

**REGENERATING THE LIVE: THE ARCHIVE AS THE GENESIS
OF A PERFORMANCE PRACTICE**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
University of Lincoln for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

July 2015

Acknowledgements

My first thanks go to Claire Warden and Andrew Westerside for their unwavering support and guidance during the course of my PhD, and to Mark O'Thomas who encouraged me to apply to Lincoln in the first place. Thank you to Ashleigh Griffiths, Cara Davies and Mads Floor Anderson in Tracing the Pathway for continuing to inspire me, especially during difficult times. Thank you to Jenny Minton and Anton Kardasis for your excellent vocals. Thank you to Bill Lowe for helping me to set up the website, and thank you to Aaron James for his outstanding editing skills and creativity.

Thank you to the drama department at the University of East London, with particular thanks to Dominic Hingorani and Conan Lawrence for their mentorship. Thank you also to Mary Smith and Libby Homer for allowing me to experiment with theatre archives during the CEDAR project, when the seeds of this thesis were sown.

Thank you to Jorge Ramos and everyone in ZU-UK for collaborating with me on the *Audience as Document* project.

Thank you to the staff at Peckham Library for giving me the flexibility and time to complete this project. And to all of those dedicated professionals who have committed their careers to maintaining quality public services in the teeth of opposition: the fight continues.

Thank you to all of my friends who I have the privilege of sharing my life with, who have accompanied me at different points throughout my studies, and who are always with me, no matter what distance separates us.

My final thanks go to my Mum, Lin, who taught me what true dedication means, and for always gently guiding me back on the right path.

And to my partner, Hannah, for her honesty, her limitless patience, her creativity and intelligence, for instilling in me a strong desire to share knowledge with others, and for teaching me it's not wrong to ask for help. I could not have completed this thesis without her.

Abstract

Live performance lacks the durability of art practices such as photography, film and painting, and so definitions of ‘live’ acts have traditionally been formulated in terms of ‘transience’ and ‘disappearance’. In this context the archive and archival documents are often described as the antithesis of performance’s ontology. An archive’s primary function is to preserve material for future, undetermined uses, whereas a live event is temporary and cannot endure as ‘itself’ outside of the temporal-spatial zone it unfolds in before an audience. Yet archival documents are intimately imbricated in the creation of live acts. This can be seen in all performance practices, from written plays in the dramatic theatre, to the assemblage of materials used in devised performance, to the ways sites are framed as sources of historical knowledge in performance re-enactments. By examining the role documents play in performance practice I argue that archival materials have the potential to act as the genesis for live acts.

The archive’s generative function makes performance a potential method of historical research, where documents can help engender an interactive reciprocity between spectators and the past. The archival mode of performance practice I advocate in this thesis requires spectators to become participants inside the performance sphere, just as historians participate in the writing of historical discourses in the archive.

There are several practice-as-research components to my project. These include the *Audience as Document* events and two workshops. The primary practice-as-research event is a participatory site-specific performance *Voices from the Village*. The Olympic Village in Stratford, East London, is framed as a type of authoritative historical document that works as a meta-narrative of London’s past. The Olympic Legacy anchors the memories of East London’s residents to a time they are encouraged to re-live in their everyday lives. At the centre of contemporary urban regeneration projects is a firm conviction that the future can be built in the here-and-now. Participants are guided through the Village and by two tour guides who attempt to inculcate them into the Legacy Project – a new type of citizenry based upon the neoliberal hegemony. In the third part participants explore what would happen if the neighbouring Hackney Wick estate was ‘regenerated’ in the future. My practice

examines how documents in performance can act as interlocutors between a site's past(s) and a participant's 'live' experience. The enduring form of digital documents creates a manifold afterlife for performance on the Web, which is the home of an evolving network of people who connect to each other through their re-interpretation of the Olympic Legacy. I am arguing that the life of a performance does not end over a fixed duration, but is instead a dialogic process with a multitude of access points.

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‘He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present controls the past’

(George Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four*)

‘Doctor: You can’t archive something that hasn’t happened yet!

TARDIS: *You* can’t.’

(*Doctor Who, The Doctor’s Wife*)

Introduction

Disturbing the leaves of history is about what might happen as much as what has already passed (Christie et al., 2006, p.ix).

This thesis examines how the philosophy and practices of the archive can become the basis of contemporary performance practice. I begin by outlining the salient points of this debate to identify how the live medium is typically defined as the antithesis of documentation. This leads me into a discussion of how, over the past fifteen years, a number of practitioners and scholars have challenged definitions of live performance's ontology that are based upon the exigencies of 'disappearance'. I argue that these definitions do not adequately account for the importance of the enduring materials that are generated from live performances, nor do they sufficiently address how staged enactments remain as memories in the minds of the audience. Moreover, a central tenet of my thesis is that the preservation and accession of performance documents¹ significantly contributes to the ways the live medium is defined, therefore any definition of the live medium has major effects on the ways performance's ontology is formulated. My research methodology has grown out of several practice-as-research activities (see below). As a result of the insights my practical experiments have yielded into my theoretical inquiries, I am proposing that documentation can be deployed as a performance strategy for audiences to *reimagine* the uses of urban spaces. This strategy is designed so that participants in my practice-as-research performance, *Voices from the Village*, can resist against and shatter the neoliberal simulacra of the 2012 Olympic Legacy so that they may reclaim imaginaries of the future from the corporate interests that govern the Olympic Village in Stratford, East London. This is accomplished by reenergising the past so that it becomes material to

¹ For the purposes of this study I use documents to denote any material born out of live performances that is consignable to the archive. It is important to note, however, that no consensus exists in the field of the performing arts or the archiving profession about what constitutes a document or a record. David Bawden and Lyn Robinson argue records and documents by defining the latter as any material – including living beings – that conveys information, whereas records refer to sources of information that are produced technologically e.g. a film or photograph (2012, p.70).

build alternative futures beyond the narrative of ‘regeneration’. *Voices from the Village* is an audiowalk that can be downloaded from the website www.voicesfromthevillage.co.uk; the dramaturgy of the piece explores the implications of the Olympic Legacy for the residents who live in Stratford and Hackney Wick – an estate that borders the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – and what effects the legacy might have on the public memory of these sites.

Linking the function of documentation with the live medium, and indeed to the very concept of ‘liveness’, runs counter to those scholars and practitioners who argue archival documents are inimical to live events. Tim Etchells² usefully summarises these views in his discussion of the creative potential of documentation:

That documentation of live events is an attempt at capture, a dragging down of the ephemeral into the fossilising mud of all that is fixed and fixing. That documentation commodifies – again, shaping into static and saleable object-form an art-practice which resists the market. That in giving way to documents (and analysis) artists are losing hold of their work – that the voices of academia posit readings over which artists have no control, readings which claim a single authority and readings which distance viewers from the work itself (1999, p.71).

Broadly speaking, the live medium is often used as a term to denote the physical proximity of performers to spectators in a shared temporal-spatial zone – the ‘itself’ Etchells refers to above. The temporary nature of this encounter underpins Peggy Phelan’s argument that “performance’s being...becomes itself through disappearance” (1993, p.146). Phelan eloquently expresses what was a major concern for academics

² It is important to stress here that this is not a view Etchells endorses. He and his company Forced Entertainment document and re-watch footage of their rehearsals and performances exhaustively, much of which is made publically available on DVD. Forced Entertainment’s CD ROM *Imaginary Evidence* (2003) is a series of unordered film clips of rehearsals, home movies, interviews, rehearsals, and performances, which the company describe as “a landscape of ideas” (Forced Entertainment, 2013) to reflect the multiple influences on their artistic process. Forced Entertainment have been working with the photographer and documentary filmmaker Hugo Glendinning for over twenty years whose documentation of the company’s work is a major contributory factor to their devising process (see Etchells, 1999, p.110-111; also see Glendinning, 2010).

and practitioners in the 1990s, a time that Fischer-Lichte tells us “saw a renewed debate about the particular medial conditions of theatre performances, especially in the United States” (2008, p.67). As a method of “resistance” against the “dominant culture of [the] media economy” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p.68), ‘disappearance’ foregrounds the performer’s and spectator’s physical ‘presence’ as the benchmark for determining if an event is live or recorded.

Questions concerning presence were a major concern for performance practitioners who worked in the 1960s and 1970s (Auslander, 1994, p.36). Notable among these were the Living Theatre, the Performance Group, the Open Theatre, Jerzy Grotowski and the Theatre Laboratory, and Peter Brook. These were practitioners who, broadly speaking, defined acting in terms of self-revelation rather than as a process of textual, cognitive-based interpretation. Given the accelerating ubiquity of technology in society during the mid-twentieth century, live performance was thought to offer a pure, or to use Peter Brook’s term “holy” (1968) communicative experience, immortalised by Antonin Artaud’s image of actors and spectators as “victims burn[ing] at the stake, signalling through the flames” (Artaud, 1958, p.13). In 1968 – a year of unprecedented artistic, political, and social upheaval (see Caute, 1988) – Brook and Grotowski wrote that the performer and audience’s presence is the essence of theatre:

I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and that is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged (Brook, 1968, p.1).

[C]an the theatre exist without actors? I know of no example of this [...] Can the theatre exist without an audience? At least one spectator is needed to make a performance. So we are left with the actor and the spectator. We can thus define the theatre as ‘what takes place between spectator and actor’ (Grotowski, 1968, p.32).

These formulations gained a great deal of currency in the proceeding decades, and significantly contributed to definitions of the ‘live’ in theatre. We can clearly see here that for Brook and Grotowski the presence of performers and spectators communally

residing in proximity with each other creates a 'live' event. Since the mid-twentieth century, these "pillars" of live performance (Coogan, 2012, [unpublished]) have come to constitute its ontology. Not only will a performance's meaning be lost in the absence of an audience, but its mode will cease to exist without the performer-spectator dynamic. These theories of presence established the commonly held view that live performance is an inherently temporary form of art that 'disappears' the moment an audience perceive staged enactments, a formulation Rebecca Schneider argues has remained a "cornerstone" of performance studies (2001, p.102). Yet 'transience' is a far more accurate way to describe live performance's materiality than 'disappearance'; 'transience' acknowledges performance's temporal dimension without reducing it to an absolute state of presence or absence, whereas 'disappearance' enhances the restrictive dichotomy between the two states. Live performances do not disappear 'in time', but are instead events that produce a temporary experience for spectators. Such experiences do not disappear but remain as memories. However, it is performance's temporal dimension, the perception of staged enactments always 'passing', which is often cited as proof of the impossibility of capturing the qualities of liveness in documents. Transience has thus become the valorising criterion to judge how live an event truly is; if performance cannot be preserved in documents, the logic goes, so it must end 'in time' and 'disappear'. But does this logic stand up to scrutiny when one considers how performance-making processes, as varied as they are, operate? To take one example, Happenings were explicitly designed to be 'one off' events in order to prevent their re-iteration (see Sandford, 1995) but they nevertheless spawned a host of documents and analysis. Furthermore, this work provides a rich source of inspiration for artists who continue to make pieces in response to the originals.

However, it is a truism that live acts in performance cannot be reproduced as they were *then* and are therefore distinct from other art works. Many performance practitioners therefore cite transience as the antithesis to reproducible works of art, because these works "are successful to the extent that they stand the test of equivalence; that is the process offers an ongoing flow of sameness, or order from

order” (Critical Arts Ensemble³, 2000, p.154). Matthew Reason writes that transience is considered in this context “not merely one phenomenological characteristic of live performance, but also a motivating and inspirational virtue” (2006, p.6). The “virtue” of transience is, however, currently undergoing an important re-evaluation. At the centre of this debate is the complex relationship archives have with contemporary practice. Many performance practitioners are now recognising that the archive is a valuable resource for creating an afterlife for their work, but most significantly that it can be utilised as a tool to communicate with spectators beyond the temporal-spatial zone of the live event.

Disappearance, Documentation, and Memory: The Triad of the Live

The anxieties surrounding the effects of mass consumer culture on live performance’s value as a non-reproducible work of art that began to be articulated in the 1960s have somewhat calmed over the past decade. It is not a coincidence that this has occurred in conjunction with the acceleration of recording technologies; indeed, the increasing mediatisation of society offers a possible explanation for why scholars and practitioners are beginning to re-validate what a live experience constitutes. At a time when seemingly all of our experiences have a digital afterlife, live performance can potentially combine the irreproducibility of embodied experience with the durability documentation offers, thereby creating a manifold afterlife through spectator’s memories and in (physical and digital) archives.

To return to the question of formulating an ontology for performance, I argue that instead of focusing on the impermanence of live, embodied acts, it is far more useful to think of the live and the recorded as mediums that facilitate communication between spectators and performers; both of these groups oscillate between the roles of *receivers and transmitters of information* over the duration of a performance. These roles are not static but are in fact extremely fluid, as to suggest one group is more active or passive than the other reduces the dialogic quality of the spectator-performer

³ CAE was formed in 1987 and are made up of a group of artists who work across artistic disciplines including performance, visual art, computer graphics, web design, film, and photography. They explore the “intersections between art, critical theory, technology, and political activism” (Critical Arts Ensemble, 2013).

dynamic. Framing live events in this way enables me to broaden the scope of this thesis beyond performance studies per se to consider how digital technologies create networks between people irrespective of time and distance.

The effects digital technologies have on performance practice(s) are a vital aspect of my enquiry, as the integration of media into experiential reality calls into question whether any *absolute* experience of the live – as a medium defined in terms of ‘disappearance’ – is now possible for contemporary audiences. If it is not, then it is reasonable to argue spectators now experience *degrees* of liveness during seemingly transient performances. As the “mass mediascape” (Auslander, 1994, p.3; also see Etchells and Lowdon, 1996, p.236) we inhabit has become ossified into our day-to-day experience of reality, the binary categorisations of the live and the recorded have become increasingly blurred, meaning that defining the live as a medium which makes onstage acts ‘disappear’ is inadequate at reflecting how contemporary audiences perceive live events. But I consider the infusion of *potential* liveness in archival documents to be of greater significance in this paradigm; the notion archival documents can re-enter the performance-making process means they can act as a *generative record* of live acts. As Simone Osthoff states,

[artists’] performances in, with, and of the archive are producing an ontological change – from the archive as a repository of documents to the archive as a dynamic and generative production tool (2009, p.11).

The archive breaks the ostensive linearity of performance practice – spectator’s experiences do not necessarily mark the ‘end’ of a performance, but instead become part of an ongoing interpretive process enacted through a multiplicity of networked dialogues. As practitioners turn to archival documents as catalysts for performance-making, the archive is now thought of less as the terminus of live events and more as one interweaved amongst the temporal manifold that performances are created within. This temporal mode continues to unfold in the audience’s memories and through their subsequent interpretations of the event. Documentation in this schema is not formulated as a “passive simulacrum” but as “a dynamic phenomenon, at once bound up with [and] standing apart from former liveness” (Ellis et al., 2010, p.164). One of

the goals in this thesis is to demonstrate how live performance is not practiced separately from archiving practices, but is in fact dependent upon it to be experienced as a live event (see Goldsmith, 2007, p.5). The term ‘archiving practices’ does not, however, just describe practitioners’ uses of archival documents – photography, film, costume, written text...in short, all of those ‘hard’ materials that are produced during all stages of a production – but also denotes the kinds of remains that are non-archival. These include memory, monuments and ruins.

Two examples of this paradigm shift are evidenced in the academy. The TaPRA Documenting Performance Working Group was set up in 2010 to explore the different approaches to documenting and archiving performance, “particularly in relation to the new communication technologies, which have radically changed the way documents and archives are created and managed” (TaPRA, 2014). Additionally, Bristol University hosted the *Performing Documents* project in collaboration with the Arnolfini Arts Centre and Exeter University. This culminated in a series of events including the *Redux Symposium* on the 7 November 2012 and the *Performing Documents Conference* on the weekend of 12-14 April 2013 (see University of Bristol, 2013). The theatre companies Blast Theory and Bodies in Flight created new pieces for the *Redux Symposium* entitled *Jog Shuttler* and *Do the Wild Thing! (Redux)* respectively, using their extensive archives to re-imagine their past work in new contexts. For example, *Jog Shuttler* was an installation of video players and televisions that looped footage of their rehearsals and experiments. *Do the Wild Thing! (Redux)* was a response to Bodies in Flight’s 1996 show of the same name. Four members of the group made work in response to the documentation of the original piece. The documents were ‘translated’ into photographs, a dance, a video, and written text.

Documents can engender a form of live performance that aims to take the remains of the past and order them into sequences that engender new interpretations and historical insights; in so doing, the past can be made into a present experience for participants, an idea I elaborate upon further in the subsequent chapters. Indeed, the very impossibility of preserving live events ‘as they were then’ can be considered as a valuable attribute for performance research; a document’s seeming incompleteness

invites future generations of researchers and practitioners to constantly re-interpret them. This process generates new forms of knowledge pertaining to the originary performance over time. Baz Kershaw embraces the performing arts archive's fragmented condition for scholarship by asking "how might the chief lacunae of performance research as a scholarly and creative endeavour become its greatest strengths?" (2009, p.26). Joanna Lindsay explored this theme in her paper *Performing Documents: Performances of Potential* (2013) where she postulated archives might be read as a repository of "unrealised potentials" that can be ordered into a live performance (2013 [unpublished]).

Although the examples I cite above evidence a mode of practice that treat archival documents as the catalysts of live performances, the artists I mention all used material that had been generated from their own work. True, *Jog Shuttler* and *Do the Wild Thing! (Redux)* demonstrate how archival documents can be treated as generative material of live art works, yet the pieces fail to fully capitalise upon the potential for audience participation that I argue is the most important aspect of the paradigm shift. In the context of the archive, participation can be understood as the researcher's subjective interpretation of archival documents because as Gale and Featherstone state to participate in the archive is to "examine multiple truths" and immerse oneself in the "networks of connective materials" (2011, p.37). In short, by interpreting the past(s) in archives researchers participate in the formation of history. Documentation can engender a type of audience participation that is analogous to the researcher's process in the archive. This is different from the type of participation that is used by theatre companies such as Punchdrunk⁴ and ZU-UK⁵ where participants interact with performers; the archival mode of participation I describe here involves interacting with sites using documentation strategies in order to create multiple, non-unified and non-authoritarian imaginaries of future cityscapes. The specifics and functions of

⁴ It is arguable whether Punchdrunk's pieces are participatory or merely immersive. When I saw *The Drowned Man* (2014) I participated by moving about the space, yet my presence was incidental to the action of the performance. The performers never directly interacted with the audience nor gave us tasks to complete. Our function was to watch as scenes unfolded around us.

⁵ ZU-UK's artistic director Jorge Ramos describes the company's performance *Hotel Medea* as a 'dramaturgy of participation' as spectators sing, dance, eat and sleep over the course of six hours. I discuss the audience's role in *Hotel Medea* on pages 51-57.

these strategies are discussed in Chapter Three, ‘Reimagining the Future Cityscape’ with reference to *Voices from the Village*.

I link the changing definition of the live medium and liveness with theories pertaining to the archive and documentation practices throughout the thesis (Abbott et al., 2009; Agamben, 2006; Anderson, 2008; Argelander, 1974; Barrett and Bolt, 2010; Cook, 1997; *ibid*, 2001; Derrida, 1996; Dixon, 1999; Enwezor, 2009; Freshwater, 2003; Kershaw, 2007; Nelson, 2013; Nicholson, 2012; Reason, 2003; Rye, 2003; Sant, 2013; Schmitt, 1976; Schwartz, 1995; Steedman, 2002; also see Freeman, 2003; Ketelar, 2001; Marini, 2008; Stapleton, 2007). I argue in Chapter One, ‘Defining the Live in the Context of the Archive’, that formulations of performance’s ontology based on the exigencies of disappearance as advocated by Phelan (see above) have limited the opportunities to study how live events *disappear and simultaneously remain*. My main contention here is that the live and the recorded are interdependent mediums and are not in conflict with each other; as Fischer-Lichte observes, “it was not until the recording of acting on film became possible that the ‘real’ body and space began to mark important and distinct categories” (2008, p.67). The contradistinctions between these categories are unduly focused on the presence or absence of technological interfaces in the event sphere, not on the effects the live and the recorded mediums generate in audiences. Due to the role digital technology now plays in the everyday I concur with Auslander’s proposition that “it is not realistic to propose [that] live performance can remain ontologically pristine or that it operates in a cultural economy separate from that of the mass media” (2008, p.45). I then go on to consider how the concepts and processes of reproduction are undergoing a major reappraisal in the context of digital culture (Bang Larsen, 2014; Gere, 2008; Kroeker, 2014; Marres, 2014; also see Blake, 2014; Grewal, 2009; Turkle, 2013; Zuckerman, 2013). I contend the ways artists are engaging with the online world evidences a paradigmatic shift away from Walter Benjamin’s notion of “mechanical reproduction” (1999). With reference to my practice-as research experiments, I propose that the live denotes a medium of *archival production* (see pages 57-59). This is with an aim to distinguish my definition of the live from Auslander’s analysis by framing spectators as participants within a performance; here, spectators do not participate as consumers

of mediated images, but rather temporarily inhabit the event sphere in order to create the conditions for future live events. These conditions resonate with what Michel Foucault describes as “continuous history” (2007, pp.142-148), a mode of historical discourse actualised as a set of archival documents that are not organised into monumentalised narratives, but are endlessly open to re-configuration. In this way, the documents participants’ produce effectuates the conditions for future performance processes and events to emerge.

The ways in which performance actualises a legacy for itself in memory is discussed in Chapter Two, ‘Performing the Past to Create a Live (Living) Legacy’ (Barba, 1992; *ibid*, 2002; Connerton, 1989; Millar, 2006; Taylor, 2003; *ibid*, 2006). In order to explicate these ideas in a practice-based context I make extensive reference to Schneider’s work on historical re-enactments found in her book *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment* (2011). I take the four performances *Seven Easy Pieces*, *Poor Theater*, *9 Beginnings*, and *Battle of Orgreave*⁶ as case studies (Art Angel, no date; Deller, 2015; Dunkelberg, 2005; Every House Has a Door, no date; Goulish and Hixon, 2013; Heathfield and Jones, 2012; Jones, 2010; *ibid*, 2011; Roach, 1996; Santone, 2008; Tate, 2012; Taylor, 1996; Thompson, 2012). The effects of digital technology on the experiencing of live events is adumbrated further in Chapter Two, where I argue the ubiquity of digital technology has resulted in a blurring of the audience’s perception between material, experiential reality and a mediatised one. This has significantly altered what constitutes the contemporary ‘Real’ (Baudrillard, 2001; Bennett, 2012; Huyssen, 2003; Žižek, 2002; also see Willis, 2005).

I have rooted my practice-based research methodology in site specific performance because the notion that actions and events do not end or disappear but leave residual traces in their wake are central tenets of this mode of practice. Mike Pearson elucidates this notion in the following description:

⁶ Three of these four performances (*Seven Easy Pieces*, *Poor Theater* and *Battle of Orgreave*) are discussed in varying detail in Schneider’s book. In my thesis they are used as examples of practitioners either resisting or embracing archival processes. I distinguish my theories on reenactments from Schneider’s by focusing on the performance’s potential to engage audiences in distributive yet interactive modes of historical interpretation and discourse.

Site specific performances are conceived for, and conditioned by, the particulars of found spaces, (former) sites of work, play and worship. They make manifest, celebrate, confound or criticise location, history, function, architecture, micro-climate. They are an interpretation of the found and the fabricated. They are inseparable from their sites, the only contexts within which they are readable (2010. p.4).

Performance spaces are not consignable to the archive yet possess the potential to fulfil an archival document's function. Marvin Carlson contends that the spaces performances are enacted in are "haunted" by past live enactments, as all present experiences are "ghosted" by past ones (2003, p.2), a state of affairs that becomes even more acute when performances are enacted in 'everyday' spaces. But as Alan Read correctly states any delineation between the realms of the everyday and performance is a false dichotomy: "Theatre, when it is good, enables us to know the everyday in order better to live everyday life" (1993, p.1). In other words theatre and the everyday have a dialectical relationship with each other. Read directly challenges Peter Brook's notion of an 'empty space' by pointing out "there is no such thing" and that practitioners have been "surprised, mystified and sometimes dismissive when people who inhabit space have a point of view concerning theatre's arrival" (1993, p.13). The spaces performances are staged in determine how spectators experience and perceive live embodied enactments, but equally the materiality of space can reveal multiple pasts and give us glimpses of potential futures. Citing Michel de Certeau⁷, Read goes on to argue that places are in a constant state of displacement through "the emergence of others' stories from other places, through which theatre might elucidate a political claim, a romantic gesture, or a metaphysical meaning" (1993, p.138).

