by John Williams and Paco Peña at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. (38)
Experimental music at the ICA. (38)
Rock: The Cate Brothers at the New Victoria, Frankie Miller's Full House, plus Shanghai and Meal Ticket at the Round House; Barclay James Harvest at the Fairfield Hall. (40)
Jazz: London Jazz Big Band at the 100 club. (40)
Sport: Shellsport European Car racing championship at Brands Hatch; motor cycle racing; basketball; fencing; judo; sailing; ski demonstrations at Olympia. (44)

Protests at use of public money for Contemporary Arts exhibition

Mr Robert McCrindle (Brenwood and Ongar, C) asked the Home Secretary if he planned amending legislation on the law on obscenity.

Mr Brynónor John, Minister of State, Home Office (Pontypool, Lab)—The Home Secretary (Mr Merlyn Rees) has no present plans for legislation making fundamental changes in the law of obscenity, but possibly we want to legislate to give effect to the recommendations of the Law Commission proposing certain amendments to the Obscene Publications Act designed to compensate for the abolition of the common law on indecency.

Mr McCrindle—As a result of recent decisions the law is full of inconsistencies. Consideration might be given to scrapping the present situation and going back to a situation of straight censorship, taking into account the standards and values of 1976.

Mr John—The question of the "deprave and corrupt" firm is criticized but those who criticize it have nothing better to suggest to put in its place.

I would ask Mr McCrindle to

look at the effect of the Law Lords' ruling in the courts only yesterday.

Mr Nicholas Fairbairn (Kilnross and West Perthshire, C)—Is the minister satisfied with the law which allows bodies such as the Arts Council or the British Council to spend taxpayers' money on sending Cossey Fund Turf to take a bath in polythene chips in Milsen and exhibitions such as we have in London? Is it government policy to allow money to be spent in this way? (Conservative cheers and Labour interruptions.)

Mr John—No body of human beings will make correct decisions in every case. (Conservative laughter.) The correctness of decisions are matters of individual taste—(renewed laughter)—and with many of the things Mr Fairbairn says I would not agree. The basic answer is that these matters are for the Arts Council which has autonomy, and the Government do not interfere.

Mr Robert Hughes (Aberdeen, North, Lab)—Would the minister take into account when public money is allocated the use to

which outside bodies make of it? (Conservative cheers.)

Mr John—I accept that when the grant is being considered these matters are taken into account. One can never ensure correct decisions in all the cases in which grants are made.

Mr Patrick Cormack (South-West Staffordshire, C)—Will the minister go across to the Institute of Contemporary Arts? Will he see the exhibition entitled "Prostitution" which is currently on display and which is itself a prostitution of the taxpayers' money? (Conservative cheers and Labour shouts of "Have you seen it?")

Yes, I have seen it. (Labour laughter.) Will the minister have urgent consultations with the Secretary of State for Education (Mrs Shirley Williams) with a view to banning the grant to that particular body which is squandering our money? (Conservative cheers.)

Mr John—As a matter of departmental responsibility this exhibition is outside my control. My leisure time as a private citizen is so limited that I do not choose to go to that exhibition. (Laughter.)

There is room for the gentle art of wasting money

There is said to be a Chinese proverb which runs: "Do not burn down your house to inconvenience your mother-in-law", and something of that spirit is clearly required on the part of those contemplating the untow over the widespread allegation that ominous wrapping noises have been heard coming from 105 Piccadilly, headquarters of the Arts Council, with the concomitant suggestion that these are caused by the men with old England's winding-sheet, who have finally arrived and set to work.

The evidence offered for this gloomy conclusion consists of two recent exhibitions, one, by a Miss Mary Kelly, of used babies' nappies (that is, the used nappies of babies, not the nappies of used babies, though no doubt that is the next logical development), the other, of various goods largely of interest to what Mr Jonathan Miller once memorably called "your average straight-warped", by a Mr Genesis P. Orridge (which, as the magistrate said to "Sippy" Sipperley when he and Bertie had been laid up at Bost-Race Street after a Bost-Race Night fracas and Sippy had thought it best to be coaxed as Leon Trotsky, "I am strongly inclined to think an assumed and fictitious name"), together with the work of a gentleman whose contribution to the cultural heritage of the world is to sweep piles of dust together and prod them with a stick.

The uproar is caused not only, or even mainly, by the nature of the offerings, but rather by the fact that they have an, either directly or through the Institute of Contemporary Arts, been subsidized from other people's money; it is suggested that the Arts Council, responsible for providing the grass into which the nappy-lady, the straight-warped gentleman and the crossing-sweeper are even now dipping

their bread, has, to put it with more moderation than some have, exceeded its brief, and even that it ought to be closed down *instanter*.

