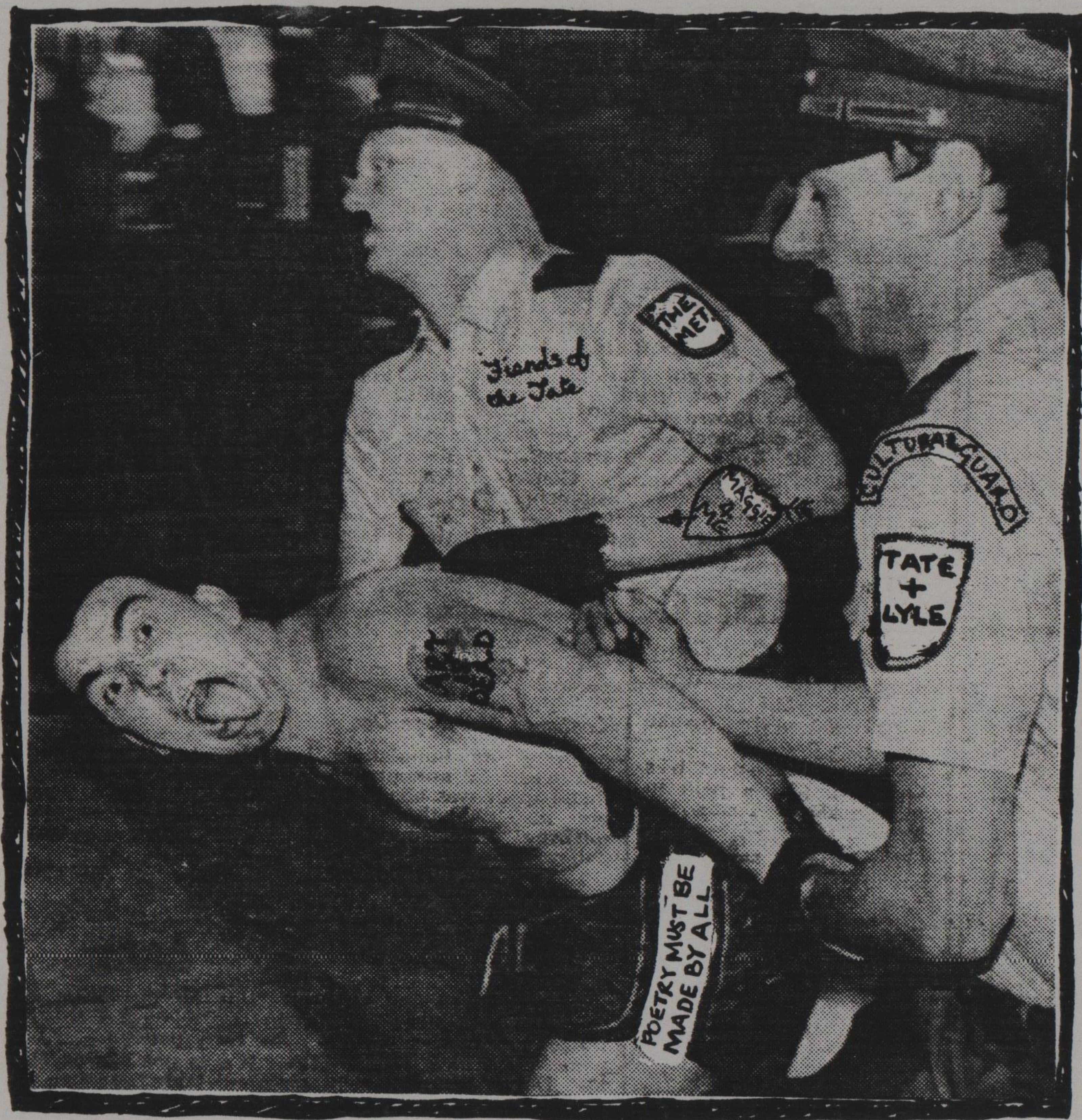


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A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE CRITIQUE OF ART HISTORY AND OTHER SUBJECTS



TWENTY YEARS AFTER
PUBLICATIONS

LONDON
1988



THE RETURN OF THE REPRESSED

"Chained dogs bite worst".
Preface to A Poor Man's House
by Stephen Reynolds. (1908).

So much, recently, has been written, screened, said about 1968 to bore the pants of everyone. Today David Dunbar will drivel on in the same vein. Everything has been said except what really matters. D. Cohn-Bendit is maybe the only one to have said something which resembled what took place in 1968 in France, he knows only too well his shortcomings at the time and today.