Consider, for instance, how ruins are evidence of a past that has fallen into decay and fragmentation, yet also show us a potential (or even inevitable) future. Ruins remind us that life's transience does not mean our actions 'disappear' when they end over a duration of time, but rather remain as residues on the landscape: "[R]uins themselves, like other traces, are treasures: our links to what came before,

⁷ I make further reference to de Certeau's essay *Walking in the City* (1984) in Chapter Three.

our guide to *situating ourselves in a landscape of time*” (Solnit, 2008, p.355, emphasis in original). My practice-as-research experiments prove that site-specific performances are an effective strategy for spectators to participate in communal yet distributed interpretations of urban space’s past(s) through their documentation and the online dissemination of the documents they create. In a similar fashion to the archive, a place’s past is fragmented and never totalising; to experience London’s, and indeed any city’s past, requires one to be an active agent inside them: “And in unearthing them [these fragments], another, more disquieting picture of London emerges in which the very ideals which have animated the city’s growth have also made the city unreal to itself” (Cohen, 2013, p.38). Henri Lefebvre contends space constitutes part of “lived experience” (1991, p.94) and as such is part of the political hegemony it resides in. Indeed, even as an abstraction, “political space” imposes itself as reality that is “endowed with enormous powers because it is the locus and medium of power” (ibid).

The Olympic Village is a perfect example of the type of space Lefebvre is referring to. *Voices from the Village* aims to reveal how the power structure of the Olympic Legacy operates in the Olympic Village by inviting participants to walk through sites in order that they may imagine alternative futures for them beyond the hegemony of neoliberalism. This process occurs over the duration of the audiowalk and through the sharing of the participants’ documentation. The role documentation plays in *Voices from the Village* also allows me to broaden the definition of the live medium to include the reiterative and metamorphic nature of live acts. An integral aspect of my practice-as-research activities has been a methodological analysis of the ways documentation can be integrated into live performance, and how documenting can act as a mode of audience participation. Participation in this sense denotes the participant’s actions inside the event and their contribution to a performance’s legacy. *Voices from the Village*’s theoretical framework developed following two practice-as-research events I designed and led:

- *The Audience as Document*. In collaboration with the ZU-UK theatre company, I took on the role of researcher to determine how spectators in the immersive performance *Hotel Medea* could be framed as its primary source of documentation

- *Body-Site-Encounter*. I ran two workshops in Aberystwyth and Bristol in collaboration with Cara Davies and Mads-Floor Anderson⁸. The workshops explored the interconnected relations between sites, memories and documents

The aim of the *Audience as Document* project was to determine how spectators' memories could be framed as a type of non-archival document capable of retaining and transmitting the effects of a past live performance. *Body-Site-Encounter* was designed to reveal how documentation can act as bridge between a participant's memories and a site's histories (see appendices two and three, pp. xxxiv-xxxix).

I discuss these projects in detail in Chapters One and Three respectively, but at this stage it is important to note that both *Audience as Document* and *Body-Site-Encounter* led me to consider how participation in performance should be defined in the context of the archive. In all of the following chapters I discuss how audience participation can be framed in the context of the archive whilst situating my methodology in contradistinction to more established methodologies of immersive theatre practices (Bishop, 2012a; Freshwater, 2009; Ramos, 2011; also see Machon, 2013; White, 2013).

Because the discipline of performance studies relies on a fluid relationship between theory and practice I do not delineate between purely scholarly or creative activities (see Barrett and Bolt, 2010; Freeman, 2010; Kershaw and Nicholson, 2010; Nelson, 2013; Smith and Dean, 2009). My theories on archives and performance guide my practice-based methodology, just as the discoveries I make during the practice-as-research activities inform my theoretical enquiry.

The Indebted City

The Olympic Legacy is the latest example of 'regeneration' projects that have become commonplace in the UK over the past thirty years. 'Regeneration' is the name given to large infrastructure projects that are designed to re-develop dilapidated urban districts. The goal of these projects is to engender the economic 'trickle down' effects

⁸ Tracing the Pathway was formed in 2010. We are a collective who explore how the memory of place can be experienced through documentation, and how such experiences of places can create archives that encapsulate some essence of lived experience.

favoured by neoliberal orthodoxy – thereby minimising the necessity of government ‘interference’ in people’s lives through ‘regressive’ taxes – by building luxury apartments, retail complexes, shopping centres, and a smattering of ‘affordable’ housing. But despite the glitzy veneer of limitless prosperity, much of this has been accomplished through risky property speculation and increasing the public debt, which Cohen contends has become an acceptable form of governance for over three decades:

Since the 1980s, living on the never-never has been encouraged not only by banks but by both Labour and Tory governments, for whom consumer credit was the easiest way to stimulate growth. Moral and social status, the issue of legitimacy and illegitimacy, become reduced to credit worthiness (2013, p.220).

The history participants interpret in *Voices from the Village* is, of course, rooted in the 2012 Olympic Games, an event which has spawned a host of imaginaries of the future cityscape. These range from the total privatisation of public space (Campkin, 2013; Hatherley, 2013), bleak visions of civic alienation (Sinclair, 2012), and benevolent pogroms (Oldfield Ford, 2013).

In her important book on this subject *Ground Control: Fear and Happiness in the Twenty-First Century City* (2012) Anna Minton traces the origins of regeneration projects to London’s Docklands; once the centre of UK trade and heavy industry, the brownfield site by the river Thames is now home to the iconic Canary Wharf and HSBC towers, potent symbols of the Thatcher government’s (1979-1990) economic policies. The transformation of the Docklands began as a result of the private property boom ushered in by the Conservative government in the 1980s, a time that saw the steep decline in the once thriving British manufacturing industry. Daniel Trilling writes that the government’s solution to replace the UK’s manufacturing base “was a combination of top-down diktat and economic laissez-faire” (2012, p.12). Within this paradigm a large part of the Docklands was designated as an “Enterprise Zone...offering low tax rates and lax planning regulations to property developers” (ibid). The process of privatising public land has now “taken root in towns and cities

around Britain, changing the physical fabric, the culture and the government of the places we live in” (Minton, 2012, p.3).

The Conservatives’ programme was sold to the public as a way of alleviating the ‘burdens’ on private businesses by freeing up public land for private ownership. These businesses would in turn generate jobs and invest in local communities, communities that were often described in the media as economically and culturally deprived. This process has accelerated since the turn of the millennium. As Minton states, privatising land “to serve the needs of business has become the standard model for the creation of every new place in towns and cities across the country” (2012, p.5). In other words, the demands of business now determine how we live, a dangerous state of affairs given how the financial crash in 2008 led to the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government's (2010-2015) cuts to public services, which has resulted in a further reliance on private capital to generate economic growth. But the regeneration of the Docklands has not resulted in wealth ‘trickling down’ to local communities, but instead has engendered a “spread[ing]” of wealth resulting in the “original community” becoming

displaced...as property prices ensured new homes remained unaffordable for locals, [they were] forced to move out further east to boroughs like Barking and Dagenham, or deeper into Essex (Minton, 2012, p.8).

If we take the Docklands as a blueprint of how regeneration projects affect local communities, then the future of communities in Stratford and Hackney is bleak.

Neoliberalism is a political and economic philosophy summed up by J.D. Taylor as “the belief that free economic trade and exchange is the guarantor of individual political freedom” (2013, p.12). Regeneration embodies the neoliberal ideals of mass consumerism and private ownership of property and public space, where the new has a higher value than the old, and has become the real politick of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (see Chomsky, 1998). As David Harvey notes, “[t]he whole capitalist system of perpetual accumulation is...one of the hallmarks of our times” (2012, p.109). Neoliberalism is a version of capitalism that configures societies to operate as businesses. In this model, citizens become

consumers, homes become commodities, towns and cities become assets, and the sense of the ‘public good’ is eroded. The neoliberal project, which began to manifest in Britain in the 1980s, was instilled in the UK under the Thatcherite mantra of ‘There Is No Alternative’ (or TINA as it was commonly known as). Mark Fisher writes in *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (2009) that neoliberalism’s power lies in its ostensive hostility to political ideology in favour of economic pragmatism – the success or failures of which are measured using metrics such as Growth Domestic Product (GDP), not the investment in public services or the quality or security of jobs – until it becomes a kind of “pervasive atmosphere” (p.16). Yet neoliberal economics are anything but apolitical; the 2008 crash proved this to be the case when the New Labour government (1997-2010) bailed the banks out to the tune of £500 billion of revenue taxpayers had generated for the UK treasury. The willingness of the free market to turn to a government at a time of crisis evidences a deceptive collusion between the political and financial institutions, where the latter publically berates the former for their ‘inefficiencies’ whilst relying on governmental infrastructure – educating children, funding the NHS, as well as awarding private firms government contracts – in order to continue operating. But the recession and the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government’s austerity programme demonstrated the neoliberal economic model operates by indebting the government, and therefore the public, to a small group of powerful banks and their shareholders, thereby increasing the power they have to determine how society functions and equally how cities should be built in order to service the global market.

The consequence of programs like the Docklands re-development has been to vastly increase the value of land at the expense of the general public who cannot afford to live in the communities they might have grown up or work in. Danny Dorling’s sobering fact that “[b]y the end of 2012 almost a million people in the UK had used a payday loan to cover their rent or mortgage” (2014, p.245) shows the failures of the government’s housing policies, but there is no sign of it being alleviated by any of the main Westminster parties – certainly not by the current Conservative government (2015-), whose expansion of their flagship ‘Right To Buy’ scheme will result in the further decrease of social housing stock.

The Olympic Village is a legacy of an Olympic Games built on debt, with “£600 million...owed to the National Lottery” and “£675 million to the London Development Agency” (Cohen, 2013, p.220). But the debt accumulated before and during the Olympic Games is in fact part of its economic ‘success’; as Jules Boykoff notes, the Olympic Games have “thrived under capitalism and in particular during the era of neoliberal capitalism” (2014, p.10). The material legacy of the Olympic Games, Cohen writes, can be described as the “payback legacy” that

concentrates on the disposal of material assets and liabilities – to whom are they bequeathed or sold off and under what conditions – and how debts of various kinds are to be negotiated within a time delimited frame (2013, p.220).

In this thesis and in *Voices from the Village* I argue that the neoliberal economic model the Olympic Village operates within endangers the notion and practice of civic society by making urban space a functionary of the ruling hegemonic order. The cityscape I advocate for is able to accommodate dissenting political positions and creates spaces for conflicting arguments to be articulated in the public sphere. *Voices from the Village* represents a rejection of the neoliberal hegemony and a cry for true alternatives to be voiced in order to break the stranglehold of private finance over the ways today’s citizenry live and interact with one another. But at a different level, *Voices from the Village* is also a performance that challenges the authoritative memory of the Olympic Games in order to construct alternative versions of the event and its legacy. To do this, I have turned to archiving practices, where the participant’s documentation of the sites they traverse through becomes a means of embracing the pluralism of public memory to imagine alternative futures for urban spaces.

The Memory of Place and the Olympic Legacy

Neoliberalism is a hegemony that is ubiquitous yet invisible, sensed and experienced, but remains largely inarticulable as a political ideology in the public sphere because it is framed as the natural order of things, rather than just *one version* of capitalism. The

thought that this system could end has thus become “unimaginable”, because neoliberal capitalism “subsumes and consumes all of previous history” (Fisher, 2009, p.4). Likewise, as a manifestation of neoliberal ideals, the modern city has become a “place to consume and a place to be consumed” (Georgiou, 2013, p.44). The regenerated cityscape commodifies the past in order to build an entirely predictable future, predicated upon the ideals of individualism and competitiveness. Therefore, regeneration projects are about more than the re-development of urban space to include the creation of ‘acceptable’ public imaginaries of the future.

History is a key tool in regeneration projects; by writing a version of a place’s past that enhances its degradation, an impression is created for the public that a place can only be made ‘better’ by outside agencies. The future, here, is presented as an idealised time that can be lived in the here-and-now by imagining an ideal version of a place and then building it. Yet counter-narratives of places have also emerged as corollaries to regeneration projects, thereby making the history of urban sites highly contestable, where Campkin notes “the past is drawn into fraught relationships with the present, and with the anticipated futures of specific sites” (2013, p.10).

To date, the Olympic Legacy has materialised as the E20 (or Athlete’s) Village, the Westfield shopping centre, and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, which I collectively call the Olympic Village. I use the word ‘village’ not only because it is the favoured term of many property developers and estate agents to describe areas of London – deemed by Jonathan Meades to be a “vulgar conceit” (2013, p.365) – but also to denote an urban district that is separate from the rest of the city. Meades opines that “[v]illages are small [and] inward looking” whereas London “is a city of stylistic collisions and astonishing juxtapositions” (2013, p.365). The Village acts as a monumentalised version of a future that is creeping across the Lea Valley towards Hackney Wick, and risks homogenising the site’s past into a sellable asset.

Hackney Wick sits opposite the Olympic Village and is home to an eclectic artistic community. Many of the Wick’s buildings are in a ruinous state, and so provide a fascinating juxtaposition to the newly opened Olympic Village sitting just across the Lea Valley canal. Yet the shadow of the Olympic Stadium looms large over the crumbling factories and DIY art studios. Many of the Wick’s residents now fear

their homes and workspaces will soon be regenerated into a homogenous adjunct of the Olympic Village as a consequence of the threat regeneration projects like the Olympic Legacy presents:

London is city that is fast becoming defined by its anonymity, and given the most recent set of proposals, Hackney Wick and Fish Island⁹ appear as though they are destined to follow suit (Deane, 2013, p.4).



Figure 1.1: A car park in Hackney Wick with the ArcelorMittal Orbit Tower and the Olympic Stadium visible on the skyline. Source: The author

The Olympic Legacy perfectly illustrates how the future is a contested time we in the twenty-first century are determined to create in the present, where “historical memory” (Huysen, 2003, p.1) is considered by the warring parties as the optimal weapon in the battle for the future. Yet in Huysen’s paradigm of historical memory, the past

is not what it used to be. [Historical memory] used to mark the relation of a community or a nation to its past, but the boundary between past and present used to be stronger and more stable than it appears to be today (2003, p.1).

In other words, the past – found in archival documents, living memory, and in sites – has a greater presence in experiential reality than it ever has done before. The

⁹ A purpose built complex of art studios, galleries, pubs and restaurants that is adjacent to Hackney Wick.

company responsible for implementing the Olympic Legacy, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), government ministers and much of the mainstream media frequently describe the Olympic host boroughs as areas in dire need of investment whose (hard working, taxpaying) residents needed the money the Olympic Legacy would bring in order to fulfil their potential. This sentiment is perfectly exemplified by Puttman:

The Olympic movement, exemplified so brilliantly by the spectacle of London 2012, may well represent one of the most powerful instruments we have to enable [a] ‘flowering of humanity’ to take place (2013, p.30).

Only after this historical memory was established in the public imagination did the Olympic Legacy begin to materialise in reality, as the psychogeographer Iain Sinclair laments:

In boroughs affected by this madness, the 2012 game-show virus, long-established businesses closed down, travellers were expelled from edgeland settlements, and allotment holders turned out of their gardens (Sinclair, 2012, p.63).

Sinclair’s books chronicle the effects gentrification and regeneration projects have had on East London’s residents. Merlin Coverley interprets his novels and ‘documentary fictions’ as works which display Sinclair’s “political engagement and a clear anger directed against the legacy of Thatcherite redevelopment” (2010, p.121). Sinclair’s hatred of modern redevelopment, most notably evidenced in regeneration projects, is rooted in his belief that if citizens are to actively participate in a democratic society then a city’s past (its history) must remain outside of strictly museological settings to become part of the lived environment which, Campkin argues, regeneration “either denies, fictionalises or neutralises” (2013, p.157) by idealising *one version* of the *future* cityscape.

The 2012 Games, acting as the vanguard to the future cityscape, was a mass spectacle, probably the largest the UK has ever witnessed, but its legacy was decided before the Olympic torch so much as flickered on British shores. The 2012 Games

was an event that has been cited by many figures in the government and the media as one that epitomised an ideal model of citizenry for the UK.

The LLDC have written a version of the Olympic Village's history that begins in 2012. When one strolls through the E20 Marketing Suite – one of the first spaces spectators visit in *Voices from the Village* – they are met with panels describing how the Village encapsulates East London's 'working class heritage'. The time prior to the 2012 Games is now the subject of an exhibit, an epoch that can be controlled, managed, and most troublingly spoken for.

Ever since the UK won the bid to host the games in July 2005, athleticism (which, after all, is the core of the Olympics) was a corollary to the Olympic Legacy. The 2012 Olympics was valorised by the major UK political parties¹⁰ and most of the mainstream media¹¹ as the genesis of a regeneration programme for East London. For most British citizens, but especially Londoners, the Olympics was sold as the kernel for building the city of the future, ushering in a more prosperous and generally happier era for the rest of the UK. In the foreword to the government's report *Beyond 2012: The London Legacy Story*, the Prime Minister David Cameron (2010-) writes that "legacy" was "built into the DNA of London 2012" (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2012, p.6).

The Olympic Legacy has materialised in two interdependent ways. Firstly on the material level: the stadia in the park, the E20 Village and the Westfield shopping centre have been built on the long disused industrial estate behind Stratford's underground station. Westfield and the stadia fulfil two of the Olympic Legacy's

¹⁰ The Olympics were one of those events that belied mainstream political partisanship, with politicians of all colours desperate to squeeze as much political capital from the Games as possible. At the risk of sounding overtly cynical, the then mayor Ken Livingstone (2000-2008) gave a speech at the *London United* event in Trafalgar Square following al Qaeda's attacks on 7th July 2005, where he implied that the Olympics were the antithesis of terrorism. In the speech, he said children all over the world will dream of coming to London, "a beacon of what the world can be", despite the attacks, to "run faster, and jump higher, and run farther than anyone has done before" (2005).

¹¹ There were of course some dissenting voices in the run up to the Olympics. On the eve of the opening ceremony, Channel Four news anchor John Snow vainly tried to rouse some enthusiasm from Iain Sinclair, who described the Olympics as a "national hallucination...a beautiful conjuring between William Burroughs and Charles Saatchi" (2012). Likewise, the coverage in the reliably contrary *Guardian* newspaper has always maintained an air of ambivalence towards the Olympic Legacy. In a recent article concerning the opening of the Olympic Park, Oliver Wainwright notes how the Park feels like a visit to a hodgepodge plaza with no unifying theme or sense of overall purpose, a result of "an unholy alliance of second rate-corporate architects" (2014).

goals of “encouraging wider participation in sport” and “exploiting opportunities for economic growth” (Department for Media, Culture and Sport, 2010, p.1). Yet the following quote exemplifies how the goals of the Olympic Legacy exceed the production of goods and the provision of services:

More cohesive and proactive communities would be a genuine legacy from London 2012, which would last for generations and would support the creation of the Big Society. We want to ensure that the Games leave a lasting legacy as the most equality-friendly ever (ibid).

We can see by the mention of the Big Society that the intended effects of Stratford’s new infrastructure are to create an ideal polity from the remains of 2012, which is the second and I argue far more significant component of the Olympic Legacy. The Games functioned as a communication ritual that made the viewing public part of a mass identity underpinned by an idealised cultural heritage. The opening ceremony illustrated how the Olympic Games were as much about establishing a brand of heritage that could be integrated into the Olympic Legacy as it was about entertaining the public.

Directed by the film-maker Danny Boyle, the ceremony was an assemblage of scenes designed to show ‘the best of British’. The first act consisted of a field occupied by cricket players and Morris dancers listening in awe to Isambard Kingdom Brunel (played by Kenneth Branagh, one of many ‘national treasures’ to appear in the ceremony). The field was then transformed into a steel works factory to represent the birth of the Industrial Revolution. In another scene, doctors, nurses and patients from Great Ormond Street Hospital danced around hospital beds, while the letters NHS shone in the centre of the stadium. There was almost universal praise for the ceremony – myself included. It told a convincing story of the UK’s history and culture, yet it is important to remember that it represented a *marketable version* of the UK. No matter how entertaining the performance was, like all historical interpretations, it never exceeded its representational apparatus. In and of itself this is not significant – all of history is ultimately an interpretation of the available evidence so is always, at one level, a representation of the partially absent past. But the opening ceremony, and

indeed the Olympic Games, was a special case because it was sanctioned by the state and so conformed to ‘acceptable’ norms and precepts about how the government would prefer the public and the world to interpret the UK’s past – at least over the duration of the Games.

One moment particularly stood out for me; when Brunel announced that industry would usher in a new chapter for England, chimneys rose out of the ground and transformed – or should I say regenerated? – the landscape into an industrial estate. The world was shown that the UK has always embraced change and technological innovation in order to ‘progress’; 2012 signified the acceleration of London’s re-development (which for many figures in Westminster and the press is shorthand for the entire UK). But what exactly does a contemporary regenerated future look like in a post-industrial era?

Building the Olympic Park on Stratford’s old industrial estates was a signal to the world that the UK had evolved from an industrial economy to a mass service industry ripe for private investment; Stratford would be regenerated into a “Tech City” (Department for Media, Culture and Sport, 2010, p.7) The Olympics was never intended to be a singular celebratory event to be staged and then quickly forgotten, but was instead a spectacle embodying an ideal model of citizenry. Considering the sheer scale of the Olympics, which required huge state and corporate sponsorship to be realised, combined with its societal and economic aims, it is necessary to consider the political hegemony it operates within (see Cohen, 2013, p.32) to determine how the legacy of this twenty-first century spectacle will be realised beyond East London’s new infrastructure.

Regeneration projects have resulted in nothing less than the latest urban “heterotopias” (Foucault, 1986): shopping malls, car parks and ‘affordable’ apartment blocks might very well give us an insight into what the cityscape of the future will look like. Foucault coined the word ‘heterotopia’ to denote the reflective image of utopia; in contrast to the utopian imaginary, “sites with no real place”, heterotopias contain all sites “that can be found within [a] culture [and] are simultaneously represented” (p.24). To borrow a phrase from J.G. Ballard, heterotopias in twenty-first century Britain have materialised as “concrete islands” (2008) designed to facilitate

lifestyles congruent with the neoliberal hegemony: shopping, working, and living all contained in a secure zone cornered off from the main body of the cityscape. This is not to say such activities do not occur in other types of spaces, but outside heterotopias they occur alongside other activities that do not have a specific function or cannot be clearly delineated from each other. If the Olympic Legacy expands beyond the Lea Valley canal then Hackney Wick could very well be regenerated into the Olympic Village Mark II.

Ballard sets his last novel *Kingdom Come* (2006) in a very similar environment. The protagonist Richard Pearson arrives in the fictional suburban motorway town Brooklands to investigate his father's recent shooting. Brooklands is a place where it is

impossible to borrow a book, attend a concert, say a prayer, consult a parish record or give to charity. In short, the town was an end state of consumerism...History and tradition, the slow death by suffocation of an older Britain, played no part in its people's lives. They lived in an eternal retail present, where the deepest moral decision concerned the purchase of a refrigerator or washing machine (Ballard, 2006, p.8).

Ballard's description of Brooklands could be mistaken as a prophecy for the Olympic Village. Pearson's enquiries draw him inexorably to the Metro-Centre, a monolithic shopping mall that sits in the centre of Brooklands:

Dominating the landscape around it, the immense aluminium dome housed the largest shopping mall in Greater London, a cathedral of consumerism...consumerism dominated the lives of [the town's] people, who looked as if they were shopping whatever they were doing (ibid, p.15)

Ballard could easily be describing Westfield Shopping Centre, which has been built in the centre of the Olympic Village and is visible from all sides of the Olympic Park. Yet unlike the residents in Ballard's novel, Westfield hasn't yet become integrated into the local resident's lives to the extent that shopping constitutes their entire existence. Nevertheless, the community the LLDC are building in London's 'new

quarter' might very well emerge as an evolved brand of consumerism: a total amalgamation of living and shopping to the point where they are indistinguishable from each other. Modern shopping experiences evidences the particular brand of freedom the neoliberal hegemony offers today's citizenry; the freedom to buy products becomes equitable with true democratic freedom where a citizen's actions can influence the development of the society they live in. Far from improving the lives of East London's residents, Minton argues that the architecture of the Olympic Village produces the opposite effect of the ostensive civic-minded aims of the Olympic Legacy:

[T]his is the architecture of extreme capitalism, which produces a divided landscape of privately owned, disconnected, high security, gated enclaves side by side with enclaves of poverty which remain untouched by the world around them. The stark segregation and highly visible mistrust between people, which together with the undemocratic nature of these new private places, erodes civil society (2012, p.xii).

In the context of regeneration, "proactive communities" materialise as manifestations of a mass consumer culture that does not strive for greater equality amongst its citizens. Instead, the public participate in society by enlarging their personal bank balance and spending their wages on property, clothes, and electronics. By shopping, citizens legitimise their democratic stake in society. Shopping malls, both fictional and actual, contribute to the transformation of modern life into the type of spectacle Guy Debord and the Situationists attempted to subvert through the *détournement*: a re-appropriation of the city's signifiers by finding new uses for its material components (Wark, 2011, p.35). The *détournement* is one strategy I have explored over the course of this project in an attempt to subvert the Olympic Village's ostensive function as a domestic and retail space. I have been guided by my firm conviction that it is a place which demands an embodied *and* mediated form of interaction to imagine ways of living that belie the narratives regeneration projects offer. Imaginaries such as the one Ballard describes are finally materialising in the flesh; perhaps in the absence of

alternatives, East London's residents can turn to art as a way to shatter this ubiquitous modern spectacle.