First, let us try not to be too hard on those wielding the bread. These are difficult times, and the ancient and honourable profession of the *schmorrer* is feeling the pinch no less than others; if you will, in the privacy of your breakfast-room this morning, be absolutely honest with yourself, you will agree that if somebody offered you five hundred quid for a morning's dust-sweeping, you would accept it and ask no questions, and if you could also get paid for your infant's soiled underwear, you would likewise take the money and run. It is a pity, to be sure, that the nappy-lady had to spoil things by introducing a discordant note into the otherwise melodious sound given off by the wheels of the trolley on which she was carrying away her own share of the loot, declaring that, "It is art because I say so", for that is a contention with which I feel it is possible to disagree without necessarily casting oneself as a latter-day Herosthratus. But in general, humanity has proceeded for quite a long time on the principle that the dice is to the swift, and that if a man can get his hand into your pocket and out again without being detected, he is entitled to leave the scene on a bus marked *Finders Keepers*.

But should the Arts Council have unpleasant things done to it if it spends even a modest amount of its grant on manifest rubbish? (The modesty is important; all the activities at present under discussion have inexact accounting, for considerably less than one hundredth of one per cent of the Arts Council's allocation of our money.) I think it should not; I further think that there are good reasons for my conclusion,

and I also think that some of the agitation being worked up at present is as arrogant and foolish as some of the remarks being made by, to name but one, the nappy-lady, which is saying a great deal.

To waste money is one of the minor but indispensable functions of any form of artistic patronage. This is not because, as some argue, it is impossible to tell what is art and what is rubbish, so that the nappy-lady may be bailed in centuries to come as a new Rembrandt, and the dust-bag as the lineal descendant of Praxiteles; neither of them will ever be heard of again, in any context, as soon as the present fuss is over, and the world will have lost nothing whatever as a consequence of their disappearance. The random scattering of money by an organization such as the Arts Council is justified not as a form of insurance against subsequent dramatic rearrangement of present artistic judgments, but as prophylaxis against timidity on the part of the scatterers. The Arts Council has, paradoxically but rightly, always sought to avoid making artistic judgments; it thinks, again rightly, that the ICA is a body that deserves support, and also thinks, no less rightly, that those in charge of the ICA should be allowed to work out their own artistic destiny without further interference. This means that the ICA, and through it the Arts Council itself, will come several spectacular croppers from time to time, as the Tate Gallery did not long ago with the bricks-and-blankets man. But just as I made it clear, while pointing out that the bricks-and-blankets man was a dealer in bricks and blankets rather than an artist, that the Tate was entitled to make a fool of itself occasionally because if it didn't it would never make a sale of itself, which is what it does usually, so I now declare that although

the dauntless three w'o ha e caused the present fuss are not artists but *marchands d'ordure*, the eventual alternative to wasting money on them will not be to spend it on masterpieces but to spend it only on work admired by the *Daily Express*.

That is not the kind of fate one would wish on art. Yet the sound of Philistia Felix baying for blood is never a pleasant one, and the bitter truth is that the greater danger is not that wasting art-money on rubbish will dry up the supply of good work by the operation of an aesthetic Gresham's Law; it is that accepting demands that art-money shall be denied to rubbish will open the door to those who would, if they had their way, deny it to art as well.

I sometimes wish that the Arts Council would have the full courage of its convictions and set aside a few thousand pounds each year in an allocation boldly headed "For wasting". It is a truism that he who never makes a mistake will never make anything, but truisms are commonly true, and it is a pity that Lord Gibson and his embattled colleagues are inevitably forced, the world being what it is, to remain on the defensive. But to be on the defensive is not the same as to be on the retreat, and I hope that they will keep their nerve and ride out this latest storm and the similar storms that, from time to time, will undoubtedly follow. Let them take comfort from the fact that history will absolve them; Cleo's sieve has holes of perfectly-judged size, and these, as they have done for thirty centuries, will pass such things as dirty nappies and piles of dust and alien porn, and miraculously become too small to let good work slip through. You have doubts? Then account for the fact that you have already forgotten the name of the nappy-lady, though you read it hardy a thousand words ago.

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The Guardian.

The Arts Council's deliberation (and disgust) about the ICA exhibition

Sir — Your report (October 22) on the cancellation of the "prostitution" exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London gives the impression that this was done by the Arts Council. May I therefore say simply and emphatically that the Arts Council was in no way responsible either for putting on this exhibition or cancelling it.

Caroline Tisdall's helpful article in the same issue said that, given the extreme over-reaction to this event, it is not surprising that bodies like the Arts Council and the British Council react so nervously. I cannot speak for the British Council, but I do not think the Arts Council's reaction can be described as nervous. The full council has yet to react at all — it will discuss the subject at its

meeting on Wednesday next. Senior officers who asked the ICA about the exhibition, before it was put on, said that it seemed in questionable taste and that the council would take this event into account when assessing the ICA's next annual grant. That was not nervousness, but an expression of concern which, as events turned out, proved to be entirely justified.

