

GAME ON—acting out, mouthing off, unplugged & tricky

Artists: Matt Huppatz, Owen Leong, Juz Kitson, Drew Pettifer—*Instinct*—Greenaway Gallery, October 24th—November 18th, 2012; Bronwyn Platten, Sarah Coggrave and others—*Mouths and Meaning*—Australian Experimental Art Foundation, February 1st—March 2nd; Aldo Iacobelli—*In the shadow of forgetting*—SASA Gallery, February 12th—March 22nd; Louise Haselton, Michelle Nikou, Mark Siebert—*New Work*—Greenaway Gallery, Feb 27th—March 24th

by Ken Bolton

Acting Out

The last show I took in properly in 2012 was one at Greenaway Gallery. As a group exhibition based around gayness, *Instinct* offered no firm guarantee of quality or ambition. It might have been a show expecting to coast, approved by the Feast Festival period in which it was held. But gayness doesn't preclude anything, and as it turned out *Instinct* was well up to the mark. Drew Pettifer's photographs, for example, might have seemed to presage an exhibition fairly slackly oriented around an assertion of identity: gay and unashamed. In fact, though presenting exhibitionism, self-affirmation and narcissism, Pettifer's imagery had some distance between itself and those things and it did more work than mere self-endorsement. The photos showed naked young guys, solo, indoors in bedrooms, outdoors in the countryside. So far this might be very much what you'd expect. The subjects were all country boys in their rural habitats. The effect of their naked bodies was to suggest extraordinary innocence and vulnerability, so unmarked were they, so white, especially when in glaring sun and in harsh rural landscape. But, additionally, all this context (the glare of the sun, the coarse grass and scrub, and hints of the semi-suburban rural community and its values) seemed a metaphor for the violence and threat that could be visited on them by society—present via a regular metonymy: a view, in the background, of a country pickup truck, the detail of a checked shirt that said 'country'. Risk and vulnerability and innocence—and premonition.

Matt Huppatz showed a number of pieces that referenced rave dance-party culture and its aesthetic. The aesthetic is already dated in many ways, but Huppatz uses it to insist on its utopian, optimistic moment and to propose it (re-submit it?) as a workable ideal. Perhaps there is some pathos that derives from its 'moment' having passed. My favourite work—and I gather this was the typical art-world response—was the amusing, small polished-metal abstracted sculpture *Gladiator*. It looked sort of Dada, sort of Guston, sort of Darth Vader—its cuteness a joke against its own busily forward-leaning self. But the largest piece by Huppatz was maybe more central, *Ziggurat (Dress for Marion Mega-Complex)*, made of plexiglass on metal framework. *Ziggurat* was a decorative tower, and alluded, maybe, to Tatlin's: it did have a slightly exhortatory positivity about it. It was very pleasingly canny in the way its various colours overlaid and changed each other as the viewer moved around it. Also good was *Phase*, a sequence of Diasec mounted prints. Huppatz was the critics' choice last year as best 'new' Adelaide artist and this work would vindicate their choice.

Juz Kitson, the sole woman amongst the guys, showed combines of porcelain and very mixed materials: gauzes, tulle, silks, wool and other materials. (One thought, for a second, 'Angela Valamanesh'—of the cooler, more monochrome pieces, though purely decorative effects looked to be the object in these cases, in contrast to Valamanesh's coolly Linnaean expositions.) Some of Kitson's free-standing arrangements were hieratic, totemic, and topped, some, with skulls and horns. Mithraic? In any event, the effect was 'pagan'—witchy, and hieratic. Rather 'eighties', I thought, like Stevie Nicks. They were not a long way from the aesthetic of the (80s) ceramicist Mark Thompson either: less Venetian carnevalé, more voodoo. Kitson's objects were beautiful enough, but were maybe not in the best company, company that made them come across as, by comparison, a little light, where 'heaviness' of any kind had probably not been Kitson's intention.

Owen Leong's main work was a film, *Infinite Love*. Dealing with fluids, mouths and body surfaces, it seemed a strong work, slow and sad and sort of science-fictiony. Many of the works had to do with pain and dental and surgical procedures. So the aesthetic was sort

of excruciating but also grimly exacting, calm and deliberate. I am reviewing it now at some distance, as I am the whole show.