But today a modern critique of the world is spoken about at the Tate and Lyle Gallery. This is why we are here to protest against this co-option by a firm well-known for sweetening exploitation. Only those with cultural credit-cards will see nothing wrong with Dunbar's collaboration with such an enterprise. This Dunbar was once nicknamed Dumbo by a canny child of eight. This name has stuck ever since. Dumbo slumped it for a few years, he used to rant about how the Gang of Four (a pap group from radical Leeds) had sold out, apparently he went to kindergarten ie. university with them. Dumbo in many ways has been trying to make a name for himself over the last couple of years. A while back in Glasgow he scribbled some pseudo-gibberish to promote Ralph Rumney's (ex-situationist) exhibition of his Polaroid holiday snaps. Rumney believes he has discovered the ultimate reality through the distorted lense of his camera obscura. Poor Ralph! He got lost in Venice in 1958 trying to do a psychogeographic map of that sinking place. A couple of years ago he was lost again in a sea of Polaroid crap and Dumbo was happy to drown with him. On that occasion that pond was infested with many sharks and a few minnows. All were pleased to see the prodigal son return to the artistic fold. Another corpse for these culture vultures to feed on! Amongst those lickin' their lips were: Guy Atkins, another art historian ie. a graverobber; Jean Beaudrillard, a sociologist very much revered by the New Statesman and also by New Society, need we say more! Felix Guattari: a so-called marxist psychoanalyst ie. a handler. This latter creep deserves special insults. Together with his cohort scribbler Gilles Deleuze, they penned a book called Anti-Oedipus (capitalism and schizophrenia - both diseases!). What Guattarisk and Deleuded forgot to mention was that they had ripped off one of their patients who they were "treating". Ivan Chchetglov aka Gilles Ivain was the source for the really radical material in that book. I. Chchetglov was a pioneer of the modern critique which would later set this old world ablaze. So Dumbo has found his niche with these brain-salad surgeons.

But let us return to Rumney for a moment since it would be unfair not to mention his sculptural talents. At the Glasgow debacle of which we spoke earlier, he also exhibited female parts cast in plaster of Paris, no doubt to counter-balance what some female groupies had done with male popsters privates. (Germaine Greer is said to have a good collection in her bedroom which she contemplates whilst kissing Marxism Today. Aargh!). Both sides of this sexual divide need to be criticised. The machos and the neo-feminists (dogs and bitches) both reinforce this separation. All this hideous role-playing (coquettes and studs) is a cornerstone of this society and very good for business. Misery as a commodity. No wonder they call separation Chinese walls in the City.

But back to the business in hand ie. Dumbo. This mortar-bored twerp has cunningly entitled his lecture "...The Situationist International versus Situationism in the late '60s". He puts the S.I. on a pedestal. They were everything he will never be. Dumbo is a classical pro-situ and a jerk too.

He fails to see that "situationism was the puberty crisis of situationist theory", a disease which affected the S.I. itself after 1968, and which led to a crisis in that organisation. But some people in the S.I. were quite aware of all this and decided to call it a day. For the first time in history a revolutionary organisation, which had done a lot to challenge this world of the commodity sabotaged itself in order not to become "the last ideology of revolution". Dumbo is in good company with Stuart Hall, the C4 house Stalinist who once said that Guy Debord's book The Society of the Spectacle was "a Hegelian extravaganza". Clearly this crawler needs his head examined or maybe a few slaps to awaken him. Stalinists enjoy spreading their confusion. Recently Hall (of fame) has been called upon to exorcise the spectre of 68, which still haunts this society, its cops (cultural or otherwise), and the 57 varieties which makes up what is known as the Left in Britain and elsewhere. This Hall (of mirrors, just like in the Kremlin), recently penned along with Martin Jacques, the editor of Marxism Today, an article about 68. It was a vacuous piece, like the rest of that designer socialism rag. No wonder it is called MT. This Jackass was spouting on C4 (Nov. 30, 1987): "We need to recuperate new forms of thinking to combat old forms which are exhausted like 1917". Dumbo is helping these Gorbachov fans in that task. Many participated in the MT 68 bash, at the LSE. These overgrown students of revolution would maybe understand their subject better if they played truant a bit more. Targaret Mather, Kinnochio and the SLD hydra have nothing to fear from these critics with paid holidays. As Jeff Nuttall, another MT sucker and art lecher knows art history is a nice little earner! Nuttall also added to the 68 media stew (all bones) when he took an hour of radio time to demonstrate just how little he understood of it. In the process he called upon the personal services of Ralph Rummage, situationist when needed. Nuttall could not even get his name right, he called him George. Poor, poor Ralph!