Subsequently I have seen the exhibition and have un-nervously given my personal opinion that it manages to be both boring and disgusting and should not be funded by public money.—Yours,

Roy Shaw,
Secretary General,
Arts Council
of Great Britain.

105 Piccadilly,
London, W.1.

The Times.
2 November 1976.

Report for DPP on exhibition

A report has been sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions after a visit by police last month to the controversial "Prostitution" exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London.

Two senior members of the obscene publications squad at Scotland Yard became members of the institute so that they could visit the exhibition, where exhibits included chains, flails, and photographs of a nude girl, as well as female bloodstained clothing.

Police pay to report on exhibition

By Clive Borrell

Two senior detectives of the obscene publications squad who each paid £3 to become members of the Institute of Contemporary Arts were yesterday compiling a report to the Director of Public Prosecutions after spending an hour at the exhibition, entitled "Prostitution", staged by Mr Genesis P. Orridge at Nash House Gallery, in London.

"They must have queued up like everyone else and paid their membership fee. We certainly did not know they were there", an official of the institute said.

I understand the two officers spent more than an hour in the gallery taking notes and were last night still writing their report to Sir Norman Skelhorn. It is not likely to be considered before Tuesday, when the eight-day exhibition ends.

After news of the police visit, a spokesman for Mr Orridge said that "action" performances planned each day until tomorrow had been cancelled. They were first performed on Wednesday, but because of "considerable" press interest both performers and spectators had found impossible difficulties.

Mr Ted Little, artistic director of the institute, said yesterday it had received only two letters of complaint from the public and six telephoned complaints.

Mr Nicholas Fairbairn, Conservative MP for Kinross, said yesterday he had made a report to Scotland Yard about the exhibition.

Much ado about nothing at the ICA

Marina Valzey on the latest art row

HOW far is the public display of sexuality (in art, or anything else) permissible; how can we tell whether it's good or bad of its kind; should this sort of art have any public subsidy?

We can argue about the quality, worth and interest of the work of Coom, the group of performance artists on show at the Institute of Contemporary Arts this week. But it is part of a general and recognised movement in art. It seems, at the best, hypocritical to be shocked at Cooney's postings in sex magazines generally on sale.

The performance I saw at the ICA consisted of the intent application of make-up, which resembled scars or wounds, on Cooney's face and arm. The exhibition consisted of inoffensive photographs of the group's performances in this and other countries; objects and souvenirs of physical obsessions and activities; photographs and articles from sex magazines; I myself found it trivial and only mildly interesting. But it raises important questions.

To take sexuality: more shocking, disturbing, sensual, erotic paintings are to be found in other public galleries or public exhibitions, if we could forget their context of respectability. Suffragettes dressed *Velesque*; masterly "The Rokeby Venus" at the National Gallery, a painting which scholarly opinion suggests was a privately commissioned portrait for the sexual defecation of an aristocrat. English artists this century, from Stanley Spencer to Lucian Freud, have produced properly acclaimed paintings about sexual life and many of them have been purchased from public funds. Sexual activities and attitudes are part and parcel of most aspects of art; how many people actually listen to what Shakespeare wrote?

In our century, a whole range of artists from Schwitters to Joseph Beuys and Warhol has moved from making art objects into public appearances, "happening," and even, at times, to a point where it seems their very life style is the art work.

Skill is easy to ascertain, but defining quality is the most difficult job in the world and depends largely on shared opinions. Time filters the art of the past but in sponsoring contemporary work we take a calculated risk. It is here that the question of public money comes in. If a broad spectrum of contemporary work is to be supported then mistakes are bound to be made, and some things supported which are eventually judged as inadequate, unimportant, or just plain no good.

A minuscule proportion of Arts Council money is spent on fringe, or new, or experimental,

activities. Even at the ICA, only a small proportion of their activities are controversial. At its worst, performance art, like other art forms, can be silly, stupid, trivial and boring. At its best, it can stretch our apprehensions, understanding, imagination.

BACK to painting: lovely plump ladies in shades of pink, mauve, violet, lavender, in shimmers of bluish light, sitting on beds, on chairs, standing by mirrors, by windows; stable yards and cobbled streets, all these scenes to be found in the riveting major exhibition Camden Town Recalled at the Fine Art Society.

Walter Sickert was the leader, ordinary life his subject, and his glimmering, glowing, and at times glowering paintings, in broken colour, patches of light and dark, sombre yet resonant in hue, dominate the exhibition, which also resurrects the three Camden Town exhibitions of 1911 and 1912 at the Carfax galleries.

The colour, the handling of paint is marvellous. Out of intimate scenes, sometimes banal, and even touched with squalor, something at times approaching the heroic emerges. There are not many radiant beauties here, little glamour, no pretence. There is instead the graceful awkwardness of the ordinary, the unexpected beauty of the commonplace.

And for context, and amplification, A Terrible Thing at the Norwich Castle Museum is an exploration of the years 1916-1918 in English art, from the time of the Post-Impressionist exhibition.