#

Mouthing Off

Bronwyn Platten's *Mouths and Meaning* (Platten, with Sarah Coggrave and others, at the Australian Experimental Art Foundation, Feb 1st—March 2nd) constituted a welcome reappearance in her home town. Platten has been absent since the late 90s, working in Scotland and the UK. Travel and freight costs may have reduced the scale the show ran to—more of her paintings would have been welcome and there were only four tiny ones in this showing, nutty and intriguing (together with a pair of plates and some 'signs').

The exhibition consisted of these smaller objects and images, working almost as suggestive props to the main focus, a central floor-piece dedicated to Mike Kelley and some moving-image screen works. It was possible to head towards the end of the gallery—drawn to the one, large, screened work—convinced the rest was not sufficient to hold one. Too small, a scatter of incidental pieces giving up their meaning less directly than does film. One's experience was then rather thin—and gave the impression that the exhibition was, too. In fact, though not all of them were at first visually prepossessing, these 'bits and pieces' exerted some pull (that is, 'quite some pull') and were weirdly unsettling in an amusing kind of way if you gave them any time, or, indeed, allowed them to snag your attention as you moved about the gallery.

The filmed, DVD works, though, were the heavier, most central works. In terms of this gallery-dominating register, the film, *Untitled (The Party)* (2012), made with Sarah Coggrave, asserted the strongest claim. *Untitled (The Party)* was projected very large, to wall-filling size, and had a large room to itself; and its soundtrack—intermittent, with long stretches of silence, but regularly bursting out into a goony, boisterous frivolity—often filled the gallery, advertising its presence if you had just entered, reminding of its story and content if you had seen it. The three smaller screens were silent, two offering headphones.

Mouths and Meaning examines ideas about embodiment and body-consciousness, the bodily experience, and related phobias and conditions (bulimia, anorexia), social, gendered attitudes to the body etc. The exhibition would be rather disembodied itself—all those screened works, abetted by the thin string of visual items along the wall leading into the space—if it were not for Platten's tribute to Mike Kelley (*For more and more love hours RIP Mike Kelley, 1954–2010*, dated, curiously, 1973–2013). Occupying the centre of the gallery, this served, to some extent, to 'give pause' to the overly hasty viewer-in-progress, allowing the smaller works then to snag the eye and imagination.

As a presence *Untitled (The Party)* filled its room effectively and it ran for just a little under twenty minutes. It is a kind of narrative and a kind of documentary and, as a narrative, suggests itself as a (quasi) child's story. In it a young woman turns up to a door, knocks, has the door open and enters to meet an older woman and there they have a party: lots of cakes and fizzy drinks. As in a fairy story, the girl (Sarah Coggrave) is the shy, uncertain visitor—she addresses the door tentatively, enters slowly, filmed from behind and below. Her red balloon lingers briefly, caught outside the door before following her in. Inside, Platten sits at a table writing and repeating to herself, *Mum, mum, mum, Mum; mum, mum, mum, mum-mum, mummy mummy mummy, mum-mum mum-mum*—she writes the words as she speaks. So, mother(s). We are quietly shown the room with its arrayed feast of sugared and creamy fare. Very carefully some plain black shoes are filled with whipped cream and feet are plunged into them. The cream is squelched luxuriantly from the shoes as the foot enters, and again as the laces are pulled tight. A moment for both glee and revulsion. Hilarity begins, and the 'comic' music, as the two don conical party hats, stomp about and attack the food, blow paper trumpets etc. An exorcism. An encounter, at least. Or a facing-down of fears and taboos.

The film rolls on for quite a while and is amusing enough, and its longueurs are calming. If exorcism—or facing-down—are the point, it seems a simple exercise. Extending at its fairly leisurely pace over just a few actions, *The Party* has a kind of capaciousness that allows the viewer to entertain as many of the various thoughts and attitudes about these matters as might suggest themselves. *The Party* allows them to be held in suspension, or in slow revolution.

Another large, flat-screen projection (*Untitled*, 2011, also made with Coggrave) shows the mixing of mud pies—well, a stew of grasses and dirt and leaves, in an ordinary but rather idyllic countryside. A soundtrack of gravelly, grating stirring. A child's innocent activity.