The self-appointed leader of the Situationist International Guy Debord argues in *The Society of the Spectacle* (2006) that the freedom modern spectacles engender is a chimera¹². Spectators, that is to say us as citizens who continue to watch the Olympic Legacy materialise, cannot meaningfully contribute to the formation of this political hegemony via the spectacle because it is a “visual reflection of the ruling economic order – goals are nothing, development is everything. The spectacle aims at nothing other than itself” (Debord, 2006, p.10). If this is true then the Olympics was nothing more than a means of *representing* the aims of the population and therefore cannot be studied as a model of societal practice because the representation of an ideal society does not necessarily produce actions to create that society *post event*. What a spectacle like the Olympics can do, however, is represent an *ideal* of a nationalist identity.

Benedict Anderson famously describes nationalism as an “imagined political community ... imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (2006, p.6). In the context of the Olympic Legacy the notion of a nationalist identity has a strong utopian dimension, but it is an advanced idea of utopianism. As Umberto Eco reminds us, the etymology of ‘utopia’ is the Greek for “no-place” (2013, p. 305), a place and time that only exists in the imagination as an *ideal* to be strived for. Thomas Moore states that, through this ideal, citizens learn the values of self-governance and self-determination, free from the power of the ruling authority (2009, p.23). The Olympic Legacy integrates the ideal imaginary of citizenry, showcased during the 2012 Games, with the optimal cityscape, both anchored to the historical memory of the Olympics. This is not to say the ways London was represented through the prism of the Olympics has no basis in reality or has had no demonstrable effect on East London's communities, but as an event in-and-of-itself, practiced over a fixed duration, the Games were incapable of representing the spectacle's effects *over time* because its stated ideals functioned to represent an ideal imaginary of society. This was always inevitable – as Georgiou and

¹² I discuss Debord and the Situationist International in greater depth in Chapter Three, pages 96-102.

Cohen argue, London's identity is complex and multifaceted, and so any attempt to represent a 'truth' of a city is inherently reductionist:

[T]he city is always an incomplete place. London, like all cities, is not a stable, coherent or pacified space...Place is open and internally multiple and not intrinsically coherent (Georgiou, 2013, p.47).

The stagings of grand spectacles and public divertissements are a London thing. And so are demonstrations, strikes, and riots provoked by the all too visible social inequalities etched into the city's fabric (Cohen, 2013, p.17).

Cohen goes on to argue that although the Olympic Legacy might very well bring some desirable economic benefits to the Olympic host boroughs¹³ "no amount of glossy property developers' brochures [can] disguise the fact that at the heart of this new metropolitan centre [lies] a profound inner emptiness and absence" (Cohen, 2013, p.115). It is my contention that the absence Cohen refers to manifests itself when a community like the E20 Village, a "city within a city" (Georgiou, 2013, p.51), is given a new historical perspective of East London that is written by an undemocratic company like the LLDC.

That being said, East London's past has left lasting impressions of itself in its architecture and in the public imagination. Despite the attempts by some property developers to embrace the new and control the fragmented past found in the palimpsest of East London's sites, the ruins in areas such as Hackney Wick make its past erupt through its materiality and in the memories of the communities who live there.

I am interested in how Hackney Wick's 'industrial heritage' is being used by the LLDC, and doubtless other vested interests, to exhibit East London's past and thus inveigle it into the Olympic Legacy. The authoring of a place's history, its 'textualisation', by those who build and manage regenerated sites restricts opportunities for communities to gain new perspectives on the past. The 'textualisation' of urban space is a highly provocative phenomenon for practitioners

¹³ Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest.

who work with site. Text functions as an additional layer of information audiences have to navigate through when they traverse a site's topography that can enhance, detract or subvert a site's existing features. In *Voices from the Village* I use audio to facilitate a sonic layer of information that frames the Olympic Village as the cityscape of the future. Audio guides can shift a participant's perceptions of the sites they occupy by acting as a commentary on what they are seeing to reveal the hidden structures that govern places, and therefore determine how people can live in them. As the Olympic Village's history is so recent, *Voices from the Village* functions as an additional perspective to the history the LLDC have written for this new quarter of East London.

I take up these ideas in Chapter Three where I underpin my practice with reference to theories pertaining to urban geography (Benjamin, 2002; Debord, 2009; Dillon, 2011; Garrett, 2013; Hatherley, 2013; *Ruin Lust*, 2014; Self, 2014; Wark, 2011). I then link these theories to my practice and situate it in the context of site specific performance (Benford and Giannachi, 2011; Cardiff and Miller, no date; Giannachi et al., 2010; Harvie, 2009; Heddon, 2002; Hopkins et al., 2011; Kwon, 2004; Levin, 2011; Mackey, 2002; McKinnie, 2012; Pearson and Shanks, 2001; Pearson, 2013; also see Heddon, 2007; *ibid*, 2008; Kaye, 2000).

Archives and living memory can make such a multitude of historical perspectives available to the public whilst also creating the basis for knowledge exchange and dialogue amongst individuals and groups – an optimal mode of democratic participation. *Voices from the Village* is my attempt to subvert the authority of the Olympic Legacy by inviting people to participate in the writing of new histories for this new quarter of London.

Chapter One

Defining the Live in the Context of the Archive

Theatre is about memory; it is an act of memory and description (Bogart, 2001, p.39)

Those who champion disappearance as the essence of performance rely too heavily on comparisons between the form of live events and reproducible, archival works of art. These studies often omit in-depth enquiries into the effects live events generate in audiences, and equally underestimate the importance archival practices have in the creation of live performances. In this chapter I argue that the impact of the media in contemporary society necessitates a re-definition of the live. To add to this field of enquiry, I propose that the principles and practices of archiving reveal new ontological truths of live performance practices that can engender innovative ways to experience and interpret the past.

The Live versus the Document: A False Dichotomy?

In performance studies, the archive is often discussed in terms of lacunae – the ‘gaps’ in knowledge and physical space that are created when documents are preserved, indexed, and catalogued. Reading archival documents produces a double effect of revealing information to the reader whilst simultaneously reminding them of what is absent from the archive: the past ‘as it was then’.

Archival documents are not ‘the’ past, but are forms of temporal residue which constitute the past’s material afterlife. But it is not a ‘complete’ or ‘totalising’ afterlife; archival documents, like memories, are “fragments of a vanished whole” (Millar, 2006, p.114). However, it is a truism that when documents are consigned to archives a degree of authority is bestowed upon them as they greatly determine what can be said about the past. As Foucault tells us, the archive is a hugely significant factor in historical discourse, because it “defines at the outset the system of its enunciability” (Foucault, 2007, p.146). In this sense the archive engenders a mechanism of historical validation that transcends the subjectivity of individualised memory into a series of authoritative documents. The archive is thus the place where

lived events are saved from the void of disappearance by preserving their remains. In this way, the past exists as archival documents. These documents, in turn, become the genesis of historical discourses, which constantly evolve depending upon an historian's interpretation of the knowledge found in archives. The subjectivity of an historian's interpretation belies the notion that the archive contains an objective 'truth' about the past, and thus makes knowledge about the past potentially alterable. Agamben argues the archive's potentiality makes it contemporaneous to reality and gives it vibrancy:

As a set of rules that define the events of discourse, the archive is situated between *langue*, as a system of construction of possible sentences – that is, of possibilities of speaking – and the *corpus* that unites the set of what has been said, the things actually written or uttered (2006, p.38, emphasis in original).

Indeed, Jacques Derrida tells us in the opening pages to his seminal book *Archive Fever* (1996) that the word 'archive' derives from the Greek *Arkhe*: a place of "commencement" and "commandment". Commencement refers to the place where the principles that underpin historical disciplines originate from, disciplines which are practiced via a series of commandments issued from the archive. The second of these functions precedes the first: for an authority to exercise its power the seat of that authority must reside in a "domicile", and through the "domiciliation" process the archive becomes actualised as a place¹ (Derrida, 1996, pp.1-3). If the archive only values the physical remains of the past, does this make it inimical to live, embodied enactments, which are inherently non-consignable?

Broadly speaking, those who champion performance's transient qualities do so to distinguish live events from reproducible works of art. Confining performance's lifespan to the duration of an audience's perception of it suggests live events lack precedent existences, or at least acts and events that precede what spectators see is not the performance 'itself'. Thus, the view that live performance unfolds in a live time "devoid of other times" (Schneider, 2011, p.92) is still widely maintained. One of the pillars of these formulations is the presence of the audience; their ostensibly

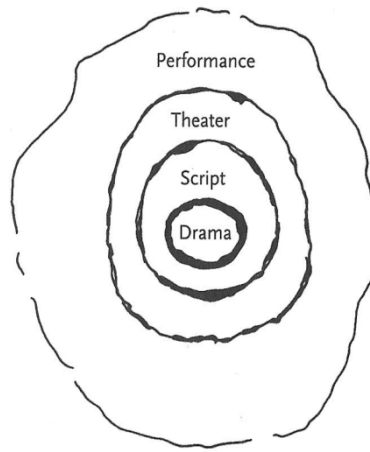
¹ Derrida uses "domicile" to refer to the consignment and reading of archival documents.

unmediated engagement and perception of a performer's animate body in space creates a non-reproducible presence for performance.

Willmar Sauter describes live performances as “communicative event[s]” (2000, p.20). The event is created by the encounter between “two partners: those who make a presentation and those who perceive it” (ibid, p.30). If this is correct then the present performance unfolds in is imbricated with memory, which can be understood as a form of documentation. Connerton explains that to divorce our perception of live acts from their reception is a negation of our experiential knowledge as human beings: “We experience our present world in a context which is causally connected with past events and objects which we are not experiencing when we experience the present” (1989, p.2).

Indeed, Richard Schechner demonstrates live performance is not devoid of past lives that retain a “spectral” (Derrida, 1996, p.84) presence during the event. Schechner breaks live performance down into four “structural welds” (2003, p.73, see below).² These “welds” function as the mechanisms of the event, yet have varying degrees of presence within a performance (ibid). The ‘Script’ weld (which is not necessarily, or is not always, written text) precedes live enactments, but also possesses a degree of presence within it. The ‘Script’ is translated into live, embodied enactments that retain the residues of the original script. In the dramatic theatre, written plays still prevail as the primary originator of live performance (see Lehmann, 2006, pp.21-22), which begs the question: are plays only live when they are performed? Schneider would certainly give a firm ‘no’, arguing that live performances can be read as “a *record* of a text *set in play*” (2011, p.90, emphasis in original). The word ‘text’ is obviously quite contentious here as it does not necessarily denote dramatic plays, and as Schechner argues can just as easily refer to a list of instructions or even a series of dance moves (2003, p.71).

² ‘Drama’ denotes the instigator(s) of the event; it is the weld that initiates the process e.g. a playwright. ‘Script’ is the material that ‘persists’ from enactment to enactment, becoming the foundations for the drama, represented through ‘Theatre’: the actions of the performers. Finally, ‘Performance’ is the realm of the audience: those unplanned, spontaneous happenings that result from the proximity to staged enactments; ‘Performance’, therefore, occupies the broadest, most ill defined region of the event (ibid).



(Schechner, 2003, p.71)

In the live performance sphere what constitutes a text is determined at the *functional* rather than the purely *material* level. But the key point here is that live events have precedent lives that cannot be discounted from any definition of performance's ontology. This is particularly relevant when performance is discussed in the context of the archive, as many practitioners have formulated their philosophy of performance based on the exigencies of disappearance as a counterpoint to potentially reproducible works of art.

Phelan's contention that performance's ontology belies the processes of reproduction and so 'disappears' is an attempt to valorise performance against the grain of contemporary culture:

Performance's independence from mass reproduction...is its greatest strength...Performance honours the idea that a limited number of people in a specific time/space frame can have an experience of value which leaves no visible traces afterwards (Phelan, 1993, p.149).

Again, we can see here how live performance's ontology is framed by the performer-spectator dynamic, where the audience's proximity to the stage is cited as the means by which the live is actualised. Implicit in this formulation is the importance of the communicative dimension in live events Sauter discusses above, creating an experience Phelan claims is independent from the processes of reproduction. But in the present context Phelan's argument has been superseded as digital technologies

now enable a multitudinous means of human interactivity, to the point where “the whole panoply of virtual simulacra, instantaneous communication, ubiquitous media and global connectivity...constitutes much of our contemporary experience” (Gere, 2008, p.15).

The World Wide Web and the Internet (as we understand them today) fundamentally contributes to the creation of digital culture. The proliferation of digital technologies in society has accelerated the pace by which the media has become part of our everyday lives, to the point where digital technology “can be observed in almost every aspect of modern living” (Gere, 2008, p.13). As Gere infers, the digital has become so ubiquitous in today’s culture that even ostensibly technologically unmediated communicative exchanges, which Phelan would say includes live performances, can be enacted in expectation of their second life in the digital realm³. Indeed, the desire to connect with the world through technology has only intensified with the digital ossification of society: “Connectivity is a compulsion that subtends social participation and cultural imagination” (Bang Larsen, 2014, p.12). Documents are a fundamental means of furthering our connectivity with others; our compulsion to archive is as strong as our desire to deepen our networked lives. Arthur Kroeker uses the term “archive drift” (2014, pp.80-90) to explore how documenting reality has entered into contemporary human experience to the degree that the archive can now store human experience (ibid, p.80). Although he is correct to say that digital culture has a “deep affinity” with “archivalism”, I disagree with Kroeker when he says human experience is “disappearing” into code (p.81). Digital technologies do not erase human experience but *translate* it into codes that ‘drift’ across cultures, manifesting in manifold forms across a distributed network of human experience.

It is not unreasonable to assert, therefore, that our perception of experiential reality is partially modelled on digital forms of communicative interactivity, even in the absence of a technological interface. Indeed, as society and our interactions with fellow citizens become increasingly mediatised, the notion of any lived event being wholly temporary becomes ever more distant: the time between an event’s live

³ Facebook is an obvious example of where such digital exchanges occur, where people take photos to upload onto the digital platform which functions as documents to engender online conversations.

actualisation and the production of its record is now virtually nil. The proliferation of digital technologies in contemporary society has expanded the definition of liveness to include the experience of sharing a “mediated co-presence with others known and unknown” (Auslander, 2008, p.61). Our networked culture also alters our perception and experience of space where any setting is a potential stage for public performances (Marres, 2014, p.100). In a digital context, the public sphere includes sites on the World Wide Web where people can interact through text, video, and photos, which transpose the everyday onto a public stage. As such, the public now exists on two planes: in everyday, experiential reality, and in the digital realm.

Spectators cannot therefore separate their everyday existences from the roles they are invited to play during live performances, even if they are ‘only’ required to sit and watch the stage. If the spectator’s presence in the live event is now actualised in the two spheres of embodied, experiential and digital reality, then this suggests any definition of the live in performance must account for the ways the processes of reproduction influence the spectator’s experience of the event. But what is meant by reproduction in our contemporary paradigm?

The Documentation of Live Performance

Benjamin argues in his essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1999) that mechanised processes altered conceptions of authenticity in the twentieth century by making original art works absent from an audience’s experience of them. Taking photography and film as the primary methods of artistic reproduction, Benjamin states that the camera has devolved the artist’s skills to the acts of looking and clicking at a subject to create the art object (1999, p.213). The inclusion of such technologies into the artist’s process devalues the artwork’s authenticity, which sits outside of technical reproduction (ibid). Benjamin contends that an art work’s existence, its uniqueness as a discrete object, is irreproducible because its presence is determined by the space and time it resides in as much as it is determined by the particularities of its physical form. This, in turn, is what makes it authentic:

[E]ven the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place

where it happens to be...The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity (Benjamin, 1999, p.214).

Reproduction lessens an original object's "aura" – the effects "natural" objects have on the world around them (ibid, p.216). Live performance is cited by Benjamin as an artistic process that retains an aura through the presence of the actor. In contradistinction to photography, there is no distance between the spectator and the artwork because the actor's body is unmediated:

[A]ura is tied to [the actor's] presence; there can be no replica of it. The aura which, on the stage, emanates from Macbeth, cannot be separated for the spectators from that of the actor. However, the singularity of the shot in the studio is that the camera is substituted for the public, consequently, the aura that envelops the actor vanishes, and with that the aura of the figure he [or she] portrays (Benjamin, 1999, p.223).

Benjamin's conceptualisation of live performance has become highly problematic in the digital context, particularly in regards to how original and reproduced art works are no longer considered as discrete objects to the degree they once were (see Heathfield and Jones, 2012, p.12). Douglas Davis emphasises the paradigm shift from mechanical to digital reproduction in the bold title of his essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Reproduction* (1995). Davis writes that the original and the reproduction,

one pure and original, the other imitative and impure, are now fictions. Images, sounds, and words are received, deconstructed, rearranged, and restored wherever they are seen, heard, and stored (1995, p.381).

The distance between the spectator and reproduced works of art which Benjamin derides has created reciprocity between the artist and the audience who, using the art work as an interlocutor, collaborate over time to create new meanings and interpretations of it.

Although Davis's essay was published two decades ago, the implications of a mediatised society for live performance have only been practically explored since the

turn of the millennium. True, performance documentation has become increasingly commonplace in performance practice since the mid-twentieth century, but it has traditionally been conducted as a subsidiary activity to the practice of making live art works. Ronald Argelander highlights this binary relationship when he writes that photo documentation creates a “permanent record [of] visual documents for *historians*” and “gives the performers an *accurate* record of the performances and the chances to examine the images in detail” (1974, pp.51-52, emphasis added). We can see in his mention of “historians” that Argelander considers photography to exist outside of the experiential live realm by implying photographs can only be used to study past performances and not as generative tools for performance practice. The purpose of photo documentation was traditionally thought to *record* performance practice; documentation, here, becomes part of a linear journey from the past performance to the production of its record to its consignment to the archive. However, the significance of image- rather than text-based documents did not go unnoticed. Two years after Argelander published his article, Schmitt argued that photo documentation is a more suitable medium than written text for documenting contemporary practice. Stating that “the real record of legitimate theatre is traditionally thought to reside in the script” (1976, p.376), Schmitt argues written text is an insufficient method of documenting a contemporary practice which is now more concerned with “process rather than product”:

Changes in the values manifested in contemporary theatre account for the new importance of theatre photography as a form of its documentation. The identity of dramatic work has tended to shift from script to performance and to [sic] such performance cannot be adequately represented by a script. Theatre has turned from language in distrust. The photograph records the language of silence (ibid).

We can see here how documentation is defined as a process to record the present in expectation of its future consignment to the archive. But instead of positioning performance and records on a linear line, where the former always precedes the latter, placing live performance in a wider digital culture enables what

Bishop describes as a “re-purposing⁴” of material (School of Visual Arts, 2014). Here, the reproduction process can become tangled: documents born out of performance can be used by practitioners to make past performances remain in the present. Documents do not function as poor replicas or copies of an absent performance in the schema I am advocating, but in our “cut and paste” culture (School of Visual Arts, 2014), spectators can become collaborators in an ongoing modality of an online distributed practice. Such a practice would be an enabler of live events but would not be considered as separate from them, as the live event would become part of the ongoing interactive process. To stay with photo documentation for a moment, having photographs participate in a performance process can enhance our understanding of its ontology; as Joan M. Schwartz states “[t]o understand [photographs] as the product of actions and transaction, we must return them to the action in which they participated” (1995, p.42). The context performance operates in cannot be divorced from our digital culture, which has profoundly altered the ontology of live performance *and* the archive. The sharing and distribution of images online has made photography

the sovereign analogue of identity, memory, and history, joining past and present, virtual and real, thus giving the photographic document the aura of an anthropological artefact and the authority of a social instrument (Enwezor, 2008, p.3).

In his mention of the word ‘aura’ Enwezor reminds us that photography is not produced independently of nature and possesses a presence that is not inimical to contemporary reality, but is rather an integral part of it. This philosophical point leads

⁴ Bishop mentions this term in a conversation with Terence Gower. She uses this term to describe contemporary modalities of “artistic strategies” in respect of taking a “cultural artefact [a book, a photograph, etcetera] and translating it across into another medium to do something different with it” (School of Visual Arts, 2014). Linking this with the attachment contemporary artists have to their own “proper names” (ibid), the work becomes a brand in and of itself, which Bishop argues informs the spectators’ experience of contemporary art works. Grayson Perry’s exhibition *The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman* at the British Museum (2011-2012) exemplifies the kind of modality Bishop describes. Perry, the first artist to be given permission to curate an exhibition at the British Museum, created a series of objects and then selected objects from the museum’s archive he felt enhanced his art work (Perry, 2011, p.11). The archival objects were re-purposed by revealing less about past forms of craftsmanship and more about how such craft has bled into and influenced contemporary art practices. *The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman* is but one example of the increasingly popular trend to invite artists into museums, where the distinction between the art object and the historical object is no longer clearly delineated. I discuss this further in Chapter Two, pages 61-66.

Susan Sontag to describe photographs as “miniatures of reality” (1977, p.4). Photography retains an essence of reality by pointing to an image’s subject whilst possessing its own presence, and is therefore not inimical to live performance.

During *Voices from the Village* participants attempt to bridge the temporal divides of their present and the potential future that the Olympic Legacy offers London’s residents. When the participants reach Hackney Wick in the fourth part of the audio walk, *An Exhibited Community*, they are instructed to photograph the graffiti and commissioned pieces of artwork along the Lea Valley canal and White Post Lane. The voice who speaks to them at this stage of the walk, the ‘Documenter’, is speaking to them from an undisclosed time in the near future after Hackney Wick has been regenerated and incorporated into the Olympic Legacy. Emphasising the temporal divide that exists between the participant and the recorded voice through the Documenter’s repetition of the line “in my time” (see appendix one, p.xxix) the participant takes photographs in expectation of their uses as referents to a *past* time they are experiencing in the present, live time of the performance. By uploading these photos onto the *Voices from the Village* website the participant’s live experience achieves a digital afterlife through her documentation – which is itself an integral part of the dramaturgy. Here, documentation becomes one of the ways the live time of performance is experienced as a temporal manifold I discussed in the introduction. In this way, the photographs become what Toni Sant describes as “transactive documents” (2013, [unpublished]). These “transactive” documents can be read and used in multiple registers – the archival, the digital, and the performative – thus fulfilling the role of documentation, described by Rye as giving performance “a life beyond its original manifestation, and thus making it available to a broader research community” (2003, p.115).

The desire to create a digital afterlife for performance has resulted in the creation of several online archives. Many practitioners are now consciously documenting their work and using digital platforms to share it with others who may not have seen the original pieces. Some examples of these include the Siobhan Davies RePlay website (www.siobandaviesreplay.com) which is a collection of Davies’s recorded dance pieces. As well as being able to access previously unseen rehearsal footage and videos

of Davies's performances, visitors to the site can also create their own 'scrapbook' which chronicles their journey through the material. In this regard the RePlay archive has a dual functionality: on one level, Davies has created an archive of her practice which she can reflect upon, and so corresponds to the type of analytic functionality Argelander describes above. But by making the archive a publically accessible resource, dancers – and indeed any practitioners who work in the live art trope – are able to connect with their own history of practice by creating work in response to the archive, thereby enacting a generative performance process. Therefore, the RePlay archive functions as a digital platform that places “knowledge exchange” at its centre (Whatley, 2013 [unpublished]).

The LIFT Living Archive (www.liftfest.com/living-archive), an extensive collection of the performance festival's ephemera, has a similar mission statement to the RePlay archive, in that it

aims not to bury [LIFT's] illustrious past in boxes or databases for posterity, but to unearth fresh forms for thinking from what has gone before. Those who visit LIFT Living Archive either in person or online are encouraged to make their own connections between the material, and map out their own paths through the archive for others to follow in their footsteps...the rich heritage preserved in LIFT Living Archive reveals new ways of looking at the future by examining the past (LIFT, 2014).

Using a similar tool to the scrapbook function on the RePlay website, visitors to the LIFT Living Archive site can create “archive trails” (ibid), personalised collections of digital documents researchers have compiled with accompanying notes and commentary for others to consult and study.

These two websites exemplify the dialogic relationship archives have with contemporary performance scholarship; scholarship, here, is not framed at a remove from performance practice, as the creators of the RePlay and LIFT Living Archive acknowledge all contemporary practice is conducted in a specific cultural context, and is therefore always part of broader artistic discourses. In this way, performance archives embody Derrida's description of the archive as “a question of the future, the

question of the future itself, the question of a responsibility for tomorrow” (1996, p.36).