At the end of the first gallery, almost stunning in its impact, is Matthew Smith's Dulcie; against a hard-hitting red we see a woman sitting in a chair, her face edged and marked with greens and blues. Although the subject is honesty it has a vitality and a grandeur which runs up the nervy, tensile, passionate edge which had appeared in British painting. The Vorticist thrust into abstraction, glorifying the dynamic lines of the machine and the new technological age, hopes crushed in the mud of First World War trenches.

Acute observation of a very particular sort is exemplified in some contemporary exhibitions of British art: the eerie, mesmerising tempera paintings of David Tindle (Piccadilly Gallery), the watercolours and oils of tulips by Rory McCowan (Redfern) and the penetrating paintings of William Coldstream (Anthony d'Offay) and many present pre-occupations are neatly set out in the third section of Artists' Market, Earlham Street.

No more P. Orridge at the ICA

By Anthony Holden

TOMORROW sees the Arts Council's annual tour of inspection of the Institute of Contemporary Arts, to which it has this year granted some £95,000. Next day, alas just too late, sees the dismantling of the ICA's latest exhibition, the much publicised work of Genesis P. Orridge (né plain Paul Meeson) and his girl friend Casey Fannl Tutt.

Orridge last week declared himself satisfied by the outraged reaction of the Press to his show—entitled *Prostitution*—with its array of whips, chains and used sanitary towels in telling juxtaposition with photographs of Miss Tutt's sexual exploits. His intention, he explained, was to explore media attitudes to Casey's many and varied adventures, and this it had more than adequately achieved.

The ICA's governing council was not quite so buoyant. The week's disastrous publicity—which included denunciations from MPs, the Arts Council and the British Council; plus a visit from the Obscene Publications Squad—coincided with their annual negotiations for next year's Arts Council grant. The Arts Council, meanwhile, was negotiating its next annual budget with the Treasury.

Life at the ICA went on last week, with more than 1,000 people passing through its splendid Regency portals in London's Mall to visit its art gallery, its cinema, its theatre and its restaurant, and a few joining the Press and police to Orridge's threadbare exhibition hall.

It was unfortunate, the authorities conceded, that *Prostitution* followed an equally publicised display of nappy liners soiled in the name of art. But they couldn't remember such excellent attending: their recent display of American posters, or the current exhibition of Iranian landscape photographs, or many other such enterprises.

Orridge's exhibition will more than cover its cost to the ICA; a modest £200. But to the average taxpaying newspaper reader, it has cost £200 of public money, and the ICA is thus obliged to say whether or not a used Tampax is art.

"Frankly, I don't know what art is," is the candid confession of Ted Little, 33-year-old director of the ICA's arts centre. "I believe it is part of our function to provide a platform for contemporary British artists, including the avant-garde. It is for the public to judge Orridge's artistic merits."

Little's non-intervention policy. It must be said, has proved him a more stable ICA director than most of his storm-tossed predecessors. When he was appointed two years ago, he was the institute's fourth director in as many years. He has expanded its activities, and stabilised its finances. But his "open house" attitude towards all artists, of whatever quality, has lost him friends.

Eighteen months ago, after seven years guiding the ICA's financial fortunes, Lord Kissin resigned his chairmanship of the governing council. Earlier this month, Sir Roland Penrose, one of the ICA's founders in 1947, resigned the presidency. Both were dissatisfied with the present artistic régime.

Little is in charge of the ICA's exhibition hall, and oversees the theatre and film programmes, which each have their own directors responsible to him. The ICA gallery is run independently by Barry Barker. Because the institute is a registered charity, all are responsible to the nine-member council, comprising businessmen, aristocrats and media people concerned about the arts.

The council is a self-perpetuating body, filling its own gaps when one of its number departs. The current chairman is Robert Loder, a City director and farmer. Other members include Malcolm Horsman, financier and former associate of Jim Slater; Linda, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava; Roger Graef, filmmaker; Simon Jenkins, deputy editor of the London Evening Standard; Martin Landau, another City director; John Bodley, publisher; and Hilary Rubinstein, literary agent.

The council held a special meeting about Orridge ten days ago, after hearing of alarm at the Arts Council, but decided the show must go on. Their only compromise was to remove some explicit photos of Miss Tutt's modelling career from the walls, and place them in a guarded showcase.

What the Orridge saga reveals, above all, is that there is no effective quality control at the ICA. "Artistic decisions about shows like this," said one council member, "are an astonishing glissando of buck-passing."

The artistic establishment appears to agree. Both the Arts Council and the Arts Minister, Lord Donaldson, were at pains last week to avoid passing comment on artistic policy at the ICA. The Arts Council's secretary-general, Roy Shaw, passed a personal, adverse judgment on Orridge's artistic talents. But there was no suggestion that one trivial item on the institute's enormous annual programme would affect next year's grant.