Let's have a quick look at the catalogue of goons which accompanies this Total Dissent(ary) at the Tate & Lyle. The situationist cartoon on the cover is used as a facade to hide all the recuperators inside (like Godard who was taken apart in the review called Internationale situationniste). We would like to know if Dumbo has had a hand in this cover-up. Maybe the obnoxious Christo gave him a few tips. And then we get a bit of Mash thrown in, a bit of Cauter, a bit of Performance art film, a bit of Labour Party Loach, 14 Americans, a bit of Woodstock, a bit of felt from Beuys, and a bit of If. In other words a vast quantity of nothing which resembles a stinking swamp, and a rotting plastic galaxy.

Many art historians probably had the idea of doing a lecture about the Situationist International, a difficult subject for them to grasp because they do nothing to challenge this world. Yet the one to do this lecture would have been against such a venture a few years ago. Dumbo I is trying to set-up shop as a specialist on the S.I., only yuppies will frequent his miserable delicatessen.

Perhaps his poodle Oscar will not like his newfound friends, it is hoped that Oscar will go on a drift without his authoritarian master. It all comes down to leashes and leeches and how to rid yourself of them.

Written & published on the 13th of June 1988, in London.
By a few angry proletarians.

NB: WARNING. Dumbo is prone to use bad language, ie. he speaks Californian. Like for example: to detourn, detournement, also to derive and deriving. The first two come from the French détournement which means diversion. The last two come also from the French dérive which in plain English means drift and driftin'. Dumbo picked up this pseudo language from other peddlers, like Rev. Knabb and other Californians. Others also use this elitist mumbo-jumbo, to name these turkeys would be giving them too much credit. They will know who they are and as usual we send them our fraternal greetings.

AN AFTERNOON AT THE TATE & LYLE

"Some people give lectures
Others go to listen
And we have fun."

The likely lads and lasses

"Art history is the rattling
of a stick inside a swill
bucket".

(Comment heard outside the
Tate and Lyle.)

On the 14th of June 1988, the Tate and Lyle got what it had been asking for over the last couple of weeks ie. TOTAL DISSENT. Only this time it was not packaged the way they like it, as a representation with nice little slides and a benediction from a lecturer-priest. Since amongst the audience were some who had come with the intent of disrupting this farcical attempt to neuter the radical critique of modernised misery. All got work and hardly any pleasure. The battle-scene was set with the distribution of the tract The Return of the Repressed. One member of the audience on receiving this leaflet scuttled off behind the scenes to report and warn the ridiculous Dumbo what was in the tragi-comic store for him. The performer seemed reluctant to make his appearance and some in anticipation of the festivities to come began to call for him. Shouting amongst other things: "Bring the Christians into the arena, the lions are hungry". When he did appear he was given a warm welcome by those in the audience whose keen sense of humour leads them to appreciate these absurd dramas.

The shit started to hit the fan (and the fans). This dunce knew his time was up and that he was through to use a popular Bogart phrase. It was obvious from the beginning that this slug was not here to give us a lecture in the Arthur Cravan style. It was left to the critical members of the audience to liven up the proceedings. He attempted to deflect the many insults which were hurled at him, by distorting the contributions from the audience. Accusing those who criticised his ham-fisted attempt at recuperation of being guardians of the S.I. More bullshit from a paid-up liar. Some come cheap at £50 a throw! For us it is a matter of defending the S.I. against embalmers like him, but above all it is a question of understanding the necessity of advancing proletarian theory and practice. A task beyond all the art historians who can only pick over the bones left by others.

As usual on these occasions, some over zealous spectators were upset that the raucous element were disrupting their spoon-feeding. As one would expect Dumbo also had on his side the cultural authorities ie. an art diktator called Richard Humphreys and his gang of security guard henchpersons. This Humph was treated to some of the choicest insults of the afternoon's proceedings. It was clear that he did not really want the total dissent that he had advertised for, but on the contrary demanded TOTAL CONSENT from his flock of spectators. He threatened to call The Friends of the Tate ie. the filth, whose patron is HRH Prince Big Ears if the agitation did not stop. As always a language of total dissent invoked a total repression.