That being said there are, however, several limitations to the generative potential of these archives. Namely, in their over-reliance on archival document’s “authenticating function” (Freshwater, 2003, p.7), the spectator’s voices are lost, or at least not present in the archive. This is understandable given that audiences are very rarely asked about their experiences, and so are often spoken for (Freshwater, 2009, p.4). The lack of agency for spectators comes into sharp focus in the context of the archive: documents do not speak for the past, but rather they engender its narration and interpretation from the historian, who “bring[s] to life those who do not for the main part exist...who are not really present” (Steedman, 2001, p.71). In the absence of a platform from which spectators can voice their own interpretations of performances they have witnessed, a troubling hierarchy of interpretations emerges, whereby the historian’s voice carries a greater authority than the one who was originally present. Yet Steedman argues this is entirely congruent with the archive’s ontology, as “the historian who goes to the [a]rchive must always be the unintended reader, [who] will always read that which was never intended for his or her eyes”, and so has a greater objective distance from the material (2001, p.75). Although Steedman may well be correct to say that all historical interpretations require a degree of separation from the subject under investigation (ibid), spectators obviously cannot be ‘archived’ in the same way that archival documents can, meaning their presence becomes subsidiary to historical narratives of past performances. But if the presence of spectators is one of the “irreducible fact[s] of theatre” (Etchells, 1999, p.94) then their lack of residual presence in the archive means it behoves practitioners to create spaces for spectator’s voices to be heard.

Those who advocate a definition of performance’s ontology based on the exigencies of disappearance might claim this is where my analysis falls short, as without the presence of an audience all archival documents can do is act as a “spur to memory, an encouragement of memory to become present” (Phelan, 1993, p.146). But as I have previously argued, documents do not just record past acts but also have the potential to act as the genesis to future live events. It is in this spirit that I, in

collaboration with the ZU-UK theatre company, instigated the *Audience as Document* project as an adjunct to their immersive production *Hotel Medea*. By framing spectators as the primary documents of a past performance, I put to the test Baz Kershaw's contention that "only the living human can retrieve and reconstitute a past live event" (2007, p.79).

Practice-as-Research: The *Audience as Document* Project

Audience testimony is a potential form of documenting performance that ostensibly mitigates the authority of archival material by privileging the subjectivity of memory. The *Audience as Document* project was my attempt to create a platform for spectators to share their memories of *Hotel Medea* with another audience, some of whom had been spectators to *Hotel Medea* and some others who had not.

ZU-UK's immersive production employed a mode of spectatorship the company's artistic director Jorge Ramos describes as a "dramaturgy of participation" (2011). The aim was to give spectators a degree of agency inside the performance by inviting them to participate in the theatrical reality they were immersed within. It is for this reason Ramos refers to spectators of *Hotel Medea* as "players", because 'spectators' implies a separation from the acts occurring outside of the performance sphere (Ramos, 2011).

Over the course of six hours players undertook a number of tasks and roles: guests at Jason and Medea's wedding; a campaign focus group; secret agents infiltrating the women only Club Exile; children being put to bed by Medea's handmaids, and finally as diners at a dawn banquet. Because of the performance's immersive structure, it lacked a fixed point of focus for cameras to point towards and so proved difficult to adequately film or photograph. Furthermore, the company felt that creating an audio-visual document of *Hotel Medea* ran the risk of generalising the multiple perspectives of the spectators into a flat document. This is, of course, not a problem that is unique to *Hotel Medea*, or indeed immersive performances in general. Steve Dixon articulates the shortcomings of audio-visual documentation by asking how such a multi-faceted process can be sufficiently transcribed onto a document, particularly when working in a "process-oriented" mode of performance practice (as

opposed to performances that begin with dramatic texts) (1999, p.155). He asserts that the question faced by documenters is “how can this process be shared with others, and how [can] the material...be best presented within an accessible format [?]” (1999, p.155). The task I set myself, however, differs from Dixon’s enquiry in one important regard: whereas Dixon is talking about material created prior to the public performance (rehearsal footage, annotated scripts, interviews with performers), and naturally any audio-visual footage of the performance itself, the material I was concerned with was the spectator’s living memories. In essence, the *Audience as Document* project was an attempt to create a new method of documentation that embraced the interactivity between living humans who are temporally and spatially proximate to each other.

I organised four *Audience as Document* events in London, Edinburgh and Rio de Janeiro between March-September 2011. Using the company’s mailing list, I contacted past audience members and asked them if they would be willing to share their memories of the show with another audience. They were told to select three moments from *Hotel Medea* that had a particular significance or resonance for them. With the exception of the first event at the V&A Museum, all of the *Audience as Document* events were staged in theatre spaces where the production had previously played (see figure 2.1).

At each event the participants were scattered throughout the space. They stood, sat, or lay by themselves in silence until they were spoken to. At the first event in the V&A the participants held photographs of *Hotel Medea* and asked the gallery visitors to choose one. Once one had been chosen they described what was happening in the picture and what they were doing at that moment. At the subsequent events I decided to drop the photographs as I felt they restricted the participant’s responses. The questions visitors asked were too focused on the visual aspects of *Hotel Medea* rather than the participants’ subjective and internalised memories. At all of the other *Audience as Document* events the participants were surrounded by props and pieces of sets from *Hotel Medea* to enhance the ‘archival atmosphere’ of the event. These included bunk beds and toys from the second act *Drylands*. Visitors were free to ask them questions and to move about the space freely.

Trinity Buoy Wharf, 22 April 2011, 12pm

I meet the cast of *Hotel Medea* in one of the two performance spaces in the IPAD dance studios. We sit in a large circle. On the edges are the hundreds of props and dozens of costumes for the production. ZU-UK are performing the second part of *Hotel Medea*, *Drylands*, for a few days as part of the Digital Stages festival, and *Audience as Document* has been programmed as an accompanying event. Jorge explains why I am here and what the aims of the event are. I enjoyed the V&A event but sensed there was a lot more the participants could share. I'm hoping having the participants perform in the space they saw *Hotel Medea* in will enhance their powers of recall. I have asked the participants over email to write down three moments of the performance they found particularly striking. The event starts at 3pm, so we won't have much time to rehearse, but then I wonder if this might produce a positive 'roughness' to the participant's narratives. The visceral quality of living memory lies in its immediacy. I want the audience to see memories form in the minds of the participants, not to listen to a prepared speech.

Audience as Document could be read as a form of resistance against the type of technological documentation found in performance archives like RePlay and LIFT Living Archive; the necessity to interact with the participants meant that their memories were not inscribed onto a consignable document, nor were they preserved in an archive for perpetuity. Instead, these memories were being made live through verbal description, with the presence of the participants' living bodies functioning as the document object.

But verbalising memories in this way did have some drawbacks; for instance, the sense of movement and sensation experienced by the participants during *Hotel Medea* became reduced to narrative description; the objective to animate these memories in a performative set-up was belied. This was compounded by the rather hesitant way the participants spoke about their memories, almost as though they felt I was testing them and that there was a 'right' way of recounting their memories. However, this was mitigated by some of the startling results produced by the participants' interactions with visitors to the event. At the V&A I clearly remember a man describing a scene from the first act *Zero Hour Market* to his friend. When I asked him, 'Had he seen the show?' he replied 'No, but I was just told about it'. Although this was the desired outcome, it suddenly struck me how *Audience as Document* could be framed as an event that transmutes memories from different groups of spectators over time. Indeed, this process throws into question as to who

counts as the ‘authentic’ audience member of *Hotel Medea*. This form of embodied documentation potentially belies the inertness of archival materials by privileging a body-to-body mode of transmission and reception. The knowledge this interaction produces is ‘live’ to the extent it resists being transferred onto a document and necessitates the presence of a living audience. An audience transform from receivers to hosts of knowledge and possess the capacity to transmit this knowledge to another audience.

Trinity Buoy Wharf, 2:30-4:00 pm

Three participants have arrived. Two women and a man. Surely, there should be more than this? It’s not nearly enough people to populate the space. I envisaged positioning at least a dozen participants in and around the studios so the entire site became haunted by these spectator-spectres. It’s decided I should participate.

I assemble the participants in an office and explain how the event will unfold: The participants will take audience members to the points in the IPAD studios and recount their significant moments from *Hotel Medea*. I encourage them to improvise as much as possible for their memories to maintain dynamism, but they look nervous.

We meet the visitors outside and organise them into groups. Each group is taken to the space their ‘document’ wants to discuss. As soon as I begin to recount my memories I feel I am trying to entertain them. But I can tell the audience are listening and are intrigued by the set-up, yet I can’t help feeling I am not successfully placing myself in the narrative. Instead, I find myself describing what I saw, not what I felt in the moment of seeing.

I developed this model at the final *Audience as Document* event, which was staged at the Oi Futuro Institute in Rio de Janeiro. One of the unexpected advantages with the group I worked with here was that they had seen *Hotel Medea* several years earlier, whereas the groups I worked with in the UK had seen it fairly recently. Indeed, at the Edinburgh event, the participants had seen *Hotel Medea* mere days previously. The memories of the participants in Rio had acquired, over time, a far greater level of personal significance for them than the other groups felt with theirs. Whatever remained in the memories of the participants in Rio were traces they were being asked to follow in pursuit of an experience enacted years before. In vocalising them to others, new memories of *Hotel Medea* bled into their minds, making the past become a present, if fragmented, experience for them, but most crucially for the *listener*.



Figure 2.1. An Audience as Document participant converses with an attendee in the Oi Futuro Institute, Rio de Janeiro. In the background are teddy bears and bunk beds from *Hotel Medea*. Source: The author

Oi Futuro Institute, 10 September 2011, 7:30pm

Three bunk beds have been erected in the main studio. Cuddly toys litter the floor. Photos of audience members wearing Medea masks are projected onto the back wall. The participants are stood at different points in the space with a sign hanging around their necks reading 'document'. The audience members talk excitedly to them, asking them questions about their memories of *Hotel Medea*. The participants are describing in great detail what they saw and felt at various points during the show, but most intriguingly they are reflecting on how they are interpreting the performance *now*, in this moment, and what effect being in the space *Hotel Medea* was performed in is having on their memories. The atmosphere lacks the reverence of the other *Audience as Document* events, and this is all to the good. People are relaxed, they are laughing and talking over one another in pursuit of a past performance. Collectively, the audience and the participants are trying to drag *Hotel Medea* into the present.

After the participants had concluded their accounts, the listener was then given the Document sign and verbally recounted what they had just been told to see how far the transmutation could go. This was not a mnemonic test, but was done to explore how the act of remembering infuses spectators' experiences of a performance with their ongoing experience. Without any prompting from me or Jorge, the new participants not only recounted the scenes from *Hotel Medea* the participants had described, but also shared the subjective perspectives and insights the participants shared with them – moments they felt uncomfortable, the empathy they felt for certain characters, etcetera. When we asked them why they had done this they said they could not

separate the account they were being told from the original teller's present interpretation of it.

Were the spectators able to re-create their past experiences fully? Of course not, but this was never my aim. Neither archives nor memories create a totality for the past; instead, they are places where the past's remains can be endlessly rearranged into new formations, new sequences, to produce new meanings for the one who re-arranges and/or remembers them. The neurologist Oliver Sacks articulates this lack of totality thus:

What, we may ask, could be played in such a way as to reconstitute an experience? Is it something akin to a film or record, played on the brain's film projector or phonograph? Or something analogous but logically anterior – such as a script or score? What is the final form, the natural form, of our life's repertoire? (2011, p.154).

As Sacks says, all living experience – which naturally includes a spectator's experience inside the performance sphere – lacks any absolute afterlife in the sense that the past can be returned to 'as it was' then. But it is this very lack of totality that made the transmutation of the participant's memories possible, because if any complete version of their experience was presented then it would have prevented the second group from re-interpreting those memories. Describing the spectators as 'documents' was a deliberate attempt to give them the authority of archival materials, in the sense that spectators were presented as "trace[s] of missing universes, as a kind of trick mirror distorting facts and past realities" (Cook, 2001, p.27). The participants were able to bridge the temporal registers between past and present just as archival documents can. However, a significant difference between a document and the living human is that the latter is far more difficult to locate post event; their presence is temporary and this presence constitutes the experiencing of the past, meaning the participants could not remain in the same way as documents can remain in archives. In retrospect, the fusion between the live time of the *Audience as Document* event with the participant's memories could have been strengthened if the spaces were treated as interactive remains. As it was, the spaces became little more than a background

setting; space does not ‘speak’ in the same way audiences can. But just as the presence of the researcher inside the archive is the prerequisite to the production of historical narratives, thereby demanding a degree of interactivity between documents and living humans for the past to have a presence in the present time, the temporal residue etched on theatre spaces demands a level of participation from the researcher – or, indeed, the spectator – to become a present, live experience.

Live Performance as a Method of Archival Production

The realisation that a performance event underpinned by discourses pertaining to archives requires the spectators’ participation was an important discovery for my research. When the visitors to *Audience as Document* became documents the metamorphic qualities of memory were evident. The processual nature of archival research was embodied through the interactions between the different groups; the experience of participating in *Hotel Medea* did not remain confined to people’s memories, but was transmitted to others to enact a mode of historical discourse. The listener’s interpretation provided new insights into that past experience, and so it could be said they participated in the ongoing re-interpretations of a past performance.

This insight directly influenced the next stage of my practice-as-research activities and theoretical enquiry into the meaning of the live in the context of the archive. I began to think that the impact of digital technologies on a spectator’s perception of live enactments necessitates a reappraisal of the audience’s function inside a performance. Memory, clearly, cannot be discounted from their live experience, as this would be a negation of the human experience. The question then becomes how these memories can manifest as action in the performance sphere, and if they can then does this not point to the potential for live performances to acquire an afterlife for themselves *outside* of the archive? But as I learnt from the *Audience as Document* project, for spectators’ memories to acquire a similar level of authority as archival documents they cannot remain confined to their bodies; they must be transmitted to other groups, yet in that transmission the memory changes, and transmutes into other forms. This is in fact entirely congruent with performance’s irreproducibility in the sense that Benjamin uses the term, as performance’s original

presence never manifests as an exact replica of itself – all that are left are its effects. But if we were to apply the logic of reproduction to live performance then the ‘auratic’ live event would be the one that all future events originate from. When would this performance occur? Would it be at the first read through, the dress rehearsal, the opening night...? In the present digital context, where spectators are embracing the transmutation of information across multiple and distributed networks, the experience of live performances are drastically altering, where presence has become less imbricated with notions of an unmediated proximate encounter between spectators and performers, as the following statement exemplifies:

Presence...is not a function of unity and synthesis; not the untroubled occupation of place, or a definitive *being here* or *being there*; but is performed in the persistence of ‘being’ across division and differentiation (Giannachi et al., 2012, p.11, emphasis in original).

The major drawback to the format of the *Audience as Document* project was that I did not create a network for people to continue the dialogic exchange *Hotel Medea* generated outside of the live event sphere. The multiple interpretations and perspectives a digital network offers *Hotel Medea* conceptually alters the concept of presence by redefining the live medium as one not purely transient and temporary, but as one of archival production. This is not limited to the production of archival documents per se as it includes spectators’ memories. I use the term ‘archival production’ to emphasise the potential such remains have to become the genesis of a performance practice with participation at its centre, where spectators participate during live events to make the past a present experience for them.

Consider, in respect of the impossibility of capturing liveness in documents, if the archive was not considered as the terminus of live events, but was instead the domicile of materials that are infused with the potential for *live acts to occur in the future*. As Kershaw states, “degrees of ephemerality in documentary transmission may, paradoxically, have the potential to resuscitate something of the ‘live’” (2009, p.42). Such a reading of the archive shifts the definition of a document’s function away from notions of preservation to consider what future acts documents contribute

in generating. This definition of documentation in performance allows for the live of performance to be radically revised to address how present acts can make the past a live experience for spectators. In this schema, the dialogic relationship practitioners have with spectators is recognised as occurring inside *and* outside of the temporal-spatial zone of the event. Archival material functions as the foundations for this dialogue; the live of performance therefore becomes a cyclical process and belies any sense of total linearity as clear ‘beginnings’ and ‘endings’ are redundant. An archival mode of practice emerges when live performance’s potential to *remain*, rather than its propensity to *disappear*, is used as the basis to formulate an ontological ‘truth’ of performance. To deepen my theoretical enquiry, I realised it was necessary to design performance strategies that replicated the complex nexus of temporal interstices found in archives and living memory.

Chapter Two

Performing the Past to Create a Live (Living) Legacy

The media has become so ubiquitous in experiential reality that it is almost impossible to experience an event as ‘purely’ live, meaning that performance’s afterlife can become the continuation of a performance process that continues to transform *over time*. Yet whilst performances generate remains, it is also important to remember that live enactments also possess precedent existences – as rehearsals, as scripts, as research notes, as design plans – which function as generative material to the time spectators experience live performances in. Just as performance’s presence is distributive, in the sense that it produces enduring effects which exceed the duration of embodied, live acts, it is also true that those originary and precedent acts have a presence in the performance event. It would not be fanciful therefore to say that live performances possess multiple pasts that become a present experience for spectators through the event’s iteration and reiteration.

Re-enactments are a mode of performance where the past is embodied during the live time of the event. In a very real sense, archival documents engender the iteration and reiteration of live acts and, in many ways, determine their function: actors perform to make the past a present experience through their animacy of historical characters and events. Conceiving of the past as something to be performed and not (just) remembered and reified in and as a series of museal objects synthesises what Kershaw would describe as an “ecology” (2007) which blurs the binary categories of what is *past* and what is *live*. In this chapter I argue that an optimal ecological synthesis fuses elements of performance re-enactment and archival research, which embraces the ways the past attains a presence in performance. During the *Audience as Document* project I became aware of the importance site plays in the experiencing of the past, and of its potential to ignite memories of certain times and events. The sites performance re-enactments are staged on are almost as important as the enactments themselves; their topography has etched on it traces of past acts, which can act as the genesis to memory. The chapter concludes by exploring what type of re-enactment could be realised if its live presence emerges from a historical memory

constructed for the purpose of building new communities for the future. I argue the Olympic Legacy is an example of such an historical discourse, evidenced by the LLDC's politicised narrative of London's past, and the construction of Olympic "heterotopic" spaces (McKinnie, 2012, p.22) in Stratford.

Performance Has Memory

Work [in the theatre] attempts to answer the questions, both professional and personal, which arise day-by-day...complying with obligations of the moment. But what really matters is what will be said afterwards when we who work at the task are gone...In the age of electronic memory, of films, and of reproducibility...performance also defines itself through the work that living memory, which is not museum but metamorphosis, is obliged to do (Barba, 1992, pp.77-78).

Two strands of this statement immediately leap out at the reader when considering performance's temporality. Firstly, in his mention of performance possessing an "afterwards", Barba acknowledges, and indeed praises, the fact that live performance creates a legacy for itself in memory. But most crucially, Barba explicitly addresses the ways both memory and performance retain their alterability and are, therefore, counterpoised against archival documents. Barba's inference that museums (and probably archives) are places of stasis is indicative of those practitioners and scholars who valorise performance's interactive immediacy over an object's inanimate form. But in his later essay *The Essence of Theatre* where he expands on this theme, Barba postulates that memory is the place where the effects of live performance reside, "the transfiguration of the ephemeral quality of the performance into a splinter of life that sinks roots into their flesh and accompanies them through the years" (2002, p.16), but that this legacy "is action that cannot be communicated" (ibid, p.18). This strongly refutes the notion that spectator's memories might be used as generative material for future live events, as in Barba's formulation the essence of performance resides as invisible traces confined to a type of cognitive house arrest that remains incommunicable. Although Barba's sentiments are admirably deferential towards spectators, to say that the only true remains of performance are essentially silent is an

underestimation of their capacity to engender future forms of interactivity in a performance event. Added to which, memory is never incorporated into everyday actions to the extent that it ceases to be memory; the past's presence in experiential reality never materialises 'as it was then', but manifests in fragmented forms that continuously transform in the living mind. As Laura Millar states, "[o]ur entire past is not preserved in our brains, and the records we keep only capture a portion of our experiences" (Millar, 2006, p.114). Why such transmutations should inhibit the spectator's ability to translate them into action is unclear in Barba's description. There already exist performance practices, such as historical re-enactments, that treat the past as material that can be experienced as live in performance.

The sense of dynamism, change and growth that accompanies commentaries of presence in performance is "imbricated with phenomena of memory and anticipation" (Giannachi et al, 2012, p.7) because the experiencing of presence involves an experiencing of its twin, absence. Likewise, our presence in and experience of reality is greatly determined by life's lack of permanence; all living beings are subject to entropic processes, and will eventually decay and die. Both performance and memory transmit trace elements of the past to a group of receivers or the lone receiver respectfully. Naturally, both phenomena are experienced very differently: a performance's past manifests when its residual trace elements – presented during the live time of performance through the performers' embodied enactments – intersects with the present time spectators inhabit, whereas memories are experienced by individuals as personalised versions of the past. Both, however, enable communication between different groups.

Memory is the keystone to the ways we perceive ourselves, the world we inhabit, and ultimately enables us to meaningfully interact with reality. Indeed, without memory, our identities, our very sense of self, would fall into oblivion, as Sacks explains:

We [each have] a life-story, an inner-narrative – whose continuity, whose sense, is our lives. It might be said that each of us constructs and lives a 'narrative', and that narrative is us, our identities (2011, p.117).

The philosopher John Locke claimed experiential knowledge is reproduced via a combination of cognitive images and sense impressions; the fusion of our in- and anterior interactive faculties creates fluidity between memory and the imagination, as the former is “actively co-opted as an agent for the imagination – the opposite of its traditional means of accurate recall” (Gibbons, 2012, p.2). Here, living memory becomes less of a record containing factual knowledge and more a site where we can imagine alternatives to a past that, through its fragmented form, demands endless re-sequencing to reveal new meanings for the one who remembers it.

In her extensive writings on this subject, Diana Taylor categorises embodied, non-archival modalities of knowledge transference as the “repertoire”, which she describes as “vital acts of transfer. Transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity, or what Richard Schechner has called ‘twice-behaved behaviour’” (2005, p.2; also see Schechner, 1986). Practices that would fall into this category are tribal events such as folk song, shamanic rituals, sport, and naturally all modes of live performance. The intensity of immediacy Taylor mentions are the levels of interactivity live events engender between performers and spectators; Taylor contends that it is these qualities archival documents do not possess. In the repertoire, meaning is created between performers and spectators via communal acts of transmission and reception; knowledge emerges through the presence of living bodies in space, whereby performers and spectators participate in the “production and reproduction of knowledge” (Taylor, 2005, pp.19-20).

It is curious why Taylor believes the preservation of documents leads to an entombment of knowledge, as the primary objective in preserving documents in archives is to engender the kind of knowledge reproduction she describes. But Taylor is not suggesting here that the repertoire is a superior form of storage than the archive, only that an archival document’s form necessarily limits the types of knowledge archives can preserve. At the heart of her thesis is a contention that, in some existing performance modalities, spectators read the performer’s presence as material that transmits knowledge of the past. The performance that is presented before an audience in this context is not an original document, but is instead a performance structure that communicates knowledge through codified behaviours, actualised via body-to-body

modes of transmission. Taylor suggests that such a mobile and reiterative form of documentation can make the past available as “a political resource in the present by simultaneously enabling several complicated multilayered processes” (Taylor, 2006, p.68).

During *An Exhibited Community* participants are guided through a time when Hackney Wick has been regenerated into a ‘sustainable community’. The Documenter describes the intense security presence and corporatisation of the Wick in the regenerated future. The juxtaposition between what the participants see in the sites with what the Documenter describes the sites look like in the future shifts the participant’s perceptions of what constitutes the past during *Voices from the Village*. At one level, the Documenter speaks to them as though they are inhabiting a past time that is relative to his own, and so they take photographs in order to make the public aware of what will be lost if the Olympic Legacy is expanded. But this is complicated by the fact that although Hackney Wick has not ‘actually’ been regenerated the participants have already explored the Olympic Village and so can easily imagine what the Wick *could* become. The Hackney Wick participants walk through is past in the sense that what they can see – the graffiti, the house boats, the crumbling factories and warehouses – will not remain in the future as they see it, but will become part of the Olympic Legacy; the Olympic Village is evidence of this future. The Documenter never prescribes what the Wick *should* become, only that it is vital for participants begin to imagine other futures for it so it does not become the site of yet another regeneration project. Each photograph is evidence of a time and place that in *Voices from the Village* has been largely forgotten, whilst on the *Voices from the Village* website the photographs document a time and a place that risks disappearing from London’s cityscape. By documenting Hackney Wick, participants contribute to its evolving history and challenge the notion that its future is inevitable by making these documents part of a live experience in a performance. The simultaneity of the participant’s embodied actions – walking, listening, watching – with the creation and sharing of photographs, fuses the live and the recorded to the extent that the live time of *Voices from the Village* incorporates memory to act as the genesis of future live acts. What those acts are is unknown, yet the potential for future manifestations of

Voices from the Village is nevertheless there. Participating in *Voices from the Village* involves connecting with others in the imaginative and digital realms.