Hysteria in the Press does not help. *Prostitution* and the nappy show are easy victims. But Little and his colleagues feel aggrieved that horrified attention is drawn to lectures on Irish nationalism and Marxist views of culture amid a busy and otherwise unexceptional programme. Regular visitors feel the schedules, too often, are not so much subversive as crashingly dull.

The council's honorary treasurer, Martin Landau of Guinness Peat, pays tribute to the current régime's attempts to make the place solvent. Overheads in so grand a building are enormous, with rates at £18,000 a year and rent considerably more. Landau stresses that the institute's earned income from membership, box-office receipts, catering and publications is more than half again as much as the Arts Council grant.

Yet this has not been a happy financial year. The hot summer, and disappointing attendances at two of the more commercial exhibitions (one, *Destination America*, linked with the ITV Bicentennial series) have spoiled a good start. A considerable deficit, as yet a close secret, will dictate a more popular approach next season.

One thing, after what Little calls "this nightmare week," is certain. Both council and administrators will be going to some lengths to avoid another such controversy. In their current financial state, they cannot risk such public hostility. So the great British public, if no-one else, has given Orridge its verdict: we may not know much about art, but we know what we don't like.

If this is art —what will happen next

THE Evening News is to be commended on its stand against the waste of public money in the sponsoring of the so-called "Prostitution" art exhibition.

The world must think we have gone mad.

We cut back on clinics and roads and defence but still find public money for something which offends many taxpayers.

I am not against this sort of show being put on, and good luck to those who want to see it.

But its place is in private premises, privately financed and preferably with the minimum of publicity.

I shall probably be accused by some of not appreciating modern art, or making a mountain out of a molehill.

I think most people would question if this is art and certainly if we allow this abuse of public expenditure to go unchecked, heaven knows what will happen next.

The Evening News is right to take a strong stand—you have the support of at least one Member of Parliament.—**ROBERT McCRINDLE, MP** for Brentwood and Ongar

Dancers

IT comes as a shock to find that the British Council can spend money to send Genesis P. Orridge abroad. My Ancient Egyptian

WRITE to Readers' Letters, Evening News, Carmelite House, London EC4A 3DF. Or telephone your letter to 353 5801.

temple dancers were invited to Cairo officially to share a programme with Egypt's leading dance group at a new theatre.

But the British Council's head of drama, Mr. Andrew Welch, told us that they had no money left to pay our fares either now or next year. The Egyptians were paying all the other expenses.

What is the British Council's artistic criteria? —**DENNIS STOLL**, Artistic Director, Ancient Egyptian Temple Dancers, Putney Heath Lane, Putney.

Waste

I WOULD like to congratulate your newspaper on the way you have tracked down the waste of public funds being granted to pseudo artists.

Various public organisations have provided money for their pornography, which can only destroy the values of our society.

I hope that your readers and staff will not cease to let me know of any occasion or any incident in which private people's funds are being wrongly spent or wasted by public bodies.

It is utterly wrong that people who would not spend a shilling of their private income on promoting these things, should recommend that they should be pro-

moted, at the expense of much poorer people in foreign countries in order to display the cultural life of Britain.

There is a social, cultural and political war which is aimed at the destruction of our society and your help is most welcome and most salutary.—**NICHOLAS FAIRBAIRN, QC, MP** for Kinross and West Perthshire.

Dustbin

I NEED money and now I have worked out the ideal way to get it.

I am going to dip several household utensils into paint and then I shall get a wheelbarrow, load them into it and take them to the Arts Council.

They are sure to give me a grant and if I can somehow get two nude models to perform an obscene act while my art is on show, I'm positive I will be several hundreds of pounds better off.

After all, I will be exhibiting life and you can do anything for art's sake.—**D.M., Merton Park.**

Brazen

THE Prostitution exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts is revolting.

But what I find so shocking is not so much the people parading their puerile sexual fantasies in public and calling it art, but the bureaucrats who spend taxpayers' money as they like.

They are devoid of any sense of proportion and respect for the decencies of life.

They just jump like fleas when they hear the word "art" solemnly or, rather, brazenly pronounced over exhibits whose only possible destination could be the dustbin.—**MRS. M. JACKSON, Llanoter Road, Wembley.**

TREATING TAXPAYERS WITH CONTEMPT

I HAVE no objection to any of my taxes being used to feed stray cats, but the idea that even a fraction of a penny of my hard-earned cash might support the antics of the unsavoury decadents exhib-

iting at the ICA turns me to thoughts of bloody revolution. Perhaps that is what is needed—a revolt by the army of decent, contemptuously treated taxpayers.—**N. LEWIS, Westland Avenue, Hornchurch.**

Evening News

LONDON, THURSDAY OCTOBER 28 1976

We've boobed over cash hand-outs, says arts chief

THE Arts Council, which helped finance the controversial Genesis P. Orridge sex-art exhibition, admitted today: We made mistakes.

