



## Wylaf Wers, Tawaf Wedy

*Legendary performers good cop bad cop conjured chaos for their contribution to Experimentica 2013. Words and images Ric Bower*

It began right after the beleaguered gallery facilitator announced “...there are a limited number of ear defenders available for the forthcoming performance ... only those of you who have pre-booked will be granted entry.” From somewhere near the back of the crowd someone shouted, “...but I have come all the way from London just to see this!” This outburst was followed by further murmurs, general unrest and that mysterious heaviness that condenses before a riot. So when the doors finally opened, we scrambled into the crepuscular chamber to witness good cop bad cop’s performance, *Wylaf Wers, Tawaf Wedy*.

A performance in the round is hard to quantify. There is no single definitive viewpoint from which to report back from; subject/object Cartesian certainty is dissolved into the all-immersive experience, the referential background, of which the viewer is just another part. But from one end of the blackened void a startling spectacle was about to unfold.

At first it seemed fairly straightforward. John Rowley, suited and booted, offered us a de-

contextualised memento to Bill Grundy’s disastrous attempt to interview the Sex Pistols on the Today program. Rowley recited the belligerent, expletive-strewn interaction verbatim. The Pistols themselves were transformed into a row of ultra-violet fluorescent tubes, each splayed before us on a couch. The Pistols and their entourage (The Bromley Contingent) in turn, were all name-checked on the t-shirts of gbbc’s row of obedient collaborators.

Suddenly, with the interview over and the protagonists filing off, the rear of the stage was brilliantly illuminated and there was the other half of good cop bad cop, Richard Huw Morgan, wielding a chain saw with which he set about a virgin Welsh dresser, diligently reducing it to so much firewood. By now there was no doubt in our minds where we were supposed to be looking, and what we were meant to hear, and we complied without question...

...So completely was our attention fixed that we were unaware of the thick smoke licking at our ankles. Nor did we immediately take note of the escalating miasma of guitar feedback rising steadily beneath the noise of the chainsaw. Soon we were no longer all facing in the prescribed



direction. As the visibility dropped away, so the discordant, metal-core layerings escalated to their glorious, ear-splitting climax. Discombobulation levels were high by now; when the doors were flung open those who possessed delicate sensibilities urgently sought the exit. Perhaps they had not spent their teenage years with their heads in a bass bin or with a Nietzschean chemistry experiment flowing through their circulatory systems. To those of us that had, the confusion was comforting; it annihilated the wagging finger of reason. We stayed on to watch, again our

attention diverted from more action behind us as Morgan revived text from a long-lost performance, while over his head the loop of projected images of gbbc’s back catalogue that had been set to pulse just below

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the speed that brings on epilepsy, slowed and stopped as Morgan sank slowly to the floor.

The sensory cacophony promised and delivered nothing. Perhaps, we are being shown that spectacle, can and should, rarely be trusted—**CCQ**

Images: Wylaf Wers, Tawaf Wedy, performance still, good cop bad cop for Experimentica 2013, photography, Ric Bower