The concept of ‘connectivity’ (in the broadest sense) is central to theories and practices pertaining to performance re-enactments, as the re-enactments function to connect audiences with the past through performance. I argue that performance practitioners who have re-enacted past performances do not adequately attempt to connect the past with the contemporary reality of the audience. Instead, they rely too heavily on the performer’s presence to transmit knowledge about the past without accounting for how that knowledge is distributed over time and distance through archival remains.

Re-enacting the Document

In her keynote address *Acting as Ruins, Dancing the Interval* (2013) at the *Performing Documents Conference*, Schneider argued that acting is a process which re-animates the dead and becomes live as “sculptural” forms: “[A]cting may...evidence a tangled combination of remainder and decay, an incapacity fully [sic] to appear or disappear” (2013, [unpublished]). She used the term ‘acting’ to denote performances which are practiced in the theatrical tradition because actors in live theatre animate past, arguably dead characters who, prior to their live embodiment, exist in precedent texts, whilst memories of other actors’ past performances haunt the public imagination (ibid). Schneider went on to explain how performance’s re-iterative nature counterpoints those theories which formulate performances as inherently singular, ‘one off’ events by framing acting as a process of “living labour” (ibid). Through the labour of repeating (past) live acts, actors’ performances retain traces of their precedent existence(s) and simultaneously animate the ‘dead’ during the live time of theatre. Hence, theatre unfolds in what she describes as an “inter(in)animate” time: spectators are witnesses to an animate relationship between lasting, monumental relics (most viscerally the dramatic characters actor’s embody) and the passing time of the live event (2011, p.7). An actor’s live performance becomes, in this context, the public manifestation of their continuing labour, but is not entirely defined by it. I disagree with Schneider’s argument that performance’s ruinous nature is most attenuated in a

theatrical rather than more a broadly performative context. Such delineations between theatre performances, live art and historical re-enactments appear a little redundant when the precedent material, such as scripts, function as the genesis of live embodiments. Live art also possesses inter(in)animate qualities, no matter how ephemeral or disposable an artist might strive to make their work.

The notion of animating remains, or perhaps phrased more straightforwardly (but not entirely accurately) as performing the past is one of the primary goals of historical re-enactment groups, such as the Sealed Knot in the UK (see *The Sealed Knot*, no date). Yet now museum and gallery curators have also begun to integrate, perhaps even to re-appropriate, theatrical devices to create “exponentially enhanced human access to the past” (Kershaw, 2011, p.126) in institutions where history is traditionally narrated by texts and objects. James Putnam argues “creative curating” practices are indebted to the field of conceptual and installation art where the ‘eventness’ of the exhibition is emphasised over the presentation of material (2001, p.135). Guillemao Gomez-Pena and Coco Fusco utilised the performative potential of exhibition spaces in their piece *Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit* (1992) by subtly turning museum visitors into “tourists, consumers, dupes, and colonists, along with other roles” (Taylor, 1998, p.166). Gomez-Pena and Fusco played two natives from a newly discovered tribe “from an island in the Gulf of Mexico that had somehow been overlooked by Europeans for five centuries” (Fusco in *ibid*, p.163). *Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit* very effectively played with the museum visitors’ desire to see ‘genuine’ cultural artefacts, when in fact what they were really examining were their own colonial pasts, evidenced through their fascination with the native ‘other’. The presence of the performers’ bodies added a further layer of ostensive authenticity for museum visitors, as Gomez-Pena and Fusco played living witnesses to a time and place ‘out of sync’ with contemporary western society.

The notion that cultural authenticity is tied up with the performer’s embodied presence is a central pillar of Marina Abramović’s *Seven Easy Pieces* (2005), as each encounter with the performance produces new memories for it that are more ‘live’ than archival documents – or so the argument goes...

Seven Easy Pieces (2005) evidences the desire amongst some practitioners who work in the live art tradition to negate the monumentality of memory by creating performances that revalidate past art works¹ as live events. By staging six archived performances and a new piece in the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Abramović was explicitly attempting to counter the (purportedly) authoritative voice of the archive by demonstrating how artists can create a legacy for their work without resorting to standard documentation strategies. In her own words, she wanted to set the performance's "history straight" (New York Times, 2005).

Abramović's terminology is curious in describing her impetus for making *Seven Easy Pieces*; in her mention of correcting the existing history of these works she implies that they are in some way skewed, begging the question how can re-enactments set them straight and align them to the correct path? Santone considers *Seven Easy Pieces* as Abramović's attempt to connect the re-enactment of past art works with "a moment of pure presence set somewhere in the past" (2008, p.148). Santone is right to highlight the difficulty in accessing an authentic or more 'truthful' version of the past in her inclusion of the word 'somewhere', but nevertheless the notion that 'a' presence can be found in 'a' past is troubling in the context of the archive because it assumes live art works only possess a singular existence, a proposition which undermines their 'liveness'. Santone concludes that it is the belief in an original artwork that "structures and encourages the production of documentation" (ibid). Considering Abramović had not seen five of the pieces she re-enacted it is worth asking how she was able to judge what the most appropriate form these pieces should take was. This problem is compounded by the fact that Abramović could only re-enact them by consulting archival documents, which she nevertheless felt "failed to accurately or fully convey the experience of the [original] performance" (Santone, 2008, p.148). Abramović strongly felt that the documents (especially the photographs) produced from these pieces had become iconic representations that had re-configured the live and animate bodies into still images.

¹ The pieces Abramović re-enacted were Joseph Beuys's *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare* (1965); VALIE EXPORT's *Action Pants: Genital Panic* (1969); Vito Acconci's *Seedbed* (1972); Gina Pane's *Conditioning* (1973); Bruce Nauman's *Body Pressure* (1974), and her own piece *Lips of Thomas* (1975). Abramović also created a new piece for the show, *Entering the Other Side* (2005). Each piece was performed for one night only over the course of seven nights.

Abramović was arguably enacting the mode of archival performance practice I discussed in the previous chapter, but there is a major difference here: the re-enactments were formulated as a strategy of archival *negation* in the sense that Abramović did not intend for these pieces to ignite new types of knowledge exchange in the audience. Abramović undoubtedly distrusts documentation's propensity to alter live art works, or as Reason says to "radically transforms its subject" (2003, p.87), yet she failed in this piece to realise its generative potential. Furthermore, there is a troubling question of hierarchical power relations in *Seven Easy Pieces*; in her attempt to negate the authority of the archive, Abramović imposed her own authoritative voice onto the artworks:

As it was presented and received, and (now) is being historically framed, *Seven Easy Pieces* itself becomes constructed and viewed as a set of 'original' acts, pivoting around the name Abramović (Heathfield and Jones, 2012, p.17, emphasis added).

It would be naïve to say that one of the main draws for audiences to come and see these pieces was not Abramović – the legendary 'grandmother' of live art. Moreover, Abramović overstated the iconography of the photographs by assuming a contemporary audience would have as much knowledge of them as she possessed – are the images really *that* canonical? Her anxiety over live art works being lost to the archive led to her attempt to make the documents live by embodying photographic images, but ultimately only served to add the re-enactments to Abramović's *oeuvre*. Furthermore Schneider correctly notes how this form of re-enactment "is aimed to legislate which bodies, where, and when, can be commissioned to act or take place as embodied documentation" (2011, p.132). The authoritative voice of the document, archival or embodied, still prevailed in *Seven Easy Pieces* because Abramović situated herself, her *embodied presence*, as the gatekeeper to the performances. Had she situated her body in relation to the documents the re-enactments originated from then she might have accomplished her desire to animate the remains of the performances, as Amelia Jones explains: "*Seven Easy Pieces*...fails to address in a critical way...what I am identifying as the 'eternal return', the desire to return to the 'truth'

that motivates all art and performance making” (2010, p.8). If its audience determines the ‘truth’ of a performance then it is surely incumbent on the artist to create opportunities to explore how this ‘truth’ manifests as a live experience during the re-enactment. It is worrying that Abramović felt she needed to appropriate other artist’s work into her canon to make them live again, with the effect of embroiling her identity into the spectator’s experiencing of them. Abramović’s approach also suggests that a ‘correct’ version of a performance’s presence exists out there, somewhere, but as Jones asks

[w]here would such a version of [a] live event reside...? In the minds/bodies of the “original” performer(s) or spectator(s)? In the documents that seem indexically to fix in time and space what “really” happened? In the spaces where it took place? (Jones, 2011, p.19).

The answer to these questions is that performance resides in all of them, simultaneously, but by valorising archival documents as authoritative versions, Abramović capitulated to her interpretation of the archive’s authority by replacing the archival documents with her body.

The challenge for artists who want to animate the past is not rooted in binary discourses of the live versus the document, but can be actualised if the unavoidable transmutation of material is made apparent to the audience. If no overt interpretation is evidenced in the re-enactments then artists run the risk of monumentalising past performances; this monument does not exist as an object, but as a series of codified behaviours which, when enacted, give spectators the *illusion* of experiencing the past. Schneider picks up on the complexity of the problem by asking if the purpose of “embodied documentation [is] to keep its liveness in a *monumental* relationship to history, suitable to the conditions of the archive?” (2011, p.132, emphasis in original). The foregrounding of Abramović’s body in *Seven Easy Pieces* functioned as a way of preserving a series of past live moments, which by implication ceased to be live the moment the originals were consigned to the archive. Roach describes such behaviours as “surrogates”: the re-production and re-creation of cultural practices which function to sustain original memories of the past, “the doomed search for originals by

continuously auditioning stand-ins” (Roach, 1996, p.4). Indeed, a practitioner’s obsession with finding original (or more specifically *originating*) copies of the past via performance re-enactments belies any creative response to what remains in the present; the time between the past and the live time of a performance is not so much bridged as erased. The attempt by Abramović and other artists to cite the presence of the living body as a more authentic method of transmitting the past’s experiential residues merely replicates one function of an archival document by supposing the presence of ‘the’ original can become manifest in a performer’s body. Rather than attempt to set performance re-enactments against the grain of performance documentation and archival practices, a far more productive modality of re-enactment for practitioners to adopt is to enact the transactive relations between reader and document that the archive engenders. This would involve performers interacting with spectators in multiple registers, beyond the interactive body-to-body dynamic, to ensure the knowledge re-enactments generate does not remain confined to the presence of the performer’s and/or spectator’s bodies. Such interaction can be described as a network that connects many people to the subject of the past, mediated by the re-enactment and the documents that underpin its subject.

The Wooster Group’s *Poor Theater: A Series of Simulacra* (2005) partially succeeded in performing this network. In his essay *You Are Someone’s Son* (1987), Grotowski writes that by staging works by playwrights, poets and authors, practitioners enact a genealogy of practice:

I am not speaking to the playwright [Calderon] as the writer of whose work I must stage, I am speaking to [him] as a distant relation of mine. Which means that I’m speaking to my ancestors (p.30).

Poor Theater invokes the genealogy Grotowski describes above. The Wooster Group can trace their lineage directly from Grotowski through Richard Schechner, who formed the Performance Group shortly after Grotowski and his group the Theatre Laboratory visited New York in 1969; some members of the Performance Group²

² Jim Clayburgh, Willem Dafoe, Spalding Gray, Elizabeth LeCompte, Peyton Smith, Kate Valk, and Ron Vawter.

subsequently went on to form The Wooster Group in 1980 (Dunkelberg, 2005, p.43). The actors in *Poor Theater* imitated the gestures, movements, sounds and dialogue of the actors in the Theatre Laboratory's *Akropolis* (1968) whilst a recording of the original performance played on a television onstage, described by Schneider as “a series of precedent moments in the theatre rendered as explicitly *again* as possible” (2011, p.114, emphasis in original). In their deliberate failure to perfectly reproduce the original performance, The Wooster Group actors actually did something more profound; in setting themselves the impossible task of staging a past performance ‘as it was then’ the company showed how the inherent incompleteness of a document can act as a spur for contemporary practitioners to continue to develop their ancestor’s legacy.

They do not – cannot – capture the full bodied, raw presence of the laboratory actors, but rather simulate the flat and partial image of their performance as captured on video, animating only those parts of their bodies that mirror their counterparts as seen within the frame of the monitor (Dunkelberg, 2005, p.47).

Here we can see a revalidation of archival documents as material that generates performances, and through the unavoidable transformations live embodiment entails, past performances are infused with a new form of animacy. This gives performances an afterlife that becomes animate in a different live time from the original, and in fact can reflect the methods of artistic production it is born out of. In his discussion of how carnival is a method of documentation as much as it is an expression of culture, Roach writes “genealogies of performance document...the historical transmission and dissemination of cultural practices through collective representations” (1996, p.25). Here we can see how live performance is capable of representing, through its preparatory methodology and live embodiment, the contemporary experience of its audience. In this instance, The Wooster Group demonstrated how documents can act as the interlocutors of communication between people as much as they are material that reveals knowledge about the past. But in *Poor Theater* this process acquired an extra layer: the actors transmitted the effects of their live (albeit rehearsed) readings of

the video documents to the audience, adding a further level of distance between spectators and the past the company attempted to make live again via its re-enactment. The Wooster Group successfully performed the knowledge exchange between themselves and the archival documents, but by maintaining the conventional spatial arrangement of stage and auditorium the next level of the exchange that should have occurred between the spectators and performers was eluded.

The communicative exchanges documents aid in facilitating during performances is created by a re-sequencing of archival documents. For example, the theatre company Every House Has a Door created *9 Beginnings* in response to the collection housed at the Live Art Archive in Bristol (see Every House Has a Door, no date). The piece exemplifies the ways live performance engenders a type of historiography that not only allows but also demands practitioners interpret past practices by treating archival documents as the foundations of a performance practice.

In their paper *Notes on 9 Beginnings: Image-Replay-Object* (2013) Matthew Goulish and Lin Hixson explained how they had been inspired by Pierre Hugghe's statement that live events no longer engender authentic experiences for spectators. Instead, the "re-play" has come to possess a greater authority than the event itself (Goulish and Hixson, 2013 [unpublished]). In the performance *9 Beginnings* Hixson and Goulish took the beginnings of "nine historical performances" from the Live Art Archive and "reimagined them as a new composition" (Every House Has a Door, no date). The original performances were not being re-enacted (or re-performed); the actors were "performing the document of that performance. We [performed] a live replay of the video footage...Event join[ed] with its image and its commentary in...*9 Beginnings* (Goulish and Hixson, 2013 [unpublished]).

This notion of the 're-play' has strong resonances with Baudrillard's description of the simulacra, which he states has replaced reality so that now "the map engenders the territory" (2001, p.169). Baudrillard takes the fascinating example of Disneyland to exemplify the breakdown between the Real of reality and its varied abstractions. He writes that Disneyland is a space that is neither real nor fictive, because

Disneyland is presented in order to make us believe that the rest is real, when in fact all of Los Angeles and the America surrounding it are no longer real, but of the order of the hyperreal and of simulation...It is no longer a question of a false representation of reality (ideology), but of concealing the fact that the real is no longer real (ibid, p.175).

To return to my practice for a moment, the Olympic Legacy and the Olympic Village embodies Baudrillard's simulacra because they are founded upon mythical narratives and an authoritative version of the past that has been created to further a political programme officiated by the government. The Olympic Village projects a future that can never be experienced in the real world because it is not designed to be attained but to be constantly strived for. The Olympic Legacy can be interpreted as a perpetual 'replay' of the summer of 2012, but it is a kind of replay that is free of the multitudinous commentaries the archive engenders.

As I listened to Goulsh and Hixson speak I began to think about how the act of documenting a live performance and then watching its replay on a screen is comparable with the process we all experience when we watch and re-watch events of 'major and historic significance'. Portable recording devices, most commonly mobile phones, have enabled the public to record events and then distribute them online, creating a virtually countless series of historical versions and narratives of events that can be accessed in one click. The ease with which we can record and share archival material with the online world has created a plethora of documentation which is accompanied by a disparate series of commentaries and narrations; as Bennett explains, this means that events are no longer experienced separately from the simultaneous mediatization of them: "At some level, the event simply *happens*; at the same time it cannot be defined merely as what occurs" (2012, p.36). The Real of contemporary reality is now experienced as a series of replays where events become raw material for documentation and re-interpretation.

This phenomenon became acutely apparent on 9/11. The philosopher Slavoj Žižek argues that the simultaneity of the terrorist attack with its live broadcast and its recording meant the public who watched it unfold on television and online

experienced the destruction of the Twin Towers as a mediated spectacle. He argues images of catastrophe have been “corrupted by Hollywood”, meaning that “the landscape and the shots we saw of the collapsing towers could not but remind us of the most breath-taking scenes in the catastrophe of big productions” (Žižek, 2002, p.17). Chris Hedges opines that the spectacle of the collapsing towers was a communicative tool modelled on Hollywood disaster movies, asking the reader to ponder

[w]here else, but from the industrialised world, did the suicide hijackers learnt [sic] that huge explosions and death above a city skyline are a peculiar and effective form of communication? (2002, p.8).

The Real of reality in this context becomes a fusion of mediated onscreen representations with the knowledge that these documents are born out of an event that occurred in reality. The digital culture that events like 9/11 unfold in has created a peculiar type of historical memory in the public; by incessantly replaying the images of the planes hitting the Twin Towers the media created iconographic representations of the event that can be endlessly replayed. Likewise, the 2012 Games were intensely mediated to the public, the majority of whom spectated on the sporting events via television, newsprint, and social media. So ubiquitous have digital technologies become in contemporary culture that the public now find it almost impossible to interpret representations of events from their actual occurrence; the commentary and its occurrence are simultaneous processes. In essence, for those who are not present in the place where an event ‘actually’ happens, the documentation produced from an event constitutes the experience of the ‘actual’ event.

The historical memory produced by documentation is now thought of as a “mode of re-presentation and as belonging ever more to the present” (Huysen, 2003, p.4). The documents produced from the Olympics function as a series of historical records, but more significantly these documents help to foster an idealised version of the future in public memory that can be frequently replayed. These commentaries accompany the participants in *Voices from the Village*, and act as a layer of mediation between themselves and the space, but they do not entirely control their perception of

the Olympic Legacy. Rather, they act as an additional perspective to the ones offered by the audio tracks.

Re-enactments are the live event and its record and possess the potential to function as a living record of the past whilst simultaneously be perceived as the generative material of archival documents³. The way spectators experience performance re-enactments cannot be considered as an entirely separate mode of historical interpretation if, as Goulish and Hixson argue, re-enactments are a performance of archival documents rather than a re-manifestation of the events ‘as they were then’. Practitioners who grapple with the Real of reality must treat “memory as a *cultural activity* enacted with texts, images, and physical presence” (Martin, 2013, p.59, emphasis added). Martin’s formulation of memory in live performance clearly shows how performance’s animacy can represent, perhaps even embody, the means by which historical memory is produced in accordance with our perceptions and experiences of the Real in experiential reality. I argue that the audience’s participation in historical re-enactments is a necessary prerequisite for the past to become ‘live’, a point I expand upon below. If memory is no longer considered as a place imbricated with the distant past but is instead a *communal activity*, then participatory modes of spectatorship have the potential to enhance the encounter between the past and the present. Thus, as Schneider states, the “‘real time’, [a time] devoid of other times” spectators experience during live performance events “can never be ‘live’. Or, never only live” (2011, p.92).

³ Josh Oppenheimer’s documentary-cum-historical re-enactment *The Act of Killing* (2013) typifies the power performance has to show how a nation’s history continues to leak into the present. *The Act of Killing* concerns the genocide that occurred in Indonesia in 1965 after the moderate socialist government was overthrown in a military coup. All dissenters who opposed the military regime were persecuted, tortured and killed, resulting in an estimated one million deaths. Many of the people who committed these atrocities are still alive today and are presented to the public by the media as national heroes who fought against a ‘Communist’ threat. Oppenheimer spent many years conversing with these paramilitary figures and convinced them to re-enact some of their past acts. In one scene, a prominent personality in this group, Anwar Tango, shows how he used to torture prisoners by looping a metal wire around their necks and tying both ends to metal poles. At the conclusion to the film he returns to the ex-torture site and begins to weep and starts vomiting, perhaps feeling guilt and remorse for his actions for the first time in his life. In Oppenheimer’s poetic description, Tango was trying to “vomit up the ghosts that haunt him”, but the only ghost was Tango’s past self (Democracy Now!, 2013).

The Past is a Battlefield

Performance re-enactments do not just animate dramatic characters or past live artworks, but can equally animate historic events. Conceiving of the past as something to be performed and not (just) reified as a series of museal objects creates a live experience of history that blurs the boundaries of what is *past* and what is *live*. Schneider argues (2011) that the fact historical re-enactments are becoming recognised as valid methods of historical interpretation evidences a desire amongst some historians to bring the past into people's present time – at least for a short while. Historical re-enactments optimally engender a sensorial historical interpretation as opposed to reducing past events to the level of text- and object-based description as is common in the vast majority of museums and exhibition spaces.

Schneider analyses the ways American Civil War re-enactors make accessible the non-archival elements of the past by animating historic battles on their original sites. She contends that being a spectator to re-enactments requires a degree of participation, who in a museological context are conventionally considered as receivers of information rather than as co-creators of an experiencing of the past:

To witness a re-enactment is to be a bystander, a passer-by, possibly out of step, in the leak of another time, or in a syncopated temporal relationship to the event that (some) participants hope will touch the actual past, at least in a partial or incomplete or fragmented manner...Many [performers] fight not only to 'get it right' as it *was* but to get it right as it will be in the future of the archive to which they see themselves contributing (2011, pp.9-10, emphasis in original).

It appears that by situating spectators as participants inside historical re-enactments the degree of agency afforded to audiences during live performance events can be duplicated in a museological context. Agency, here, is not used to mean participation per se, but instead refers to the degree to which spectators are able to apply their subjective faculties of interpretation when deciphering the information that is presented before them. Historical re-enactments embrace the spectator's subjective perspective to present a live, ergo temporary, reading of the past which is not preserved 'as it was' but exists as a performative *version*. This suggests historians who

work with re-enactment societies consider performance to possess a different dialogic potential than more conventional exhibitions are able to facilitate; by inviting people to act as witnesses to a live spectacle of history, participants optimally gain an experiential appreciation of the past which lacks the sense of authoritative interpretation found in text- or object-based narratives. Instead, in the context of historic re-enactment, history is to be understood by participants as an ongoing interpretive process that lacks a definitive totality, making the past subject to perpetual alteration and revision.

Spectators always possess a degree of participation in the sense that their subjective encounter potentially alters an artwork's meaning; as Umberto Eco states, "every reception of a work of art is both an interpretation and a performance of it, because in every reception the work takes on a fresh perspective for itself" (2006, p.22). The synthesis between the "temporal drag" – the knowledge that these actions are invocations of past live acts (Roman in Schneider, 2011, p.111) – with the spectator's interpretation of the performer's animacy, produces a type of experiential document which temporarily emerges over a live event's duration. The past might never achieve a full presence in performance, yet the labour of moulding the remains it leaves behind in its wake engenders the re-positioning of spectators into participants.

There is, however, one drawback to this: a re-enactment's 'success' is conventionally determined by the degree to which specific events, usually battles or scenes of conflict, are accurately replicated, but no re-enactment can replicate the sense of danger and fear soldiers must have felt at the time of the original event. There is therefore a danger in the sensorium of performance re-enactments that live acts belie a sense of historical incompleteness in their apparent realisation of reality. To counter this, apropos the formulation of historical memory as a cultural activity (see above), re-enactors must incorporate spectators into the performance to the degree that they participate in the formation of the historical memory that manifests during the live time of a performance.

Jeremy Deller's *The Battle of Orgreave* (2001) succeeded in creating a dialogic relationship between the audience and the history it performs. The *Battle of Orgreave*

is an historic re-enactment, an installation, an archive, and a documentary film concerning the 1984-85 miners' strike. This seismic event is described by the journalist Seamus Milne as one that

has had no real parallel – in size, duration, and impact – anywhere in the world...It convulsed Britain, turned mining areas into occupied territory, and came far closer than was understood at the time to breaking the Thatcher government's onslaught on organized labour (2004, p.ix).

Orgreave, a small, now ex-mining town in South Yorkshire, was the site of the “single most dramatic and violent physical confrontation of postwar industrial relations” (ibid, p.22). The event has become synonymous with the decline of the UK's manufacturing base, the so-called ‘workshop of the world’, and the subsequent disenfranchisement of working-class communities. As such, it is an event that remains imprinted on the public consciousness and has significantly contributed to our contemporary historical memory. Deller worked with Howard Giles from the English Heritage event programme to “orchestrate” the re-enactment on the original site in Yorkshire⁴; many former miners and some ex-policemen who were present during the original riot participated in the re-enactment, performing alongside professional re-enactors and actors (Art Angel, no date). The local residents who came to watch the re-enactment were acting as witnesses to an event which “still felt palpable and present to [them] seventeen years later” (Thompson, 2012, p.142).