And top of the list: Mr. Orridge's *Coum Transmissions* group.

They were given £900 by the Arts Council.

But their grant was stopped halfway through the year because "they were just not good enough," said the council's director-general Roy Shaw.

Orridge's controversial "Prostitution" exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, featured pornographic photographs, contraceptives, used sanitary towels, whips and fials.

DECIDED

"They would have received the grant after their application was reviewed by a committee," he said.

"We were looking at them through part of that year and decided they were not good enough and cut them off halfway through the year.

"They did not get any more money and they have not asked us for any more."

Mr. Shaw said he could not explain exactly why the money stopped, as the officer who decided is in America at the moment.

The £900 grant was revealed in the council's annual report *The Arts In Hard Times*.

In it Mr. Shaw admits other errors.

SOARING

He mentions the "dis-performance art" activity tracted by a very minor "performance art" activity in which three young men walked around with poles on their heads.

And he added: "If, as may well be the case, it was a mistake to subsidise them, two pleas of mitigation should be entered.

"The first is that the mistake was, like the legendary barmaid's illegitimate baby, a very small one.

"The second is that an organisation making over 3,000 grants a year must, especially if it is to support experiment in the arts, occasionally back a loser."

Lord Gibson, the council's

who began painting when he was in prison. He got £500.

● THE JOHN BULL Puncture Repair kit (£10.13); The Tiny Theatre of Mistakes (£1,270); and two drama groups, The Belt and Braces Roadshow (£31,250) and Sal's Meat Market (£2,550).

GRANT

Asked today about the grant to Ray Richards, Mr. Shaw said: "I thought that was a mistake but you have to take chances."

And of the other groups he said: "I am sure some of it is rubbish—but some will be regarded as being important."

By JOHN McSHANE

chairman, said he deplored the ICA exhibition.

But he added: "It ought to be recognised that this was a small event in a varied programme of activities which have attracted several hundred thousand people to the ICA this year."

The Arts Council distributed £59,853 to individuals and groups of experimental performance artists like *Coum*. They include:

● RAY RICHARDS, who got £500 for sweeping leaves and dust into "artistic piles;"

● COLIN WOOD an artist

Experimental art will continue to receive grants

By KEITH NURSE, Arts Reporter

THE Arts Council will continue to finance performance and experimental art despite the "squalid" fuss over recent controversial exhibitions at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts, officials said yesterday.

For the 1975-76 year the council has given grants totalling £59,653 to 42 performance art groups, including Coum Transmissions, whose exhibition "Prostitution," featuring pornography and sadism, provoked a formidable public outcry.

Lord Gibson, the council's chairman, said: "It is what is more controversial that attracts attention, but I am sure that the council should not keep out of the field of art which attracts controversy."

"As long as the Arts are vital and free mistakes are inevitable," he said at a Press conference on the publication of the council's annual report.

But he made it clear that he "deplored" the recent events at the ICA and "the attitude of mind" which had led to their presentation.

"I am sure a lot of it is rubbish but then I equally think that some of it will subsequently be regarded as important," he said.

£37m grant

The council's officials, faced with a barrage of questions about the ICA exhibition and the financing of experimental groups in general, went to some lengths to emphasise that the total amount devoted to such groups represented a tiny fraction of the council's budget. The Government grant to the council in the current year is £37,150,000.

The council is currently carrying out its annual review and examination of the ICA's activities—its grant from the council is at present £80,000 a year—a process which it applies to all its supported clients.

Regarding the fringe productions Mr Roy Shaw, the council's secretary general, said: "In this area, when you are dealing with freedom and experiment in the Arts, you have to take risks and chances. We make mistakes, but in my opinion they are very few."

Other officials pointed out that some of the work of the performance groups was highly regarded and favourably reviewed, both in Britain and abroad.

One said: "There is a serious body of young artists working in this country who regard performance art as an important development. We devote a tiny

proportion of our money to it because it is a development that artists themselves regard as important. We have to cater for the whole of the Arts, not just a section of it."

In the last financial year Coum Transmissions received £900 for half a year's work. The council had reviewed the work half-way through and decided it was not good enough.

Ironically, the council's annual report, sub-titled "The Arts in Hard Times," received relatively little attention from journalists, mostly occupied with the affairs of Coum Transmissions, at yesterday's Press conference.

During the year sums totalling £8,104,500 were made available to the national companies in England. This included £3,410,000 to the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet companies at Covent Garden, the Royal Ballet on tour in the regions, and £1,848,000 for the English National Opera Company at the Coliseum in London and on tour.

The National Theatre received £1,931,500, including expenditure on the move to the new complex on the South Bank, and £915,000 went to the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-on-Avon.

The Scottish Arts Council received a grant of £3,100,000 and the Welsh Arts Council one of £2,340,440.

"The Arts in Hard Times," the Arts Council of Great Britain, 21st annual report and accounts 1975-76. Price £1; annual report alone 50p. The Arts Council Shop, 38, Sackville Street, London W1V 6AU.