The Kelley-tribute floor-piece sits centre gallery. There is a dedication on the piece—a large, brightly checkered hand-sewn blanket or quilt, the initials, *M. K.*, *RIP*, and the dates of Kelley's birth and decease, are borne on the chests of some of the Kelley-like soft toys—bears and dogs—that are arranged on it, each covered in breakfast oatmeal. (Abjection, shame, are the terms most associated with Kelley.) Around the work's rectangular perimeter is a fringe of boldly printed words, a fringe—each tassel a single piece of card. All the words begin with 'B' and are to do with physicality, the body, activities that a self might undertake in pursuit of its rights, or enact as a role-playing, gendered being, but also listing various material qualities. (The words? For example, *body, boo, boohoo, boobs, booby, book, bookish, boss, bossy, bosom, bough, boy, boycott, bounce, bouncer, bow, bowel, bowl, bowler, brackish, braid, braille, brain*).

It is these words, taken from a child's dictionary, that Platten does brief, three-to-five-second impressions of, one after the other, and in the sequence that they follow around the sculpture—in the film on the nearby screen—as in the manner of charades. The effect is rather hilarious. A little like a one-woman Haka, with a wider range than just the usual threat to devour and rend: demonic and graphic and sometimes inscrutable, at others hilariously on-the-money. Platten is filmed between the stacks or shelves of a library. Books, either side, then, frame her. She is dressed in a pale blue, rather full, dowdy blue frock over which is a serviceable white pinafore apron. On her head are draped a pair of upside-down (men's) black shoes—heels at the centre of her head, the toes above each ear. The silhouette says (to me, anyway), 'Dutch milk-maid'. On her feet, under each of them, is strapped a solid hardback book. (Knowledge? Theory? The feet-over-the-head, body-over-the-cultural, over 'ideas', being a kind of topsy-turvy or reversal?) Platten swaggers and stomps about on these books, crouching, gesticulating, remonstrating, shaking her fist, clutching at her stomach, adjusting an imaginary bra,

swaggering, slumping, slouching, perorating—ingratiating or coquettish, threatening or stern. Mad. Very very funny.

Entitled *body to brain and back again* (2013), the film is on permanent, crazy rotation. One of its delightful effects is to render the words and the kind of definitions we might imagine for them suddenly literal, ‘embodied’ by these single definitive actions, all vaguery or nuance banished. As if ideas—so nebulous, abstract, nuanced—are so many wisps-of-nothing... by contrast with these hard ‘facts’, these simple demonstrations. Embodiment wins out over the unbodily and the ‘immaterial’ and is made large and emphatically physical by the artist’s exaggerated gestures and forthright dispatch of each verbal concept. The sequence’s regular beginning is very nice. Platten stands, ready, ready for the roll-call of words to begin, her mouth tightens briefly then opens slightly and we see that she is breathing like an athlete readying for a test, her chest rising and falling. Heroic. Then she goes.

A third screen showed a very young girl watching a pop-tune’s video and singing along with its indoctrinating chorus: the male voice asks, *Where you get that body from?* and the girl chorines answer, *I got it from my mama*. After a while the young girl is both embarrassed and bored and runs off laughing.

A small digital photo-screen device shows drawings that volunteers have made for Platten—done with eyes closed—of their mouths as they imagine or experience them. Curious, haptic doodles that were by turns elegant, ‘expressive’ or information-laden, and mysteriously inchoate.

The great virtue of Platten’s exhibitions is that she is a thinking artist and her curiosity and intelligence get a lot of work done, conceptually—both ‘done’ in the sense of *mileage achieved* and in the sense of *memorably nailed*. Platten’s shows, and their meanings and means, stick for a long time in the minds of those who follow them. She is an influential artist.

Mouths and Meaning seemed to show the artist torn between a ‘gallery’ exhibition, delivering visual stimulus, and an exposition of research findings and related summative-

statement pieces and demonstrations. The organisation of the space did not assist the smaller, non-film works, it must be said. On balance the exhibition delivers on both counts, though only when the smaller pieces begin to exert their pull. A curious woollen, worm-like totem stands in one corner, eyeing us. It is, Platten's wall text tells us, conceivable as a simple organism, with a simple alimentary canal and no other features: a model of equanimity and simplicity: invulnerable. (Its title is *The English Bug*.) It is also like a penis.