On one level, audience participation was employed in *The Battle of Orgreave* by allowing local residents and the police officers to re-enact the riot. Yet Deller correctly recognised that the re-enactment alone was an insufficient reflection of how the memory of the event continues to haunt these communities. To this end he created an archive to accompany the re-enactment. *The Battle of Orgreave* archive (subtitled *An Injury to One is an Injury to All*) is comprised of objects donated by the ex-miners – such as a denim jacket covered in badges– police riot shields, and National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) posters (Jeremy Deller, no date). Accompanying these objects is

⁴ The sites where re-enactments are staged adds a further layer of authenticity to the event, whilst also functioning as a place of remembrance. I expand on this point in Chapter Three.

the material Deller generated during the preparatory stages with books that discuss the miners' strike (which illustrates the commentary element to events Hixson and Goulish discuss). All of these archival objects comprised an installation which was displayed at the Tate Modern in 2012 where Deller "present[ed] its [*The Battle of Orgreave's*] constituent materials in a way that blurs the boundaries between their status as objective documents...and historical relics" (Tate, 2012). In this way, Deller created what Bishop describes as "a double archive: a record of the riot in 1984 and the strike leading to it, but also of the artist's reinterpretation of these events in a performance seventeen years later" (2012a, p.35). I would add to Bishop's conclusion by arguing that the 'battle' Deller re-enacted refers to two battles: the first was the actual riot, but the re-enactment also symbolised the battle for the 'actual' memory of the past event that continues to wage thirty years later. 2014 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the miners' strike, yet despite its historical significance there was little mention of it in either the mainstream print or broadcast media. MPs from across the political spectrum were also strangely mute on the subject. This can perhaps be attributed to the financial cuts the coalition government imposed on public services – and which the current Conservative government are accelerating; this has resulted in the re-opening of old wounds and a resurgence of grievances in northern, working-class communities many public figures claimed had been resolved long ago. Milne shows through his meticulous research and analysis that the Labour Party in the 1980s failed to offer a sufficient level of support to the miners, a fact that subsequent Labour leaders have not confronted, perhaps choosing instead to hide behind Tony Blair's maxim that ideology is "a twentieth century thing" (2012), with the implication that communities who feel they were treated unjustly should now just 'move on' and 'get over it'.

Towards a Model of Archival Participation

By creating an inherently distributed artistic response to an historical event that continues to resonate in the public consciousness today, Deller successfully explicated the limitations of historical re-enactments to animate the past, as the past resides in our historical memories outside of museums, archives, galleries and, yes,

performances. No re-enactment can accommodate such transformations, as the acts themselves contribute to the transformative process, yet the model Deller created presents a possible strategy for how a performance practice can effectively contribute to the formation of our historical memory by synthesising archival and performance practices.

I would argue, however, that performance re-enactments alone are an insufficient means of incorporating the kinds of audience participation I am advocating in this thesis. Citing the spectator's potential for participation during historical re-enactments as one of the validating criteria of the event evidences an assumption by re-enactment groups that the performer-spectator relationship is a democratic one, which is to the credit of practitioners and existing models of performance practice. The one caveat to this dynamic, though, is that in any democracy one group of voices will always take precedence over another. Participation in performance has become the *de facto* term to denote the artist's relinquishment of their authorial voice where the aesthetic of the spectacle is supplanted by aesthesis, defined by Bishop as "an autonomous regime of experience that is not reducible to logic, reason or morality" (2012a, p.18; also see Bennett, 2012, p.2).

In this way, re-enactments become part of the spectator's present reality, which as I explain above is a reality imbricated in documentation and the distribution of digital documents. It would seem, therefore, that the mode of participation necessary to reflect the contemporary reality spectators inhabit must incorporate digital recording technologies that can potentially make them producers of their own spectacle. As Bishop states, online social media evidences a type of spectacle that is devoid of spectators, and so ubiquitous has this spectacle become in contemporary society that "subjects experience society as atomized and fragmented because social experience is mediated by images" (2012b, p.36). The types of social relations digital culture engenders have produced different orders of images, but the ones I am concerned with here are what Jacques Ranciere calls "metamorphic images"⁵ (2009, p.24). Ranciere

⁵ The other types of images are the Aesthetic, the Naked, and the Ostensive (Ranciere, 2009, pp.22-24).

defines these images as belonging to a sphere of artistic presence inseparable from “forms of circulation of social and commercial imagery and from operations interpreting this imagery” (ibid, p.24). In other words digitised images have the capacity to become part of artistic events – such as exhibitions – and so are not limited by the platform or even the context they are originally created within because they can form the basis of future relations between spectators and works of art. Yet in this schema the art object is still functioning as the interlocutor between the spectator and reality, meaning that the degree to which spectators can participate in their own experience is limited by the form and setting of the image. It is therefore difficult to see how new modes of relations between spectators and their reality can be engendered in performance when their experience is determined by their proximity to live events. Rather, if spectators are to truly participate in performance events in a way that embodies their experience of the contemporary Real they should be given recording devices to produce documents that will function as the enablers of future events. This would break the binary of pure production and consumption, found in the kinds of closed spectacles Bishop describes above, as documentation in mode of performance is framed as an activity that enables participants to engage with society in an aesthetic context.

A mode of participation based upon theories pertaining to the archive would not function as a system of ordering present knowledge or formalising historical memory into reproducible narratives. Rather, it would act as a way for the lone participant to shatter and fragment existing authoritative (perhaps even fictive) narratives during the live time of the event. This model has a theoretical underpinning rooted in what Bennett terms as “practical aesthetics” (2012), a conception of aesthetics that “is informed by and derived from practical, real-world encounters, an aesthetics that is in turn capable of being used or put into effect in a real world situation” (p.2). Here, spectators not only participate in an aesthetic experience but act in expectation of affecting the society the performance occurs in. By participating in performance events they experience an alternative mode of democratic participation that the present neoliberal hegemony inhibits. In the current political climate participation “in society means to conform to full employment, have a disposable income, and be self

sufficient” (Bishop, 2012a, p.14). In contrast, the type of participation I have constructed is based upon a form of historical interpretation that places value on documenting a place’s past to become attuned to society’s pluralism, its contradictions, the invisible binds that tie people to places and communities. All of these elements might be labelled as ephemeral or transient, yet are nevertheless present in people’s experience of today’s cityscape. This is expressed by Fisher⁶ as

[f]ugitive time, lost afternoons, conversations that dilate and drift like smoke, walks that have no particular direction and go on for hours, free parties in old industrial spaces, still reverberating days later (2013, p.ix).

In short, an archival mode of audience participation places a greater value on the subjectivity of one’s personal experience of places over the existing systems of political hegemonic control. Such a system of control has been created in the Olympic Village, and limits the public’s capacity to understand it as a place beyond the government’s conception of its architecture as “the foundations of a new growth economy, built around cultural, sporting, leisure and tourism business opportunities” (Department for Media, Culture and Sport, 2012, p.12). The architecture of these places reduces citizens to the status of consumers, who exist in a present that is centred on controlling the future that is determined to author the narrative of its past. I have attempted to employ such a method of audience participation in *Voices from the Village*. By guiding participants around a regenerated landscape via an audio guide, I have aimed to create a series of micro-encounters between the subject – the LLDC’s version of East London’s past – and the participant’s present, live experience of this “legacy blueprint” (Department for Media, Culture, and Sport, 2013, p.7). As site-specific performance evidences a mode of practice that integrates the environment into the aesthetic, one of the goals of my practice-as-research performance is to make the Olympic Village a place that participants re-interpret and critique in a similar way they might evaluate a work of art. The Olympic Village is a perfect setting for a contemporary site-specific performance

⁶ This statement is originally in relation to the compendium edition of Laura Oldfield Ford’s zine *Savage Messiah* (2011).

like *Voices from the Village*, as “[s]ite-specific performance has become tied up with the political-economic management of the city” (McKinnie, 2012, p.22); as such, performance can be deployed as a method of reimagining how these systems of management are implemented, and to ask who these systems benefit. As Harvey states,

The term ‘city’ has an iconic and symbolic history that is deeply embedded in the pursuit of political meanings. The city of God, the city on a hill, the relationship between city and citizenship – the city as an object of utopian desire, as a distinctive place of belonging within a perpetually shifting spatio-temporal order – all give it a political meaning that mobilizes a crucial political imaginary (Harvey, 2012, pp. xvi-xvii).

The performance methodology underpinning *Voices from the Village* contributes in formulating the political imaginaries Harvey mentions. The two practice-as-research workshops I designed and led compelled me to make *Voices from the Village*, as I was able to see first-hand how performance strategies can engender an experiencing of cities not determined by activities of consumption, but are instead enacted in the pursuit of re-configuring a place’s past into a sequence that is meaningful for the individual.

Chapter Three

Reimagining the Future Cityscape

In this chapter I discuss performance modalities that use cities as the setting for live performances. Much of the work I discuss here incorporates audience participation, where spectators are guided by technological interfaces that aim to reveal new ways of exploring and experiencing urban environments. By situating these practices in a broader site-specific context, I outline what recurrent themes city-based performances explore. I then analyse the various modes of audience participation these performances incorporate in order to discuss what role technology plays in this process. This situates *Voices from the Village* in the context of participatory site-specific performance, whilst also enabling me to discuss the ways technology can engender an interactive relationship with participants and their environment.

Walking is a common trope of these modalities; this can be traced back to the theories developed by the relatively short-lived but highly influential group the Situationist International. The group formulated a type of urban engagement they termed the *détournement*: the walker's re-appropriation of a city's signs and signifiers in the pursuit of finding new uses for them (Wark, 2011, p.35). Psychogeography is a practice that directly descends from the Situationists, but it departs from situationism by not explicitly attaching itself to Marxism or any other political hegemony. Psychogeography is, however, a political practice in a broader sense. Psychogeographers are concerned with the subjective relations between the city and the individual, where walking provides a release from the everyday. Will Self states psychogeography is a way of "experience[ing] place in a transcendent and unbound way – to feel the reality of things peeling from the social construction of location, location, location" (2014, p.70). Psychogeography cannot therefore be discussed without accounting for the socio-political context it is practiced in, as any given political hegemony determines how spaces are constructed and limits and/or determines what activities can be conducted in those spaces. Psychogeography in the context I am using it here is to be read as a method of resistance against the

homogeneity of urban spaces that prevent the modern citizen from exploring his or her environment. Walking for psychogeographers

[i]s seen as contrary to the spirit of the modern city with its promotion of swift circulation and the street-level gaze that [sic] walking...allows one to challenge the official representation of the city by cutting across established routes and exploring those marginal and forgotten areas often overlooked by the city's inhabitants (Coverley, 2010, p.12)

I discuss these theories in relation to performance in order to explicate how site-specific performance practices treat cities as palimpsests, where the city's past is revealed by the spectator's transitions through it. Site specific performance in this context is understood as a mode of practice that, like archaeology, "takes the remains of the past and makes something out of them in the present" (Pearson, 2010, p.44). These theories and practices informed my thinking when I designed the *Body-Site-Encounter* workshops. This strand of my practice-as-research was initially concerned with determining how living memory can be translated into archival documents, and how these documents can be used as the interlocutors between spectators and sites. I was interested to see if the interaction documents can engender could make what Heddon terms the 'autotopography' of sites experiential for participants:

Autotopography resonates richly in the context of site-specific practice since to add *auto* to topography is to admit the self that writes every place. Topography, like autobiography, is a creative act of interpretation, of perspective, of location. While the myth of place might be that it simply exists, is fixed and knowable, place, like selves, are made (Heddon, 2007, p.40).

As Heddon states, sites are as subject to the processes of entropy and decay just as much as living bodies are, yet a site's history, its 'biography' as it were, can only become present in performance by creating a framework that allows spectators to experience places beyond the purely functional level: Car parks, for instance, cannot be fully 'known' only by their intended function, as all manner of activities could occur in them. Just as theatres are haunted spaces, a city's sites contain the imprints of

prior inhabitants, fellow travellers who have ‘passed through’, leaving traces of their presence for others to follow in the future. Site-based performances possess the capacity to place participants inside the fragmented and transformative condition of the city by revealing the traces of its multiple pasts, a point Hopkins and Orr elucidate on:

Such performances engage with a city’s past not through archival texts, but through urban memory and performance. Pedestrians can step into the paths walked by others, whose micro-narratives have long since ended; pedestrian performance can access overlapping urban traumas, though separated by centuries, in ways not necessarily given to archival history (2011, p.49).

The groups I led in the *Body-Site-Encounter* workshops explored how they could perform this temporal manifold by creating expressive forms for their memories and the site’s histories. The workshops demonstrated the potential written text has for deconstructing a site’s history, and how such documents can allow audiences to participate in the writing of a site’s potential future.

Practice-as-Research: *Body-Site-Encounter*

1. Raising the Ruins

One of the most visceral ways a site’s pasts remain over time is in its ruins. Ruins are objects possessing a “capacity to invent or imagine a time to come, even as it seems to fall back into times past” (Dillon, 2011, p.11). Ruins allow us to touch another time whilst conversely projecting us into a potential (or sometimes inevitable) future. Indeed, it is the fear of the Olympic Village falling into ruination that justifies the very notion of an Olympic Legacy; Olympic venues around the world, such as the one in Athens, have fallen into a ruinous state, symbolising a depressed economy and failing state, as well as a warning for other cities who have hosted the Games (see Bloor, 2014). The burnt monastery, the gutted castle, the abandoned shopping mall, the decaying theatre, the crumbling tower block... all of these ruins show us how our deceptively permanent reality ages and fragments over time. But as Dillon states, ruins do not just signify endings; they are fragments “with a future”, because the ruin “will

live on after us despite the fact that it reminds us too of a lost wholeness or perfection” (Dillon, 2011, p.11). As humanity invents more and more ways to bring about its own extinction – maybe through man-made environmental disasters, maybe through a nuclear apocalypse – scenes of catastrophe and memorials increasingly haunt our collective imagination. The 2014 exhibition at the Tate Britain *Ruin Lust* evidences the acute anxiety and simultaneous fascination ruins have for today’s city-dwellers:

Ruins are curious objects of desire: they seduce us with decay and destruction. The ruin may remind us of a glorious past not lying in pieces, or point to the future collapse of our present culture. Certain ruins are preserved as memorials, others demolished or rebuilt. For centuries artists have been attracted to ruins, seeing new ideals of beauty in their desolation, as well as sublime warnings of the past...the ruined city remains a compelling motif in our era of economic collapse. The wars of the [twentieth] century produced such wreckage that it threatened to exceed the very category of ruin. Will the same be true of current environmental crises? (*Ruin Lust*, 2014).

As the above statement infers there are many different types of ruins: ruins are produced through wars or terrorist attacks (notably the remains of the Twin Towers after 9/11), they are the result of nature’s entropy (cathedrals and castles are the most obvious examples in the UK), and there are the ruins of abandonment (boarded up shops have become a prominent feature in town centres since the financial crash in 2008). Regeneration projects in London have accelerated the pace of ruins appearing on the cityscape; with every new building or estate that is hastily erected in an effort to rush towards a future we find increasingly hard to imagine but easy to live in, there are seemingly hundreds of shops and houses that appear to the naked eye as derelict, decrepit...*ruinous*. The modern cityscape is now home to hundreds of sites that have been abandoned, or lost, or maybe just forgotten. But as the Pil and Galia Kollektiv¹ point out, our perceptions of so-called ruinous places are imbricated in artistic imaginaries of the future:

¹ A group of London-based artists who create work that “addresses the legacy of modernism” (Pil and Galia Kollektiv, 2014).

Fetishized and embalmed in celluloid, our present crops up amidst the ruins – the Library of Congress overgrown in *Logan's Run*, the Statue of Liberty in *Planet of the Apes*, the streets of LA in *The Omega Man*. Yet we experience these futures not as our own but as futures past (2009, p.78, emphasis in original).

In other words we in the second decade of the twenty-first century have imagined our future into being, but in so doing we have run out of other versions of the future, forcing us to perceive every new addition to the cityscape as material which will eventually become part of a past that is emerging as quickly as we are trying to advance out of it.

If ruins engender an experiencing of the past, what can we do with it in performance? In his paper *Contributory Factors. Or What Else?* (2013) Mike Pearson proposed that the archaeologist's process of unearthing and rearranging found material gives the remains of the past a contemporaneous dimension because they participate in the composition of present, experiential reality. This process renders the present as a synergy between materiality and 'imagined pasts'. These pasts are partially imagined by the archaeologist because they are not preserved 'as they were then'. The present, therefore, becomes a place of contention between differing versions of what "might have happened" and "what did happen" (Pearson, 2013 [unpublished]).

The past is not somehow 'discovered' in its remains, for what would it be? Gone is the notion of a singular material record bequeathed to us from the past and from which meaning can be "read off". Instead archaeology is to regard itself as a practice of cultural production, a contemporary material practice which works on and with the traces of the past and within which the archaeologist is implicated as an active agent of interpretation (Pearson and Shanks, 2001, p.11).

Site-based performance, like archaeology, is an intervention into a space that requires a processual, embodied engagement for the past to become experiential for spectators. After researching the potential uses of archival documents for performance practice, I developed workshop exercises that incorporated documentation into the group's exploration of sites.

Body-Site-Encounter Aberystwyth, 10 November 2012, 10am

Mads and I meet the group at the train station. It's cold and wet, but the sun is shining; it's the kind of weather I hate...squinty eyes and damp socks. My mind isn't on the work; I want to be at home, in London, with Hannah. I've phoned her this morning and asked how her back is; its fine, which means the pain isn't as bad today, but it's always there. There's a clock in my head that counts down the hours until she calls crying in agony, unable to move, scared about having to walk more than ten yards by herself.

Tick tock.

The group arrive one by one. Mads tells me two people have cancelled, so only four people will be attending today. Intense, I think, the ratio of two-to-four, and then I'm reminded of the phrase one-to-one from the time I worked as a teaching assistant, and then suddenly Mads is saying we should start.

I go into workshop leader mode, trying to adopt an impossible casual-knowledgeable-wise tonal inflection, but I think I sound patronising at best, creepy at worst. I explain we're going to go to a site "whose history hasn't been written yet" (I'm impressed). I tell them we are going to "excavate" this site, and then we're off.

The four women thankfully don't ask me any questions, and I've forgotten two of their names already. But I know Joanna from Exeter. She was doing her MA in drama at the same time I was doing my BA. By coincidence she saw the advert for the workshop online, but her presence, like everything else about today, is making me twitchy.

What am I looking for?

My idea was for the groups to produce written documents of the site that would act as a translated version of their experience, which could then be used as a spur for performance. In an attempt to develop Heddon's conception of an 'autotopography', work conducted in the studio was designed to produce a topography of living experience.



Figure 4.1 A member of the group writes the site's biography. Source: The author

By taking objects from the site – a leaf, a stone, a shard of glass – and placing them in a studio setting, I wanted to imbue them with the same sense of provenance and authority archival documents possess. The difference being, however, that it was the group who were imbuing the objects with a level of personal significance rather than having it bestowed upon them by an authoritative institution. The next stage in the process was for the group to find an embodied expression for their memories of the site, performed amongst the objects they had taken from it.

Aberystwyth, 10:30-11:30 am

We walk to the site in silence, trying to immerse ourselves in the experience of Aberystwyth. We walk through a quaint seaside town and pass families on days out, looking out at the rough sea. I'm filming the group from behind; everyone is walking a little hesitantly, unsure of what they're supposed to be looking for. I become aware of the sounds I'm immersed in; fragments of voices and radio announcements come into my hearing, and then pass, waiting for another group of walkers to listen to them. It's raining.

We eventually arrive at the car forecourt just as the rain stops and the sun starts to shine again. I see weeds and concrete. A word: abandoned. I stare into the impregnable ruinous showroom through dirty glass, and see some scraps of interminable detritus, a few cans of coke and scraps of rusty metal. Who lives here? After a while (half an hour?) I tell the group to start writing the site's biography. I don't explain any further; I want this word to just hang in the air, *biography*, the story of a person, a life's story translated into text.

With their eyes closed, the group imagined they were walking to the site again and then physically walked the path in the studio. Later, now working in pairs, each member of the group decided upon an active verb to describe their experience of the walk and the site. They then expressed this word through a repeatable gesture, building it into a score of movement to manifest the experiential qualities of their memories through the body².

Aberystwyth, 2pm-4:30 pm

The group slowly begin to move. Joanna catches my eye. Her hands are turned upward and her elbows are slightly bent. She's swaying, as if she's holding a large but light baby. Her face is turned upward, her neck slightly inclined. She's looking for somewhere to be, someone to tell her where to go. Re-watching the recording of the exercise on my computer, I'm reminded of the scene in *Sophie's Choice* where Meryl Streep has to choose between sending her son or daughter into the concentration camp. Joanna sways amongst the ruins

² I drew on David Zinder's "plastiques" exercises when planning this part of the workshop (see Zinder, 2009, pp.147-53)

of paper and weeds and leaves and writing that lie scattered on the studio floor, occasionally taking a hesitant step forward, but always stopping to tilt her head from side to side. Where can she go in her imaginative landscape? It is a place with no purpose, a place out of time, a place out of sync with us. Yes, this is the bodymind she inhabits now: a lost wanderer, gliding over the ruins to try and bed down, make a home, stay anchored in time. But she can't, there are too many gaps between the ruins, she can't see a future for herself here.

She has no future, and her past exists in fragments. She doesn't know how to put them together again. Joanna stumbles on forever, waiting for the clock to start ticking again.

Tick tock.

I designed these exercises in an effort to belie the limitations of text to see how the experience of place could be translated into a performance score, in a similar way to the transformative process memory undergoes each time a person remembers the past.

After reviewing the outcomes of the first workshop I came to the conclusion that 'biography' was a misleading term; the text the group wrote sounded like a complete history of the site, which was the opposite of what I was trying to achieve. Furthermore, beginning the day in the site meant the group had little time to consider how their memories functioned as a type of remain, meaning that the autotopography elements of the exercises became more of an implicit part of the work. Both the site and their memories were treated as documents that could be entirely known through the reading of text, which belied the more embodied, non-text based approaches to working in and with sites. Yet this process showed me how, despite the criticisms levelled at the 'place as text' metaphor (see below), translating a site into writing does not lessen its experiential qualities. Rather, text generates pathways from sites so it can be traced and re-interpreted by multiple readers who may never visit it, but are able to study its effects on those who have. My mistake in the workshops was framing the text as 'non-live' material – material that lacks the animacy of gesture and memory. In so doing I inadvertently monumentalised the group's texts into authoritative, absolute versions of the site, rather than treating them as interactive materials whose meaning was subject to constant alteration. This meant that some of the exercises I designed worked well as a method for expressing recent memories, but did not sufficiently relate to the group's existing repertoire of lived experience, memories they possessed prior to arriving at the workshop, because the memories were also treated as static images.

It became clear to me that working with the group's existing memories in the Bristol workshop could create greater opportunities to explore how organic or non-archival remains can be interacted with. Generating documents through site-based exercises became a means of interweaving the group's memories with their experiences of sites to create performance responses in the studio. I concluded that it was vital in the next workshop to establish a shared understanding of the term 'archive', as it is commonly associated with, to borrow Julian Barnes's formulation, a "sense of an ending" (2012), rather than as a dynamic and generative entity.

2. A Tapestry of Repertoires

I began by instructing the group to write about a significant place in their lives. This could have been a place that they had only been to once or return to often. What was crucial, though, was that it was a place that carried a personal significance for them. Focusing on a place from their repertoire was my attempt to anchor their memories around one point in time.

Body-Site-Encounter 2 Bristol, 2 February 2013, 10:45am

I think this is better, starting in the studio. Fourteen people have come for the workshop. I'm flattered and excited. They sit around the studio huddled over their notebooks, occasionally taking swigs from the ubiquitous water bottles dotted around the floor. I love this: watching memories emerge in real time, seeing each person reach back into the recesses of their minds and dig for sounds, images, smells and tastes, and then try and translate it into text. How do we do this?

Once the group had finished writing they split off into pairs and read their text to their partner. After each person had read their text, the listener asked them questions to unpick the details about the person's relationship to that memory. Now working alone again, the participants re-wrote their text in response to the discussion they had just had, attempting to develop the details their partner had commented on.

I then brought the group together and discussed the processes involved in retrieving memories, and how articulating memories to someone else can produce new associations and meanings. We then discussed what happens to one's sense of their

own presence when recalling the past: are people entirely present to their environment when they recall past moments from their lives?

In an attempt to express some essence of the group's memories through the body, I designed an exercise I called The Invisible Archive, which was partly inspired by Michael Chekhov's work with Atmospheres (see Chekhov, 2002, pp.47-63). The Invisible Archive was an imaginative space to store the remains the group created during the course of the workshop.

Bristol, 1pm

Cara, Mads and I hand out coloured chalk to the group. They draw a circle around their chairs, and begin writing on the floor. Their pace becomes frantic as their desire to fill the lacunae of the studio floor possesses their writing hand. They imprint themselves on the space, writing to prove they have been here, that their presence counts. The writing is poetic but beautifully opaque; no 'I felt this and then I did that' here, just an outpouring of fragments that invite an imaginative engagement from the reader who aches to make the story whole, but in so doing just adds themselves to an anonymous memory.