Change of name

SIR—In your report (Oct. 21) of the so-called art exhibition, through which we are expected to derive pleasure and spiritual solace from the sight of such agreeable paraphernalia as soiled diapers, you mention that the man responsible is one Genesis Pillow Orridge who changed his name by deed poll three years ago from that of Neil Meeson.

I am not a lawyer and always believed that only a surname can be legally changed either by deed poll or statutory declaration, whereas a christian name can only be changed by Act of Parliament.

Perhaps one of your readers who is a lawyer could put us right on this.
JOHN STRAKER
United Oxford and Cambridge University Club.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1976
THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Arts Council chairman says he deplores recent events at ICA

By Kenneth Gosling
Arts Reporter

A vigorous defence of its policy of supporting performance art, which includes fringe or experimental theatre, was made by the Arts Council yesterday in the face of questions to its officials about the recent and much criticized exhibition, "Prostitution", at the Institute of Contemporary Arts.

At a press conference on the council's annual report, Lord Gibson, the chairman, read a prepared statement in which he said he deplored recent events at the ICA and the attitude of mind which led to their presentation.

But he said that whatever the justification for criticism of those particular events, which he thought was deserved, it ought to be recognized that they were small events out of a varied programme of activities which had attracted several hundred thousand people to the ICA this year.

In order to determine whether the organizations it financed gave value for money and had adequate administrative arrangements to enable those in control to exercise their responsibility properly the council regularly review their performances. The ICA was reviewed annually and an examination of its activities and organization was being made.

Mr Roy Shaw, the secretary general, was asked about a £900 grant to Coum Transmissions, which staged the "Prostitution" exhibition. It starts an American tour next month.

Arts Council general expenditure in England, year ended March 31, 1976*

R Opera, Eng Nat Opera, R Ballet, Nat Theatre and R Shakespeare companies	£8,104,500
Music	£3,150,351
Drama	£4,371,741
Touring	£1,278,514
Art	£1,279,721
Literature	£255,286
Festivals	£170,825
Reg arts assans	£2,078,967
Arts centres, commy project.	£581,362
Education in arts	£259,459
Publications	£17,047
Reports and surveys	£2,619
Housing the arts	£787,500

Total £22,337,892

* Net expenditure for the Scottish Arts Council was £2,830,709; for Welsh Arts Council, £2,177,778.

Mr Shaw said the money represented only half a year's work by the group. "We decided they were not good enough and refused to give any more. We cut them off halfway through the year."

Lord Gibson said it would be wrong for the council to attempt to make decisions in advance about individual items in an organization's programme. "It would substitute for the free system, under which the arts flourish and develop, a system of centralized control which would negate the whole purpose of the council's existence".

He emphasized that that system required those who were directly responsible for the subsidized organizations to exer-

cise their own artistic judgments.

"The attitude of those people in the art world who say that no artistic judgments are possible about contemporary art and that the function of those who present it is simply 'to reflect what is going on' is totally unacceptable to the council."

He was sure the council should not keep out of the field of art that attracts controversy; it could not, and did not, take decisions about individual performances and exhibitions.

Mr Shaw said in reply to criticisms that the council was too much concerned with establishment art: "We should be very vulnerable to criticism if we said we did not want to take any notice whatever of performance art, which has 50 years of respectable tradition behind it".

It was also pointed out that the amount spent by the council on performance art was 0.1 per cent of its total grant. What had happened at the ICA, which was part of a much bigger programme, had been "really too squalid".

In a plea in the annual report for the preservation of the Government's grants to the arts, even at a time of financial difficulty, Mr Shaw said they represented so small a fraction of public expenditure and were so valuable to public morale that it would be wise to spend more on them even before the end of the economic crisis.

The Arts in Hard Times: Arts Council of Great Britain, 31st annual report and accounts, 1975-76 (Arts Council Shop, 28 Sackville Street, London W1V 0AU, £1; annual report alone, 50p).

Art show events deplored

Lord Gibson, chairman of the Arts Council, said he deplored recent events at the Institute of Contemporary Arts and that a review of its activities was being made. He was replying to questions about an exhibition, "Prostitution", at a press conference on the council's annual report.

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The Orridge Furore

Genesis P. Orridge works in a number of directions, sending postcards, as a member of a rock band and, with P. Christopherson and Cosey Fanni Tutti, as COUM, a group working in performance. Central to each of these activities seems a fascination with sensationalism, with various sexual social taboos and with controversy. In October COUM presented 'Prostitution' for one week at the ICA. The core of the exhibition was to have been photographs of Cosey from some 40 soft porn magazines for which she has posed. Documentation and remnants of performances, plus a few actions, were to complete the show. They also stated that 'the most important performance, the key to our stance, is the opening party.' This turned out to be a depressing evening with mediocre music from Throbbing Gristle and LSD, and the sad occurrence of a striptease by a rather shocked young girl who unwittingly had been contracted by her agent for this crowded and pretentious public occasion; quite different from her usual clubs which are, because of their basic premise, presumably less compromising. The large crowd was the direct product of 'Shocked' press coverage, acquired by a provocative press release. The exhibition itself included — among the remnants of various performances — tastefully arranged displays of chains and used tampons. The press had a ball and, rare in England, art made the front page.