This threat to bring in the cops, to rescue the floundering art historian inspired a fresh round of insults. Dumbo was given a last chance, by those who were already being hounded by the cultural guards, to demonstrate that he had not completely sold out, when he was informed that the pigs were coming to eject the dissenters. His nauseating reply was that those who were challenging him wanted to be arrested! Thus, in choosing to side with the State he revealed that his revolutionary pretensions are as transparent as the Emperor's New Clothes. This remark alone should earn him the distinction of being spat on when passed in the street.

The debate raged on. One of the more intelligent members of the audience suggested that on such a beautiful sunny day, the proceedings should be taken into the gardens of the Tate where a dialogue on the subject might be possible and infinitely preferable to Dumbo's boring monologue. But on the whole the congregation preferred to be lectured to from the pulpit, obviously they knew as little as Dumbo. The flak continued volley upon volley, all bona fide critical stuff. In response the Hump seeing the intimidatory tactics of his security cronies were not having the desired effect, chose to draw on the renowned passivity of spectators improvising a bit of demockracy. He called a vote to eject the Tate and Lyle critics. It was a shambles. However it rapidly transpired that this ploy had another purpose, that of gaining time and a temporary respite from the storm of criticism. Since shortly after this vote of no confidence was taken the scuffers (art lovers to a man) arrived to swing the vote in Dumbo's favour. The takeaway crew had at last arrived to remove the spicy and tasty ingredient from this insipid Dumbo stew (standard university canteen no fun fair). Some now voted with their feet and left the dumbatorium in support of the ejectees. Here a special mention can be made of two young schoolboys who walked out at this point, thus demonstrating once more the attraction of the negative at work. Well done ol' mole. The commotion continued in the foyer, many who had come to see Turner were instead intrigued by these unique scenes which like Turner's paintings did not lack that rare poetic element.

The dissenters found themselves being charged with disturbance of the social peace and taken away in the meat-wagon. Ironically the desk-sergeant at the cop-shop was more clued in than the Dumbos and the Humphreys of this old world. He knew straight away that to press charges against the Tate 4 would risk creating a cause célèbre to quote this cultured sergeant. And he at least understood being a full-time cop that for the State it is better that these matters be imprisoned in the Tate dungeon rather than discussed openly.

Meanwhile back at the Tate and Lyle. Dumbo having had his cage well and truly rattled was stumbling through his disastrous lecture. Apparently Dumbo succeeded in boring everyone to tears as one might expect from a counter-revolutionary. Many spectators having earlier been given a taste of what the subject is really about now realised for themselves what a fraud Dumbo was. They began to drift away from the flock hopefully to a better way of life. Earlier in the afternoon Dumbo had tried to convince his audience, to the accompaniment of hoots of derisory laughter, that this term drift did not fully convey for him the experience of what he calls the dérive. Those who are foreigners to themselves speak a pseudo-language with forked tongue. We later heard that one spectator who had become critical reminded Dumbo that he had not returned the paintings he had borrowed from Ralph Rumney. It seems the robber of radical ideas has also turned art-thief. But like in all his endeavours Dumbo is a goddam failure and is rapidly exposed as such. If he was not so pompous, this pretentious creep might see that he too is being used, as a pilot-fish for all the sharks of the political and cultural academic world. These flesh eating zombies know only too well their bankruptcy, they

are head-hunting for victim donors to provide them with a theory transfusion service. Heavy drip, like!

The teacher's pet mentioned earlier who ran off to warn Dumbo is a minor example of a brain-snatcher. His name is Barry "Baz" Curtis who ponces a living at a rat-hole called Muddlesex Poly. He is a founder member of a cultural studies rag called Block it is the usual postmoderniststructuralistsemiidiotics confused mess! No wonder its writers and readers are **known** in the trade as blockheads. This idiot Curtis even speaks of Pop and its Future. Future!!!???Aargh!

What took place at the Tate and Lyle was another campaign in the war between those who seek the supersession of art and separate politics and those who wish only to make appear a pseudo-cultural political unity in order to **disguise** the divisions of class society with all its trimmings that are so dear to them (ie. prestige, status, security, mortgages, monotony etc. ask Lorry Taylor for further History Man details.)

FAREWELL MY LOVELIES,

The Tate 4 and friends,
Written and published on the 16th of June 1988
in London.

PS: No one in the audience and especially not Dumbo noticed in our original tract that Ivan Chtcheglov's name was misspelt.

PPS: **There were** some noticeable absences from the Dumbatorium. Many who in the past have had to suffer slanders from this idiot did not take the opportunity to get even. Maybe they were afraid themselves **of coming under fire.**

c/o EM CHRONOS London WC1 N3 XX



..... FLIP THOSE LIDS!