The exercise was intended for the group to gain an awareness of how an archive stores versions of the remains of living experience that can be then re-organised to produce new versions of the past. The group stored their text and the objects they took from the sites we worked in. By instructing the group to work inside their archive during the following exercises, I was also exploring how those intangible, living traces (Taylor's 'repertoire') could be consigned to an archive. I instructed them to sit in their Invisible Archives and begin to think about the place they had been working with.



Figure 4.2. The group create their Invisible Archives. Source: The author

With eyes closed, I told them to imagine they were sitting inside a transparent dome, and that they were going to add the atmosphere of their place to the archive. Seeing the place in their mind as a transformative image, they imagined the memory – with all of its emotional and sensory resonances – coursing through their body, until they were literally full of this memory. They then imagined the memory spreading out into space until it had completely left their bodies, filling the Invisible Archive with their memory.

We then walked to the gardens on the university campus. I instructed the group to excavate the site by recording in their notebooks how it affected their presence: ‘How does standing in a site affect your memory? What associations does it create for you?’ They then took an object from the gardens to be used for the next exercise, *If Stones Could Speak*. Sitting in their Invisible Archives they studied the object they had brought back from the site. The group wrote a history of the object on the studio floor in the first person; this was to see if an object taken from a site could reveal qualities about a site’s past that might otherwise remain hidden. The group then selected an active verb from the text they had written and expressed it as a gesture, eventually developing it into a continuous score of movement. Through their movements the object manifested as an animate but transmuted presence in the body.

By beginning with the group’s personal memories rather than with a site I was able to establish a shared lexicon with the group to reflect on the performance-responses they created in the studio. The Invisible Archive exercise was designed to demonstrate how I was applying the term ‘archive’ in a site-based context, yet the Invisible Archives also created a place for the participants to work comfortably in, perhaps because they had constructed it. On reflection, however, I did not give sufficient consideration for the personal attachment people have with their memories, and underestimated some group member’s reluctance to share their memories with strangers. Yet by translating these memories into movement and text, the memories became framed as tools for performance-making, rather than as the subject of the work itself.

When I was planning the *Body-Site-Encounter* workshops I set out to create a series of exercises that could be formulated into a mobile methodology; artists and

researchers could use my exercises as they saw fit, working in any site they wanted. But after evaluating the research outcomes I realised that a workshop setting was not entirely conducive to determine how I could construct a dramaturgy that incorporates documentation into a participatory mode of spectatorship. The workshops did demonstrate, however, that performing in a site-based context was suitable to explicate my theories relating to how a place's past(s) can become the subject of a performance. Furthermore, I was able to observe how text can act as the genesis to embodied modes of engagement with sites; I learnt that text could function as a means of mediating an audience's perceptions of sites without framing them as static monuments. But most crucially I realised that an audience must participate in an archival dramaturgy for a site's past to attain a presence during a performance. Yet this presence differs from an archival document by perpetually transmuting into different forms through the participants' perspectives of it.

In *Voices from the Village* participants re-interpret their memories of the 2012 Games during their traversals through the sites the audiowalk guides them on. This process is designed to be a spur for action: If Hackney Wick's residents believe their history has already been written and they are progressing towards an inevitable regenerated future, then they are bound to feel disempowered and disinclined to try and participate in finding their own version of a desirable future. The archival mode of participation I began to develop during the workshops acquired a dual functionality when I began to create *Voices from the Village* and has been enhanced since: At one level, audiences participate in the performance by downloading the tracks, walking through the sites and completing tasks – taking photos, trying on clothes in Primark (see appendix one, pp. xvi-xviii), but the second aspect of this participatory mode is the ability for participants to add their perspective of the Olympic Legacy to the network of voices the *Voices from the Village* website hosts. By uploading photos and commenting on the forum they participate in an emergent but never static vision of future cityscapes beyond the rubric of regeneration.

But what is the broader socio-political context of the present, and what is the origin of the desire to make 2012 a kind of Year Zero, a point from history to progress from? The Games did not occur in a vacuum and are indeed inherently political

events. Furthermore, as well as being an event politicians and corporations are keen to attach themselves to, the Olympics also have a strong association with political activism. Since the onset of the recession in 2008, London has seen a number of protests where the act of occupying a site has become a political act in and of itself. What, I began to ask, would be the subject of a protest in the Olympic Village, and how could the participant's act of documenting become a politically subversive act? The second strand to this question led me to think about how participants in *Voices from the Village* might perceive the Olympic Village in the context of contemporary protest movements.

The Politics of the City

As I wrote in the opening to this chapter, the city has a long association with political activism; not only as a site for protest, but also as a space of collisions between the competing ways citizens can meaningfully participate in a society. Formed in Paris in 1957, the Situationist International sought to shatter the orthodox version of an 'ideal' model of citizenry by subverting the capitalist hegemony of the twentieth century city. The group claimed the capitalist ideal of perpetual accumulation and growth had become so ubiquitous in contemporary culture that all human relationships were now mediated by this 'spectacle', described by Debord as "a social relationship between people that is mediated by images" (2006, p.7). Debord contended that the spectacle had made alienation a fundamental feature of modern urban living where the subjectivity of lived experience was now mediated by the "ruling economic order" (ibid, p.10). The spectacle thus alienates citizens not only from subjectively experiencing the city outside of a political hegemony, but also from imagining alternatives ways to live in and change society. Furthermore, the spectacle is not simply the mediator of society but is its producer, showing citizens a reality that can always be seen but never grasped and brought into people's sphere of influence. Thus, the spectacle inhibits freedom because

there can be no freedom apart from activity, and within the spectacle activity is nullified – all real activity having been forcibly channelled into the global construction of the spectacle (Debord, 2006, p.10).

When Debord says ‘real activity’ he is pointing to everyday experiences that have no quantifiable function – an experience of living that cannot be easily integrated into any political or economic hegemony. The type of activity Debord advocates is the freedom to participate in a society in ways that are not officiated by the state.

If we look at the Westfield Shopping Centre, for example, we can see how the twenty-first century spectacle has materialised in East London. Today’s shopping centres, or ‘malls’ to use the imported American vernacular, have naturally evolved from the twentieth century ‘arcade’ – the architecture of consumerism (see Benjamin, 2002). To walk through Westfield is to experience the ideal imaginary of a consumerist paradise, where ‘everything’ one can want is under one roof. The Greater London Authority (GLA)³ placed Westfield slap bang in the middle of London’s new urban district to make ‘everything’ available to both Stratford’s and the Village’s residents. But more fundamentally, Westfield acts as a portal between the past and the future.

In *Voices from the Village* the Legacy Builder and 2012 Manager describe Stratford as the ‘old quarter’ to denote its age and wear, which nevertheless possesses some fascination to these corporate figures. The rumours of crime and degradation provide titillating anecdotes for the Village’s residents who can comfortably sneer at their neighbours whilst enjoying the fruits of regeneration. The Legacy Builders only have to point to the older buildings across the train tracks to remind the Village’s residents of the hell they’ve escaped from. In contrast to the ‘old quarter’, the Olympic Village is the beginning of a new, more prosperous, happy...in short, *better* time. Westfield not only acts as a portal to this future but is also a training ground for an ideal model of citizenry (see appendix one, pp.iv-xiii).

Participants shop for appropriate outfits in Westfield during *Training for the Next Stage of Regeneration* in order to ‘blend in’ with their surroundings. Giving participants the task of shopping for clothes acts as a means of deepening their immersion into the Olympic Legacy; their role as participants in a performance bleeds into their role as consumers in a mega-mall. The mall transforms citizens into

³ What was once the Greater London Council, the Greater London Authority is now run by the Mayor of London, a position currently held by the Conservative Boris Johnson (2008-).

consumers, but as Debord points out the spectacle is not experienced as pure materiality – the spectacle is, after all, a *medium* of the ruling economic order. Rather, today’s “consumer has become a consumer of illusions. The commodity is this materialised illusion, and the spectacle is its general expression” (Debord, 2006, p.24). There is perhaps no greater illusion than consumer credit, a system that transforms money into entirely notional sums, which conversely has an abjectly material impact in experiential reality.

The fusion between the commodity – which in Westfield’s case is the space that facilitates ‘consumer demand’ – and the neoliberal orthodoxy of establishing a purchase culture amongst today’s citizenry (summed up in the cry of ‘buy, buy, buy!’) produces an illusory experience of society where the citizen trades her rights of democratic participation for the right to buy limitless products. True, consumer culture has been with us since the Industrial Revolution, but only in the last three decades has consumerism been explicitly linked with democratic freedom. The neoliberal model of citizenry is distinctive because it allows the modern twenty-first century citizen to buy products to enhance their freedom.



**Figure 4.3. The Westfield Shopping Centre
in Stratford, East London. Source: The
author**

Not only that, but in the digital culture what constitutes a product might just as easily refer to intangible software as much as it does a car, a new suit or a house. The Web makes the potential buying power of the modern consumer virtually limitless, yet the

amount of money she possesses is still the primary determinate of her ability to participate in the marketplace. The enthusiasm by which the UK government has adopted the philosophy of neoliberalism has rendered the marketplace a pseudo-democracy, thereby enhancing the citizenry's alienation from the ruling democratic order; if a citizen is unable to purchase as many products as her neighbours, then she is unable to participate in society to the same degree.

Debord maintains that the mediating effects of the spectacle pacifies a citizenry to the point where they are only able, or are at least trained to *think* they are only able to function as receivers of a society they have no stake in or control over. To counter this, Debord and the Situationists developed a mode of artistic spatial engagement they called (perhaps somewhat predictably) the 'Situation': a mode of performance that demands the spectator becomes a participant in the reality they inhabit with the artist. The Situation is designed to embody the spontaneity and unrepeatability of the everyday:

A situation is an integrated ensemble of behaviour in time. It is composed of actions contained in a transitory décor. These actions are the product of the décor and of themselves, and they in their turn produce other decors and other actions (Debord, 2009, p.110).

As described by Debord, the Situation is an organised series of 'moments' where chance, spontaneity (in its rawest, unplanned sense) and uncertainty are embraced as the essence of living experience (Debord, 2009, p.113). These were considered by the Situationists as the necessary elements to create an interactive relationship between artists and participants, as in the Situation a participant is able to (partially) determine the outcome of the act they are engaged in. Rebelling against art formalised and practiced primarily through visual aesthetics, the Situationists wanted to convey the beauty of the everyday through *détournement*; the negation of capitalist spaces that would optimally lead to citizens enacting what Harvey calls the "right to the city" (2012). This right is an expression of the struggle by today's citizenry to determine who shapes the qualities of daily urban life by articulating the "*idea of the city*" (Harvey, 2012, p.xiii, emphasis in original). This idea

does not arise primarily out of various intellectual functions and fads...It primarily rises up from the streets, out from the neighbourhoods, as a cry for help and sustenance by oppressed people in desperate times (ibid).

The Olympic Village could be read as the antithesis to this cry. The government's solution to tackle widening inequalities in the UK and the acute housing shortage in London was to build a retail complex, recreational park and luxury flats, described by Owen Hatherley as "an act against London – the creation of yet another security obsessed, enclosed, gated enclave set up to mock the idea that we would become more rather than less equal" (2013, p.32). The notion that history is not a narrative of linear progression is a vital aspect of my work in *Voices from the Village*; by creating a framework where participants can imagine alternative futures for London by walking through a future imaginary of it in Hackney Wick, the city reveals itself as a space of potentials.



Figures 4.4 and 4.5. Apartment blocks in the E20 Village and a sign over Stratford International Train Station in the E20

At the end of *An Exhibited Community* participants are instructed to look out at the Wick from the bridge in Hackney Wick station. They look at the Olympic Stadium and the ArcelorMittal Orbit and are told by the Documenter that they are looking at the approaching future. The last instruction he gives them is to remember what they have seen on their journey so Hackney Wick, and indeed London as it currently exists, is not forgotten or regenerated to the extent that it completely 'disappears' (see appendix p.xxxiii).

One of the notable features to the Situationists' conception of *détournement* is their metaphor of the city-as-text. Some have argued this metaphor is a reductionist

technique because living experience becomes limited by the exigencies of language, as the following statements exemplify:

[A]t what point does the idea of the urban ‘text’ fail to account not only for the multiple physical, material, and psychic interactions between city and citizen, but also for the city as a space of tension and negotiation framed in countless ways by formal and informal works of performance? (Hopkins et al, 2011, p.5).

By reading site-specific performance primarily through the frame of writing, we frequently miss the expressive density, contributed to by multiple registers of sensory perception (Levin, 2011, p.250).

These statements suppose the word ‘text’ denotes a degree of finality, whereas the experience of the city is transient in the sense that it is a manifold composition of present action, memory and history. But as Roland Barthes argues the intentions of a writer do not necessarily determine how the reader interprets text: “ [A] text’s unity lies not in its origin, it is in its destination” (Barthes, 1977, p.148). The locus of a text’s meaning is found in its anticipated and unknown audience, whose analytical and interpretive faculties are not, or at the very least ought not to be, inhibited by the author’s intentions. Likewise, the ways a citizen chooses to navigate and interact with a city’s topography is not solely the domain of the ruling order – they have agency over their perambulations. In this sense, the city-as-text metaphor is a highly appropriate means of describing the optimal mode of engagement citizens should have with one another and their environment if they are to shatter the spectacle.

One of the acts the Situationists cited as *détournement* was the *dérive* (or drift), a variation of Charles Baudelaire’s *flâneur*, a figure who “confounds dominant uses of the city by casually strolling through it, and so [creates] his own *version* of it through his manner of performing it” (Harvie, 2009, p.49, emphasis in original). Baudelaire’s conception of the *flâneur* is, however, quite flawed when one considers the picture he paints of a leisured gentleman. For one fortunate enough to be born into wealth they have the time to take gentle promenades through the streets, but for the majority who live in cities their days are centred on working to earn a living. The problem lies in the

casualness Baudelaire ascribes to the *flâneur*; to meaningfully drift across the city's topography requires more than a willingness to explore its hidden depths. Text can function as the interlocutor between the city and the walker to engender multiple experiences and readings of places, known only to the lone individual, yet these versions emerge through an *active* and *conscious* engagement with the city. De Certeau contends that these highly subjective versions are created when the *facts* of the city – its parks, shops, bars, office blocks, walkways – are transformed by the walker into a *concept*. This is accomplished, de Certeau suggests, through the fusion of the walker's perspective and prospective vision of the places they move through, allowing them to perceive fragments of a city's past whilst imagining its future. The city's past and future do not converge into a comfortable whole and so can never be entirely seen because the walker is immersed within it, and indeed contributes to its composition:

[The walker's bodies] follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text' they write without being able to read it. These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen; their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers in each other's arms (de Certeau, 1984, p.93).

The city is thus 'written' through the trajectories created by walkers who leave traces of themselves on the landscape, composing a "manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces" (de Certeau, 1984, p.93). As described by de Certeau, the city experienced as a series of *dérives* creates an experiential narrative for the individual alone, yet it is an experience that defies representation and eludes contemporary society's 'spectacularisation' of living experience. This is (usefully) complicated by the fact that when walkers move through a city they are interweaving amongst countless unknown narratives that have been spun in and amongst the urban topography. Therefore any narrative the walker creates for him- or herself never emerges into a totalising form because it is constantly being written over: The city thus becomes a palimpsest of lived experiences.

Forced Entertainment sought to shatter the homogenous character of the modern metropolis in their performance *Nights in this City*, described by Levin as a

“prototype for urban site-specific performance” (2011, p.240). Etchells writes that the group wanted to create their own geography of Sheffield to take people on a tour “which avoided facts in search of truth” (1999, p.80). The audience became passengers on an esoteric tour that presented Sheffield as a tangle of fictions and histories, interweaving through the confused commentaries of the tour guides, thereby illustrating the city’s fragmentation for spectators. As the bus drove through the city the performers gave Sheffield multiple identities, each one layered on top of another, until it was impossible for spectators to read the city in one way only. Forced Entertainment subverted the officialdom of mapping by comingling their commentary, the spectator’s subjective gaze and their interpretation of the city with “the silent text of actions created by those living and working in the city as the bus moved through it” (Etchells, 1999, p.81).

Nights in this City departs from de Certeau’s formulation of the lone walker by creating a shared, mediated experience of Sheffield for spectators, which I contend strengthens the experience of the city as a palimpsest. Despite the walker’s non-unitary, inherently fragmented and alterable experience of an urban topography, the emphasis on the subjective gaze might mean a participant’s experience of the city can be incorporated into the political hegemony the *dérive* functions to subvert because it does not translate into collective action. In the absence of a historical version of places that is subject to revision and alterations, which are the very qualities archival documents engender, the walker’s ‘story’ risks replicating the ‘spectacularisation’ of cities. If, as Debord argues, the city is a spectacle, then the participant who enacts a *dérive* cannot be considered as a separate subject from it; it is the encounter between the spectacle and the participant’s actions, even if those actions are formulated as a *dérive*, that create an experience of the city. Sites are not finalised products to be read and interpreted at one remove from the experience of them but are, rather – as Debord alludes to in his description of the Situation – continuously emerging spaces of *happenings* created through embodied processes which, in the absence of chance factors, cannot *end* as a text, but demand to be re-performed (see Debord, 2009, p.113). Text does not signify an ending, but is instead a tool to generate these re-performances. Yet the figure of the lone walker-writer has persisted in

psycho geography, with authors like Self and Sinclair somewhat mythologizing the – to coin a phrase – *mano-a-ciudad*⁴ dynamic that exists between the individual and their environment, belying as it does the homogeneity of the ‘public’. But it is churlish to dismiss ‘the public’ as a body devoid of agency or one that is incapable of nuanced argument. Without an audience to read the books and articles produced after a psycho geographer’s circumnavigations and perambulations, the author’s versions of places remain entombed by their necessarily limited subjectivity. The dramaturgical choices I have made in *Voices from the Village* requires participants to enter into the walk alone, but the version of E20 and Hackney Wick they experience acquires a greater historical significance when it enters into the wider discourse surrounding the Olympic Legacy. The online community I am hosting on the *Voices from the Village* website is not participating in the writing of a monolithic history of the Olympic Legacy; rather, the documents participants upload and the dialogues they have online function as archival tools. The one who reads the material determines their meaning; it is a meaning that, like the Olympic Legacy, must be decided by the public, which is made possible by establishing dialogic relationships between participants.



Figure 4.6 Two sculptures in the Olympic Village with the ArcelorMittal Orbit in the background. Source: The author

The LLDC’s imposition of a history on the Olympic Village negates the subjective experiencing of place by determining how the residents in E20 live whilst that community is still establishing itself. The first building passengers encounter

⁴ Literally translated as ‘hand to city’

when they depart from Stratford International (on the banally named street ‘International Way’) in the Olympic Village is the E20 Marketing Suite. Inside is an exhibition of the 2012 lifestyle: Photos of people kayaking on the River Lea, jogging to work, taking long walks on the Hackney marshes, children making sandcastles in the playgrounds in the Queen Elizabeth Park, and groups of young families laughing whilst they drink coffees bought from the nearest bespoke bakery.

Exhibiting a community in this way reduces the experience of the city to a generic lifestyle brochure and perfectly illustrates the absurdity and horror of the Olympic Legacy. A public legacy should mean that the citizenry have a stake in creating their future through democratic participation, but the Olympic Legacy is a version of the future that is preventing other imaginaries of London from emerging at a ground level and being voiced in the public sphere. This can only be made possible if a network of people is established to explore alternative versions of the future cityscape beyond the narrative of regeneration. The network acts like the palimpsest of the city with ideas and narratives jostling amongst each other. The *Voices from the Village* website is my contribution to this network. The audio guides, Twitter feed, photo archive and forum are designed to act as material which can instigate a public debate on the value of the Olympic Legacy and its implications for the rest of London. As it stands today, that conversation is absent from the public sphere, which sets a troubling precedent for communities who might be ‘regenerated’ in the future. If the future presented in the E20 exhibition is the ideal time the public are working towards then we will eventually live in intensely surveyed gated communities with shopping centres at their heart – Ballard’s Brooklands for the 2012 generation.

The hegemony of the Olympic Legacy is intensely ‘textualised’ on the E20 Village’s topography (see figures 4.7-4.10 below). The ‘textualisation’ of the space only enhances the determinist feel of the Olympic Village; from the street names to the brochures, every piece of text is designed to pull people into this future cityscape, to the point where the presentation of the E20 community constitutes the experience of the residents themselves.



Figures 4.7, 4.8, 4.9 and 4.10 Street signs in the E20 Village. Source: The author

The Real of the Olympic Village resides in the imaginary cityscape the LLDC have created, a place where one's subjective experience of the city is determined by outside agencies. The problem is not so much the existence of the text itself, but in the way that the hegemony of the Olympic Legacy is 'textualised' through a restrictive framework. So ubiquitous is this hegemony that it is difficult to imagine how the Village might facilitate a plurality of interpretations from those who traverse through it. Interpreting the site through the topographic text creates a restrictive reading of the Olympic Legacy and limits the potential ways the site can be interacted with. Not only that, but the past is mythologized to the extent the Village's history is orientated around an authoritative version of the 2012 Games, thus inhibiting the multiplicity of discourses modern historical analysis embraces. This places the Village in a state of temporal perpetuity, where the ideal future is ready and waiting to be lived in by those who are able to escape from all of those undesirable futures awaiting them in the old quarters of London.

Hackney Wick has become subject to a similar process. Gallery notices are mounted onto buildings that are considered places of 'historical significance'. This has

had the effect of placing Hackney Wick's past into a stasis field that chimes with the LLDC version of East London's past. Labelling selected buildings as the 'Wick Wonders' trivialises the estate's history into a series of fairground attractions.

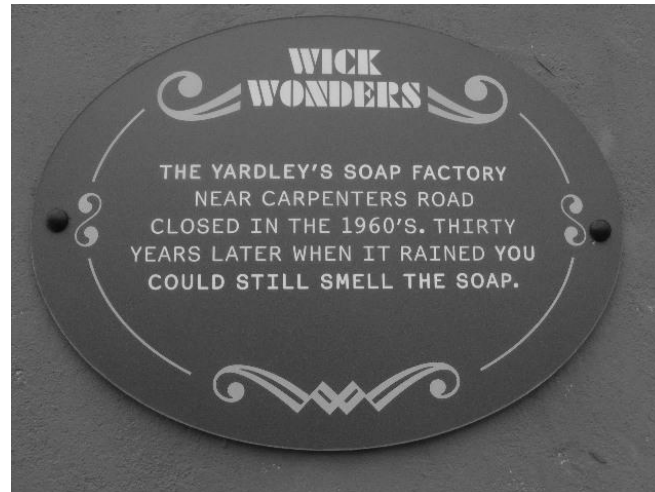


Figure 4.11 An exhibition note in White Post Lane, Hackney Wick. Source: The author

At the beginning of *Gateway to the Nation's Dreams* participants are welcomed by the Legacy Builder who tells them they "are going to go an exciting journey to the future, a future that started in 2012" (appendix one, p.iv). The tour the Legacy Builder takes them on is designed to show the participants what life they would lead if they 'chose' to live in the Olympic Village. The Legacy Builder makes it clear that the participant's purpose in the Village will be to spread the Legacy Project "beyond this glorious island of dream production" (appendix one, p.v). The explicit desire of the Legacy Builder to inculcate the participants into the Olympic Legacy is designed to emphasise its expansionist aims.

The text in the Village acquires a different resonance when its function is explicitly stated. The on-site text and the Legacy Builder's commentary interweaves with the participant's perception of the Olympic Village to create a series of perspectives which is not entirely text-centred. Yet the participant's subjective interpretation of the Olympic Village is not only determined by the audio tracks. The participants begin *Voices from the Village* with memories of the 2012 Games; the 'Mobot', crowds booing George Osbourne, etcetera, which undoubtedly influences their perception of the sites *and* their interpretation of the character's dialogue. This

creates a threefold structure whereby the participants are jostled between these different registers – the site, their memories of 2012, and the audio tracks – throughout the performance. This differs from the palimpsest metaphor by lacking a linear progression from one layer to the next; the participants experience the Olympic Legacy through a fragmented lens over the duration of the event. They are not searching for a keystone to connect these elements together during the performance, as this would inhibit their ability to continuously interpret the Olympic Legacy over time. The website allows participants to constantly re-interpret their experience of *Voices from the Village* by reading other people’s Tweets, looking at their photos and reading their blog posts. The photo gallery and forum on the website evidences an evolving historical perspective that grows through continuous participation and public dialogue. As such, *Voices from the Village* resonates with the protest movements that have arisen since the 2008 financial crash, because it aims to re-claim cities for the public.

