

In German the name Fundus means the properties and costumes of a theatre and in medical terms it can also be the camera for photographing the inside of the eye. While Edwards & Johann do not feel the need to constrain their practice with anything as existentially blunt as a manifesto, this collaboration does contain within itself some of the idealism, performance and collaborative nature of early European early modernist movements like Dada and Surrealism.

What many of those artists sought through automatism, Primitivism (exploiting the art of other cultures perceived to be less sophisticated than ours), children's art and the art of the mentally ill, was a kind of third space free of all archetypes, clichés and conventions, that would allow them to explore their creativity and self-expression unfettered. Paul Klee seems to be the obvious example.

Rather than imitating the art of the naïf and marginal, those artists would have been better off adopting something of the mindset – not to the extremes of Tony Fomison and Pat Hanly, perhaps – and find the instinctive playfulness within themselves. This is what allows Edwards & Johann to experiment, combining many different media in a free and associative way that embraces the personalities and interests of those who participate in their collaborations.

Art is play – serious play, occasionally dark play, but play nonetheless. Play is communication of the most basic sort, channelling creativity and establishing relationships. Play and creativity are both energy: the energy that powers this collaboration is an intense, virtual, psychological space. It is democratic and open, inviting rather than excluding (in stark contrast to much contemporary art). Their practice is play; is dress-up; is theatre; is moving and still image; is words and sounds; is drawing; is painting.

Unfortunately the creative will cannot directly manipulate space and time, matter and energy, at a whim. It requires the concerted efforts of experienced cultural professionals – artists, makers, recorders – to create the illusion of it. Even the audience is, in a sense, part of this broader collaboration.

Edwards & Johann bring that energy back into the real world because, while much of it exists as traditional art formats for the art gallery, it also exists in the performances and tableaux those images record and reference. Those take place in real-world settings. These artists draw on the history of art, and the raw imaginative creativity of the group. *Fundus ist spontan!*

Edwards & Johann is a heroic expression of being true to a collective creativity, and refreshes itself and its art by tapping the universal and inexhaustible creative impetus that is often expressed in play, but is all too often crushed by the norms of adult behaviour and cultural conditioning. The collaboration is anti-rational, but not illogical, grappling with the unpredictable - whatever it takes to break out of the authorised forms and vapid anaesthesia of cultural production. *Aslan is not a tame lion!*