Further along the wall is a big nought, or zero, or 'O', flanked on either side by multiple parentheses radiating out from it. Is it the same alimentary canal looked 'through' from one or other end? Is it 'nothing', a sort of absence? Is it a vagina? Is it to do with sound? *Mouths and Meaning's* area of operation allows all such things to be invoked by these curious signs: *The English Bug* could be a penis, it could be a worm, it could be watching us; some people desire invisibility, absence. And so on.

Two signs hang on the wall, white lettering on medium blue grounds—and they look like hospital ward signage. One says *hormal*, the other *biosexual*. (They are 'modest proposals': their title, *Permeate the medical world with signs like these...*) Some plates hang on another wall of the gallery, having, together, the title *Bully*: glazed and fired each carries a graffitied scrawl:

Lara is really fat
for her height,
says one.

There are also some small paintings. They are puzzlingly compelling, though I never figured how they related. One I remembered as showing a very antique telephone receiver that cast a long, distorted shadow, the latter resembling male genitalia. But it doesn't. Looked at closely, the object casting the shadow looks like an ear, on a short stand with a circular base. The shadow cast is much magnified as well as stretched and suggests, very inconclusively, a bike seat, a 'figure' with long nose and very big hair, a Minnie Mouse crossed with Olive Oyl? (Does *the shadow* look like an old-style phone?) Nothing is confirmed, which gives it its holding power. Well, so I thought. Maybe these are like rorschach blots whose interpretations define the viewer. It occurred to me that this

visual trick was one of the sort that Bronwyn Platten's sister, Anna, might pull. The titles to these pictures provide guidance: each is called *Anatomical Sense* and then, variously, identified as *ear, tongue, throat, jaw*.

Untitled (The Party), as the biggest 'thing' in *Mouths and Meaning*, served to give the exhibition weight and a nutty, fairground soundtrack that worked well in the overall space. And it served, I think, to 'allow' lots of ideas play about it, without needing to have generated all of them. It was necessary to the exhibition, but it was far from being the whole of it. One of the strongest parts of the *Mouths and Meaning* was a book entitled *Inventory*. It contains Platten's notes of ideas about a great number of her works, all of those germane to this exhibition's themes, from early days to the present—notes written at the time of each work's making. Some pertain to works made well before art school. Some of the works, some of the ideas, are in gestation for a very long time. 'Meaning' (and 'intention') gain a great deal from this consolidation: it affects how we see works we knew in the past and it strengthens their connection to each other and to those on show here.

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Unplugged

Aldo Iacobelli's *In the shadow of forgetting* (at SASA Gallery, February 12th—March 22nd) showed a great many, mostly very small, pieces. It suggested a show-and-tell—about, say, What themes are you mulling over? what doodles and drawings do you make, to think with, to idle with between major bouts of activity? In this it differed from most shows by Iacobelli that I have seen. Many of these I have liked. But they have been deliberately sequenced and focussed and formatted, and have usually involved larger paintings.

In the shadow of forgetting's themes were relatively few. So I take them to be the product of just a few years and probably pretty current. There were a great many drawings and small drawn studies in various mediums, watercolours, charcoal, smoke (!), fine line drawing: some looked likely to have come about as play with a medium's possibilities. A moon in clouds, all very close in tone and intensity, for example.

Individually—and a mass of these small works on paper were mounted closely together as on a notice-board—works often charmed by virtue of technical subtlety, sometimes by their intricacy; some had curious subject matter (the corner of a cupboard, a brain with a match or a *smokestack* coming out of it). These were grouped under the title *My days*: they abutted each other closely and their profusion gave an impression of abundance and heterogeneity: line drawing, moody charcoal, differently textured papers.

There was a lost air about many, a fretful despair for society or civilization, the isolation and lack of agency of the individual—in the face, mostly it seemed, of the despoliation of the environment across the planet.

The means: mostly massings of emptiness weighted against a multiplication of units; massing of empty or ruined space counterbalanced by a tiny and isolated figure. These are a long-established cliché of graphic design and cartoon work everywhere going back many decades. (So, a small ant drags a leaf across the empty space of a page; a figure is seen, from above, standing alone in dunes; various similar lone figures stand confronting forests or emptiness or waste—or confront a scrap-heap of overproduction, or logged trees.) If an artist is going to tell us what we know already then it might be told interestingly. Admittedly the futility of doing so might weary one's sense of invention: if it's not worth doing it's not worth doing well?