Referring to the modest state support given to COUM for staging performances in Europe over the last two years (and, incidentally, for work different from that at the ICA), the London *Evening News* screamed 'Sex Show Man's Amazing Free Tour.' MPs asked questions and, defending public morality, 'dropped in' for a quick look at the porn. Issues became confused. COUM's fetishism had succeeded with the lower end of Fleet Street, maybe too well; which, they claimed, proved their point, that media distort information. They also claimed, with less success, that people should 'look at the art.' But there was little of it left because the ICA had restricted the 'dirty pics' to being viewed on demand (by members only), and the programmed actions had been cancelled. Instead a demonstration was given on the applications of synthetic and cosmetic scars and bruises. Caroline Tisdall wrote the most articulate piece in the *Guardian* of 22 October, with an able analysis of the mechanics of controversy according to the sex-as-art-plus-taxpayers'-money-equals-public-outcry equation. Marina Vaizey ended the week with her *Sunday Times* column headed 'Much ado about nothing.'

'These people are the wreckers of civilisation'



TORY MP Nicholas Fairbairn fought his way through Hell's Angels and young men with multi-coloured hair, lipstick and nail varnish last night — AND SAW

sex-show

A STRIPPER, accompanied by a rock group called 'Throbbing Gristle' far, far worse than anything I have ever seen. I was appalled. — They must be very sick people indeed.

A WEIRD porn-and-pop show.

Its filth is exceeded only by its banality, the pornography can only destroy the values of our society.

Nicholas Fairbairn . . . outraged.

And the MP's critical appraisal was: 'It's a sickening outrage. Sadistic. Obscene. Evil' money is being wasted here to destroy the morality of our society. These people are the wreckers of civilisation. They want to advance sex demons.

'I came here to look, and I am horrified,' said the MP.

THROBBING GRISTLE

ARE attempting 'to destroy the difference between good and bad, and right and wrong

'I'm sickened — This show was an excuse for exhibitionism by every crank, queer, squire and ass in the house.'

Mr. Fairbairn said he saw: **SADISM** with sticks and **WEIRD** music from what exhibition organisers called the Death Factory, by a rock group called 'Throbbing Gristle,' allowing people to promote every squalid attitude they can to degrade language, meaning and thought."

CEASE TO EXIST

Stripper

The show includes a stripper accompanied by masochistic performances by a rock group called Throbbing Gristle;

They are devoid of any sense of proportion and respect for the decreencies of life.

MASOCHISTIC performances by a rock group may be a scabrous symbol of one facet of Britain today; but not yet, thank heavens, of the whole. And the underlying impulse is not one of survival but of destruction and the death-wish—

controversial pop-and-porn show

A rock group called Death Rock will be taking part at the opening. They will be singing songs about mass murder and about the child murderer Ian Brady. They offer reflections on the way TV programmes and the other media work.

"spooks with soft-belt intellectual arrugance . . . anxious to promote every squalid attitude they can to degrade language, meaning and thought."

"The organisers must be very sick people. I wish I'd never got involved." It was an excuse for exhibitionism by every crank, queer, squire and ass in the business."

"We're only just getting a look at the maggots in the nest. By the time the current controversy dies down their strapbook will be fat enough to ensure gigs a plenty here and abroad for them, their rock band Throbbing Gristle and any professional striptease artiste they care to take along with them

SECONDARY ORGASMIC DISFUNCTION

PARANOIA CLUB



Visitors . . . what today's connoisseur is wearing.

"We are presenting information. Without people, information is dead. People give it life.

But for me, it was like a scene out of a real-life horror show last night.

As I walked in, a drunken young woman was being carried out. She had great hair.

At the bar, a girl in trousers and bright orange hair was embracing a blonde in a gold lamé dress.

Next to them was a 6ft 5in tall West Indian transvestite in a red oil-shoulder gown.

There was also a very noisy rock group called Throbbing Gristle, dressed in more black lures

My main concern is that it has become the phenomenon of the age in music for non-creative people to make up for their inability and lack of imagination by being obscene, vulgar and depraved." Such filthy rubbish has always been available in holes and corners for those willing to pay for it; and there have always been people ready to make a living by purveying it. A red-and-white crescent nearby giggled, his black lures trousers and shouted: "God there are so many straights around"

Scotland Yard said today: "A report is being sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions"

"This all sounds rather menacing but these are always the things which interest politicians"

GENETIC FEAR

DEGRADED IMAGE

INTERFERENCIAS