There were a few larger pieces: a giant doily (*Potato Eaters*, 2012)—a textured white out of black; there was a depiction of barbed wire across cloud (*A night of many moons*, 2012) that made slightly gimmicky play with the handmade paper's texture, but to good effect. There were three tiny, furtive sculpted figures—a little like *The Burghers of Calais* but turned into flashers, all pervy and Peter Boothy.

A larger floor sculpture (*Birdbath de luxe*) tapped into the same 'existential' desktop-calendar humour (or 'bleak vision'): an arrangement of plumbing pipes into a kind of maze, the metal scarred and aged. At various junctures the pipes end in small clay, cisterns, basins, showers, hand-modelled and rough. Nearby a single small bath (six inches? less?) sits, perched like a pole-sitter, atop three foot or so of vertical pipe.

Absurd, surreal, slightly old-world. The irrationality of our rational systems? Sure, that'd be it.

#

Tricksters

New Work? Yes, though in the vein of their recent showings. I generally like all three artists (Louise Haselton, Michelle Nikou and Mark Siebert, at Greenaway Gallery, Feb 27th to March 24th)—and have written about them often enough. Inevitably, and to their great irritation, I suppose I will be repeating myself. Exhibiting Louise Haselton and Michelle Nikou together could be a brave move, a canny move, or a risky one: they work in what can look like similar territory, are probably appreciative of each others' work, and have not dissimilar sensibilities. That said, it's the differences that make all the difference. And together they might be thought likely to draw a bigger crowd. They *might* be thought, in the context of the Adelaide Festival, to represent something of an Adelaide aesthetic? Siebert's work, on the other hand, is not related to theirs at all closely: he works in an area that might be rather crowded—with current practitioners and past veterans—but in fact he is rather alone in Adelaide. (And in fact he's in London, and who could be lonely there?)

Louise Haselton's work is the least likely to cite categories, quote the social world, allude to everyday life and the way it is thought about. Michelle Nikou, by contrast, will use words, occasionally make casts of recognisable objects, employs, occasionally, readymade objects, and in all this plays off against their conventional usage and meaning, dealing in ironies and sarcasms—wit—as well as visual charm. Haselton works with forms (shapes, surfaces, textures, colour) and their psychic valency. Consider her circles, a one instance: they look wobbly and organic and unstable, made of what look like branches but also resembling flesh. Their scale is ambiguous: they are small things shown large, or they are 'to size'? Are they standing true, or leaning? Does their lean make us feel that we are leaning, too? They are destabilising.

I think the piece I liked best of Nikou's—though already I regret saying that—was a group of grey, cast metal balloons with the little pipes they would be pumped up with attached. Nikou's versions look sadly deflated and 'dead'—an ironic echo of the festivity and will-to-gaiety they might have represented. The sentiment they engender: a funny sadness, that might be kitsch and cheap to feel, is taken as read, a given: you *will* feel that; but it is yours alongside the more sober attitude the work instills. You get to have the obvious reaction and the more 'adult' reflection. And then, at the same time, and almost but not quite independently of these things, the work (*Expire* is its name, from 1999) is rather beautiful, isn't it? *Expire* allows a range of responses, from beguilement, to sarcasm, to irony, to amusement. Or a fascination with the object—as material, shape and texture.

Nikou also showed a woman's black jumper (laid out on the floor) with decorative, dull grey (cement) lightbulbs attached to it—*Sylvia's Jumper*, 2013. Half the size and made of wool these items might make the jumper very kookily 'special', the sort of thing to catch your eye in a boutique. A series of fluorescent-tubing words mounted in front of a rack of assorted pots, proclaims "sage, rosemary, thyme" (the piece's title). Why is it good? It looks glamorous, the handwritten letters are hard at first to read quickly, and they float hypnotically in front of the pots—a 'reality' that they *put in the shade*, so to speak. And they read as pure, sinuous line, glamorously bright. Another cast of plate-sized disks has a series of numbers on it, the line of them (the work, from 2012, is entitled *Free Money*) spelling out 583,000. The large figure, the obdurate, matter-of-fact typeface of the figures, the comma, given a whole plate to itself, all conspire to insist heavily on the massive figure. Weird to be given pause like this, by a mere (if large) number. It is the presentation: the materials and scale and kind of facture. The fact that we think "money" is its sly point.

Gesture and deposition are regular animating features of Nikou's work. Plainly Michelle Nikou's objects bounce off socially constructed reality more than Haselton's. Louise Haselton steps outside it for the most part. A decade or so ago this would not have seemed at all the case. Haselton then regularly ran text up against a form that thwarted the verbal sense. The works, in this show, based around slightly wobbly circle shapes (*Remainders* and *Those Who Stay*, all 2013) work almost entirely through their quasi-

and uncertainly, organic identification: branch-like and unstably squared circles, or circled squares? the limbs moistly glistening in a slightly icky-repulsive way, and with pale, internal-organ colours. They can read, then, as resembling an aorta, a smooth, bark-stripped sapling branch, as somehow penile. But their innocence disclaims any strong identification. Their colours are organic, but also slightly unsettling: bland, custardy tan, puce, a milky plum? A baby-food colour. A prosthetic limb colour. These factors set up a kind of uncanny that the works tempt us beyond. The viewer is pleased to be rewarded with pleasure at assenting to the works' beauty.

Haselton showed a flat arrangement on the gallery's white wall (*Meret Oppenheim's Eyes*, 2013): a kind of much distorted or casually approximate rectangular frame-and-grid, of thin gold chain, attached to the wall at irregular points. Intervals, again irregular, asymmetrical in effect, were marked by bangle or ruched tie, all in closely approximate deep red shades, with a few hints of orange, even a little blue or white in flashes. It was beautiful, a kind of bounty given to the viewer—white and gold with scarlet blooms—the rhythms spare and limber. *Il Pleut* (2013), a work near the gallery's entrance, featured a roughly rectangular piece of hessian with some lines (of circular holes) cut in it so as to quote the fall of the lines in Apollinaire's beautiful concrete poem of that name. The rain / crying-sky metaphor is played here wordlessly. The small, perfectly circular holes that stood for (or stood *in* for) Apollinaire's words reveal a smokily dark, pink tinted-mirror surface beneath.

Both Haselton and Nikou seem on a roll. Michelle Nikou's objects seems more sharply and tartly witty, making them a little closer to a distant Warhol. Haselton's humour is more beneficent and jubilant. Way in its background stands Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse or Leon Baxt. These are attributions of affiliation that tell more about the difference between the artists than about their actual art. Intrinsic to many of Nikou's works is a sense of their having been quickly and casually arrived at. Haselton's—whether studied or not—make less of this. And so on.

Mark Siebert sent from London, where he has been working for some time now, a smorgasbord of small, colourful paintings (on cardboard, chipboard and various cheap backings) each one showing a piece of paper, a betting ticket, a scratch card, a lottery

ticket. These were painted as if looking down, the artist's feet presumably just out of frame. Some show what might be the artist's shadow. I can imagine they were captured first on Siebert's phone camera and painted back at home. They are crudely painted—on materials found on the same walks, cardboard and cheap building materials or discarded packaging. As an assortment, though, these are amusing, and record a life in London, at least in terms of movement. The ongoing series is called *Losers*. Each one is named after the spot at which it is found. Street names plus dates: *Bermondsey Street*; *Sheep Lane*; *Bus Shelter, Cambridge Heath Road*; *Peckham Road*. None is much bigger than 30 cm or much smaller than 13 cm. Their colour, their lettering, reflect the promise of the tiny event (of consumption, of living) that each one represented briefly: the record of an impulse triggered.

Losers records 'London'. But of course it could equally record anywhere. Unless Siebert is the gambler the tickets and stubs don't record any single life, though they might be taken to record 'Life'. And so, perhaps they are not so far from Nikou's *Expired*. Have I said this before, I wonder: Siebert's (totally fake) guilelessness (he's a joker, an ironist, and poker-faced) reminds me of Peter Blake's early, 'earnest' *Self-Portrait with Badges*. In this work Blake stands before the viewer covered in fan's badges (indicating his fealty to Elvis Presley, Bo Diddley, Brigitte Bardot, Buddy Holly, Little Richard and so on). In Siebert's work we are given the artist's self-portrait as *poet maudit*, feckless artist, would-be bohemian, would-be hip success. Do the portraits make it so? (Does he have tickets on himself?) It is a joke he shares with us—as much as it is one he plays on us. If no-one is annoyed at his presumption the rest of us can't feel 'cool' in liking it.