Occupying the Olympic Legacy

Over the past few years, London and indeed many other cities around the world have seen a galvanisation of mass protest movements unlike anything we’ve seen since the early 2000s⁵. The causes and intentions of these protests vary considerably, yet they nevertheless evidence the public’s growing unrest and dissatisfaction with governments over the world. But more than that, the scale of these protests suggests the desire to strengthen the stake of the public in how their societies are governed. Oldfield Ford below expresses the zeitgeist of those communities who resist against urban re-development:

The preparation for the Olympics involves systematic social cleansing. An attempt to sanitise the market on Bethnal Green Road and Brick Lane has already begun but is proving unsuccessful. There will be a battle for the entire

⁵ Most notably the protests against the Iraq War.

East End...Occupy⁶ the Olympic Village...Squat the yuppiedromes (Oldfield Ford, 2013, no pagination.).

In 2011 Tahir Square in Cairo was the site of a protest that lasted for weeks, as thousands of Egyptians peacefully mobilised and demanded Hosni Mubarak's government step down (see Mason, 2013; Sowers, 2012). In May 2013, residents of Istanbul occupied the city's Taksim Gezi Park to protest against its re-development (see Temelkuran, 2013). At around about the same time in Brazil, a country that hosted the 2014 World Cup and will host the Olympic Games in 2016, people took to the streets to protest against the country's huge inequalities and corrupt government, "turning Sao Paulo's flyovers and urban motorways into temporary protest playgrounds and occupying...main thoroughfares" (Hilton, 2013, p.22). But by far the largest global protest movement since 2008 has been Occupy (see Chomsky, 2012; Gessen and Taylor, 2011). From Zuccoti Park in New York to St Paul's Cathedral in London, camps have sprung up all around the world to protest against a range of issues under the banner that capitalism is not delivering for the '99%' (Graeber, 2013). However, Occupy's real significance is the call for action – to occupy – as a way to re-claim spaces for public use. This is at a time when London has been developed into "the archetypal, impenetrable fortress city" by instilling pervasive surveillance technology in public spaces:

[T]he security architecture familiar in airports and at international borders – such as cameras, cordons, bollards and even biometric readers – has begun to appear in our neighbourhoods (Garrett, 2013, p.14).

The intrusive measures Garrett describes came into sharp focus in 2012 when the public "saw the biggest peacetime security lockdown in London's history" (Bloom, 2012, p.50). The occupation of public spaces in this context is a way to subvert 'acceptable' uses of spaces by using them to create temporary communities: "communities that simply exist in virtual space or that come together in temporary communities at festivals, demos or flashmobs" (Bloom, 2012, p.12). These

⁶ Oldfield Ford is not specifically aligning herself to the Occupy protests here, but rather to the broader squatter movement.

communities have amassed “to imagine and experiment with alternative forms of organization, to search for the germs of the new in the present” (Žižek, 2012, p.87). The internet has been an instrumental tool in organising these communities and has made the Web a different type of publically contestable space (see Croeser and Highfield, 2014).

The riots of August 2011 demonstrated the power of the Web to swiftly organise groups in locales to loot shops, but the riots were in many ways the antithesis to the kinds of political activism I discuss above. It is significant that the rioters targeted no public buildings; instead, their prime targets were high street chain stores, so from the outside the rioter’s primary motivation appeared to be accumulating valuable goods. Their actions seemed to correlate with rather than challenge the capitalist system of accumulation, despite the claims by many of them that they were motivated by dissatisfaction with the government’s austerity programme and antipathy towards the police (see Bloom, pp.76-100; also see Briggs, 2012; Lammy, 2012). This interpretation was cemented in the public consciousness by the intense mediatisation of these events. The riots demonstrate that when individuals mediate their actions and share them online they run the risk of joining a community who are spoken for by the government or the media. Scenes of people leaving Footlocker and Currys with armfuls of shoe boxes and plasma screen televisions were frequently repeated on the news and distributed on the Web, creating the impression of a mindless free-for-all. As such, any meaningful analysis beyond David Cameron’s summation of the rioter’s actions as “criminality, pure and simple” (2011) has struggled to be heard over the sea of outrage.

London has seen many examples of large-scale political activism since the onset of the financial crisis in 2008. The student protests over increased tuition fees and the Occupy camps outside St Paul’s Cathedral and in several university campuses are notable manifestations of a relatively new form of online activism. A notable feature of online activism is its refutation of a single political ideology, preferring a “horizontal” system of organisation “dedicated to directly democratic politics” (Graeber, 2013, p.26). Horizontal activists coalesce to shatter dominant political and social hegemonies in pursuit of constructing new modes of democratic participation

from the ‘bottom up’ rather than the ‘top down’. Here, the Web is employed as an organisational platform to engage with a distributed public network, yet its function in political activism transcends the purely organisational level. Groups like Hacked Off, Anonymous, UK Uncut, and the London Consolidation Crew (LCC) reflect the ostensive anonymity the Web affords its users – symbolised by the ubiquity of graphic novelist Alan Moore’s ‘V’ mask (see Lloyd and Moore, 2005) at recent protests. These groups have (or, in the case of the LCC, had) no public leaders to articulate their demands in a context outside of the events they organise. Rather, sites are appropriated by the public to experiment with democratic forms of participation outside of existing social structures. Thus, ideas are germinated through the public’s interactive relationship with each other and their interpretation of the sites they temporarily occupy.

The notion of what counts as public space in today’s culture is becoming grossly distorted; the Queen Elizabeth Park in the Olympic Village, for instance, is not, ironically, a royal park, but is owned and managed by various different corporations. The park and the Olympic Village in general are distinct from public places which are managed by the local council like, say, Hyde Park or Parliament Square. Now, an increasing number of urban sites are treated as assets by developers, and the public who use them are framed as consumers or customers rather than citizens, as Minton explains: “Previously, the government and local councils ‘owned’ the city on behalf of us, the people. Now more and more of the city is owned by investors, and its central purpose is profit” (2012, p.5). Participatory performances can mediate the public’s experience of these privately managed sites as a means to reclaim their right to find new uses and purposes for them over time. Mediation of sites in this context becomes a means of subverting the norms and precepts of ‘desirable’ systems of spatial organisation.

The archival mode of participation I deploy in *Voices from the Village* is contemporaneous with the model of online activism I have outlined, yet departs from it in one crucial respect: *Voices from the Village* is clearly an artistic response to the Olympic Legacy and so is ingrained with my subjective interpretation of the sites participants walk through. Participants’ experiences are mediated through the haptic I

have created, and so in a sense coalesce around my conviction that the Olympic Legacy inhibits the public to construct imaginaries of the future outside of the neoliberal hegemony regeneration projects operate within. The audio tracks prescribe the participants' perambulations; this arguably limits their capacity to interpret the Olympic Legacy for themselves, but this is the essence of an archival mode of participation; the plurality of responses to a performance's subject occurs beyond the event in a distributed network. The Real of the Olympic Village is interacted with in sites *and* online. Unlike horizontal activists, the community I hope to create is not a temporary physical one, but an evolving digital one; participants produce documents during the performance that can be shared online. The participants 'occupy' the sites of the performance and a digital site on the Web to contribute to a public network that shares ideas on how contemporary cities should be designed. As such, the live time of the performance event is extended beyond the participant's spatial-temporal engagement with the sites to include its digital afterlife on the *Voices from the Village* website. The performance does not therefore have a definitive 'end' point; I have left it deliberately open-ended so the website can continuously develop, and through its evolution the community it hosts will optimally grow larger.

I participated in a type of *détournement* when I was researching how artists working in Hackney Wick have responded to the opening of the Olympic Village, and what regeneration means for the future of the estate. I responded to an advertisement from a newly formed group called Navigate who were looking for participants for their workshop *Madness, Sanity, and Gentrification*. The aim of the workshop was to transgress acceptable social norms in public spaces, and through such acts discover how gentrified spaces, such as the Olympic Park, could be used for site-based performance. The photograph below is taken from an exercise where we had to imagine we were newly born life forms who were seeing the world for the first time.

As I started to walk across the bridge I began to move in a disjointed and uncoordinated way; my arms were swinging from side to side, while my feet were pointed outwards. Other people in the group moved very slowly, some never leaving

the floor, examining every particle on the ground. Most of the people who passed us gave us quizzical looks, but they didn't seem that interested. It didn't take long for G4S security guards and community safety wardens to make an appearance; they seemed unsure if we were breaking any laws but were nevertheless unhappy about our presence there. But then perhaps our little improvised performance wasn't as subversive as we'd hoped. As I was waking up to the world a father and daughter walked by; the little girl turned to her father and asked, 'Daddy, why are those people asleep?' and he breezily replied, 'Don't worry darling, *its just art*'. Performing in places regenerated or otherwise does not necessarily result in the performer's re-appropriation of a site; sites can all too easily become the backdrop for acts that could be performed anywhere. After working with Navigate in and around the Olympic Village for two days, I came to the realisation that if I was to create a framework for participants to image alternative future cityscapes in *Voices from the Village* then I would have to immerse them in the environment via a mediated lens.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, site-based work can create an experience of history for audience members that transforms them from spectators into participants. Yet the complexity of the Olympic Village's history is that it is so recent and reasonably fresh in people's memories.



Figure 4.12 Navigate workshop in the Olympic Park,
Source: Andre Verissimo

When I was doing some field research I wrote in my notebook that the Village feels like a film set waiting for the actors to arrive and the sets to be finished. Or,

conversely, the Village is an abandoned film set that possesses an uncanny feeling through its absence of actors who had previously populated it, leaving a strange and haunted space. Even with the completion of the Park in March 2014, that feeling of incompleteness, of a half-finished, soon-to-be used space persists. The Olympic Village's future feels too concrete, too polished and finalised. No-where outside of the E20 Marketing Suite will you see any evidence of what the site used to be used for, and even then visitors can only read about it on plasma screens. On the material level, the only past that is present in the Village are the residues of 2012. But then if the past does feel closer today than it used to, could the remains of 2012 – the stadia, the flags emblazoned with the moniker 'Re-live the Spirit of 2012' – be considered as monuments that will not let East London's residents *forget* 2012? In a place which makes people remember a branded historical memory, immune from revision, alteration or transmutation, I started to think that to truly participate in this site's history I would have to cast a fictive overlay over the Olympic Village in *Voices from the Village* to break its homogenous character, to peel back the glossy veneer of regeneration to reveal the site's substrata and ask participants to consider what does, or what will, the Olympic Village do to East London's past?

2012 has been monumentalised in the Olympic Village; how citizens can respond or interact with these monuments is still uncertain. I argue performance can facilitate multiple types of interaction that is not beholden to the LLDC's version of history. If the monument "provides everything an observer needs to know" about the past, including "interpretation" and "ideology" (Wark, 2011, p.40) then for participants to experience a site's history they must exceed the limitations of the monument by reconfiguring a site's past until it becomes a present, living experience. Wark describes the *détournement* in similar terms, stating that the "*détournement* sifts through the material remnants of past and present culture for materials whose timelessness can be used against bourgeois culture" (2011, p.39). One of the key philosophical aspects of *détournement* for the Situationists was that it enabled citizens to become "masters and possessors of their own historical world and of their own *fully conscious adventures*" (Debord, 2006, p.37, emphasis in original). Thus, for citizens to become participants in society through *détournement*, they must participate in its

on-going history, as “once history becomes real, it no longer has an *end*” (Debord, 2006, p.40, emphasis in original). The history of the city in this context is not to be considered as an objective interpretation of the past, but as a continuous process that citizens contribute to in their everyday lives. *Détournement* is optimally experienced as the experiencing and re-experiencing of history as a spatial event (see Wark, 2011, p.40). In his mention of “timelessness” in the statement above, Wark is referring to material that can be used over time in different contexts – especially living memory. Yet on the ontological level archival materials could also fit into this category, as the durability of documentation engenders new forms of knowledge creation and exchange. The participant’s use of documentation in my piece could therefore be used as a way to interpret the Olympic Village by interweaving the participant inside the site and my interpretation of the Olympic Legacy.



Figure 4.13 A monument to the 2012 Olympic Games. Source: The author

Performances that utilise a sonic form of audience participation would fit into what Benford and Giannachi term “mixed reality performances”, which “deliberately adopt hybrid forms that combine the real and the virtual in multiple ways and through this, encourage multiple and shifting viewpoints” (2011, p.4). The concept of the city as a vessel of memories has proved to be fertile ground for practitioners who work with site. Janet Cardiff’s *Her Long Black Hair* (2004) and Blast Theory’s *Rider Spoke*

(2007) presented the city as a shifting entity, where the walker's perception of places contributed to their experience as much as the sites' material properties did.

In *Her Long Black Hair* audio tracks guided participants through Central Park in New York. During the walk they were instructed to compare the space they inhabited with photographs taken in the nineteenth century. The tension between the scenes depicted in the photographs with Cardiff's recorded commentary created an oscillating effect between the records of the sites in New York and the spectator's live encounter with the city. The participant's experience of New York shifted between "the present, the recent past, and the more distant past" (Cardiff and Miller, no date).

Blast Theory often integrate technology into their work to make spectators co-creators of the performance they are immersed in, "transforming participants into performers and authors capable of contributing to design trajectories of their own experience" (Benford and Giannachi, 2011, p.191). In *Rider Spoke* participants rode through the city on bikes, guided by a computer to selected 'hiding places'. Once they reached the location they then recorded an answer to a question regarding their personal lives they were given at the beginning of the performance. These recorded responses could then be listened to if another rider found the recording. The interactivity the digital interfaces facilitated created an intensely intimate experience of a live performance for the participants:

Each city in which *Rider Spoke* took place thus became a mixed reality palimpsest, a user-generated repository of ephemeral memories in which a variety of individual voices became, in the voice of one reviewer, 'embedded in a suspended web of whispered secrets' (Benford and Giannachi, 2011, pp.187-188).

Uncovering these recorded memories was analogous to the process of reading archival material; the documents became live when they were read. By having the riders distribute documents across the city, the city revealed itself as a repository of pasts which could be read once they entered into the next participant's present experience, which in turn produced new histories, new memories to document, and so the process continued, "transform[ing] the past into the present for someone in the future"

(Giannachi et al., 2010, p.354). I would describe the mode of participation the riders undertook as archival in the sense they interpreted pasts found in the city's topography and in documents, whilst also contributing to the creation of a networked series of recorded memories.

We can see from these two examples how digital technology has the extraordinary potential to function as the interlocutor between participants, sites, history, and between other participants who do not necessarily have to be present 'in the flesh' to have a *presence* in the performance. A participant's perambulations leave traces over the cityscape and in documents for others to follow in the future, producing continuously evolving versions of the past. A performance that incorporates an archival mode of participation is inherently distributive – *Voices from the Village* is not only the title of an audiowalk or the name of a website, but is a processual method of interpreting the Olympic Legacy through live performance. Like *Voices from the Village*, the Olympic Legacy has no definitive end, and so must be constantly re-interpreted if it is to be fully understood. If this does not occur then the Olympic Village's history will remain in stasis by resisting the types of historical interpretation practiced in archives. The methodology I refer to is the accession and sequencing of archival material by living agents whose presence in the archive makes the past potentially alterable. The audio documents in *Voices from the Village* act as the genesis to participants' interpretations of the Olympic Legacy. Through these collaborative interpretations, multiple versions of the regenerated cityscape are created for others to read, study, experience and interpret in the future. *Voices from the Village* is a performance that stretches across time and distance through the participation of its audience.

Conclusion

Voices from the Village launched at the Hackney WickED Festival on 3 August 2014. As an accompanying piece I read my prose poem *Scenes from the Future* in the Yard Theatre, Hackney Wick.



Figure 5.1 The author reading *Scenes from the Future*. Source: Sadie Edington

Scenes from the Future evokes a regenerated cityscape where London has been re-developed into a version of the Olympic Village. All residential districts are built around shopping centres, schools have become little more than corporate training academies, and 2012 has become a fairy tale parents read to their children. I attempted to form a series of dystopian images in the minds of the audience to reveal to them how this future was emerging before their eyes:

Boys consult sales reps to learn the appropriate desires of communities that are fearful of tradition; sports stadiums on every street corner charging premium rate membership fees; streets managed by sponsors; paperless books to facilitate hands free reading experiences. Entrepreneurs instruct teenagers how to open

banks in casinos and nurseries in microbreweries...Concerts and football matches will embolden communities to achieve their dreams, and dreams will become the basis of the Big Society that has a cross generational impact.

Perhaps this reality will emerge sooner rather than later. The perimeter of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is already expanding onto the banks of the Lea Valley canal. The security fences that have become a permanent fixture in and around the Olympic Village are now appearing in Hackney Wick.

But it would be misleading of me to claim that a consensus of opinion exists between the arts community in Hackney Wick regarding the impact of the Olympic Legacy on their working lives. I interviewed Sebastian Hau-Walker– the artistic director of the Hackney Wick-based performance collective, Cluster Bomb – after he had participated in the *Voices from the Village* audiowalk. He told me opinion is divided between those artists who have worked in the Wick for many years and have chosen to shun the potential funding streams the Olympic Games have made available to artists, whilst emerging groups (such as Cluster Bomb) are considering the potential such funding offers new artists (Hau-Walker, 2014). Although new platforms and facilities are appearing in the Wick, artists have to demonstrate what ‘impact’ this will have on the audience, which raises an ethical dilemma for how work is devised – should art have a quantifiable outcome? That being said, I would argue that if artists are able to engage wider sections of the local community then this is a worthy goal, although it is a contentious issue as to how funding bodies determine how this engagement is realised. It became clear in my conversation with Sebastian that the whole concept of ‘legacy’ is inextricably linked to funding – hence the emphasis the Olympic Legacy places on ‘sustainability’ as a good in and of itself. Could *Voices from the Village* be considered a type of ‘sustainable’ model of performance? In one sense, yes, but this is not to say its worth as a work of art is determined by its economic value.

There are many paths that lead to Derrida’s ‘domicile’ in today’s digital culture – the past is simply more accessible than it used to be. One of the primary goals of

this project is to create an interface for audiences to access a live performance to construct a distributed mode of practice. The type of accession I advocate challenges the more traditional or conventional responses to archival work by negating the notion of a definitive historical truth. Instead, I contend that the historian's presence in the archive and reading of archival documents produces subjective versions of the many pasts that remain as memories, as objects, and as sites. Situationism and psychogeography show us how walking can function as a method of historical interpretation; by framing sites as types of archival repositories, the potential for a new type of audience participation becomes possible – what I term an archival mode of participation. In the methodology I have developed participants enter into a dialogic relationship with versions of history that are not monolithically authoritative but subject to endless revision. The participants in *Voices from the Village* contribute to an evolving body of knowledge through their actions over the duration of their walk.

Integrating documentation into the performance reflects the ways the 'live' in contemporary culture has come to encapsulate communicative exchanges between people separated by distance and time. *Voices from the Village* evidences a mode of practice that does not confine the lifespan of a performance to the audience's proximity to onstage enactments, but instead treats the participant's experiences as originary acts. As a generative event, *Voices from the Village* functions as a means of providing a forum to debate what the Olympic Legacy stands for and to ask for whom does it benefit; I argue that this debate must begin by considering how the 2012 Games formulate public imaginaries of the future. If we frame the Olympic Village as a type of archival document whose meaning is determined by the reader, the knowledge it transmits becomes live when its topography is traversed.

Voices from the Village does not mark an ending, but is instead the beginning of a process I cannot determine the end of. To do so would be a negation of the performance's archival functionality. The philosophy underpinning archives and archiving reveals how interpreting the past is never entirely objective; the past, remaining as documents, becomes contemporaneous at the moment of the researcher's subjective interpretation of a document's content, and with each

reading the past becomes potentially alterable, making its future uncertain. An archival mode of participation requires practitioners to make the audience agents of historical interpretation and knowledge production. Audiences, here, do not only participate during the performance but also continuously contribute to the evolving body of knowledge their actions generate. The audiowalk is not the ‘original’ performance in the sense that the documents it generates solely relate to past acts, but is rather part of a larger processual framework I do not entirely control. The Web is a perfect platform for this type of knowledge production to evolve from, as it creates a network of communicative exchanges between people who can act as audiences to emerging versions of a place and its histories. But this is not to say participants in *Voices from the Village* or visitors to the *Voices from the Village* website are passive bystanders; rather, the narratives they create through their documentation and their on-going dialogue offer multiple ways for others to experience the Olympic Village and Hackney Wick. If, indeed, the Olympic Village is a ‘blueprint’ of future regeneration projects then *Voices from the Village* can act as the genesis of a method to re-appropriate the histories and uses of public spaces.

Archival documents and live performance function as the interlocutors of this multi-layered communicative exchange. By positioning performance as part of a processual framework, unbound by temporal or spatial limitations, the theoretical framework I have developed allows scholars and practitioners to study performance as an important tool in interpreting the past that is not entombed in archives, but has a living presence in sites and in living memory.

The live performance is regenerated by each participant’s subjective experience and reading of the Olympic Legacy, and therefore resists any particular form. But the live in *Voices from the Village* does not just refer to the audiowalk: In my project I have appropriated the term ‘regeneration’ by freeing it from the restraints of the neoliberal hegemony it has come to embody. Regeneration can now be used to describe how communities can resist the monumentalization of public memory and imaginaries of the future by participating in a live performance. The versions of history the participants produce is regenerated by drifting through

memory, through documents, and through a digital culture populated by the countless voices that contribute to that culture's development every day. When participation in live performance is discussed in the context of digital culture many exciting opportunities for practitioners reveal themselves, not least the opportunity the Web creates to engage with audiences outside of the spatial-temporal zone of the performance event. *Voices from the Village* demonstrates that participation in performance does not have to 'end' over a fixed duration, nor indeed does participation in this context necessarily involve direct interaction with performers. Rather, archival modes of participation enables the public to assemble in physical and digital spaces to critique the development of their communities and begin to imagine alternative versions for them. Framing urban places as types of archival documents to be read and interpreted during and after the live event re-defines performance's ontology away from questions of disappearance and transience. *Voices from the Village* treats Hackney Wick as a site of potential – the Olympic Legacy is only *one* imaginary of its future.

Appendix One

Voices from the Village

An Audiowalk of a Regenerated Cityscape

By Joseph Dunne

Synopsis

Voices from the Village is an audiowalk that takes participants on a journey through the E20 Village, Westfield Shopping Centre, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and the Hackney Wick estate. The performance explores what impact regeneration projects have on a community's past(s), and if the focus these projects place on the future risks erasing a place's history.

Characters

Legacy Builder

2012 Manager

Documenter

Part 1: Gateway to the Nation's Dreams

Stratford to Stratford International

[Rousing and inspiring music fades in. The tune should remind the listener of cheap Hollywood movies that ooze superficial sentiment. The Legacy Builder's voice begins speaking over the music after 5 seconds. Her voice is seductive but intensely patronising. Her voice is always kept at a level, steady pace. The listener should be able to hear her smile]

Legacy Builder: Welcome to Stratford. This is the gateway to the nation's dreams. Today, you are going to go on an exciting journey to the future, a future that started in 2012. We, the Legacy Builders, are offering *you* the opportunity to contribute to our vision of a sustainable future by coming to live and work in the Olympic Village. I hope that by the end of this tour you will make the right choice and join us.

[Music slowly fades to silence as the Legacy Builder begins speaking again]

Legacy Builder: You are currently passing through parts of London's Old Quarter. This is a site that is ripe for building new homes for hard-working families – as long as those families have the money, of course. The empty spaces you can see will be gone one day. Eventually, we'll regenerate all of London, perhaps even the entire country, but that's not going to happen for a while yet. You probably won't be alive to see it, but if the Legacy Project goes smoothly then your children sure will. That's one of the first lessons you need to learn; the E20 residents are always looking ahead, and never look back further than 2012. As you look out of the window you will see the monuments to the Olympic Legacy: the Olympic Stadium to re-live past glories and the ArcelorMittal Orbit so people can look towards a better tomorrow. You will also see the Westfield Shopping Centre. Shopping is vital to the Legacy Project, because the more people shop, the closer we'll get to a better tomorrow. I know that you must

be *aching* to go and explore the hundreds of shops inside, and I promise that you will get the opportunity later, but please try and be patient. You've got all the time in the world.

[Pause]

Legacy Builder: When the train arrives at Stratford International please wait on the platform for further instructions. If the train is delayed, press pause and play the track again when the train starts moving.

[Music plays again until the 3 minutes are complete then fades to silence]

Stratford International to E20 Marketing Suite

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Legacy Builder: Walk up the escalator.

[Silence for 30 seconds]

Legacy Builder: Walk straight ahead and stand still at the kerb.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Legacy Builder: Now look to your left. Can you see those green statues? Go and stand by them. Have a good, long look around when you reach them.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Legacy Builder: You are standing in the blueprint of the future. One day, all places will look like this. But before the Olympic Legacy can be expanded beyond this glorious island of dream production, the 2012 Spirit needs to possess *every*

community. You see, people have to truly *want* the future the Olympic Legacy offers them, before they can have it. One of the key tasks I have as a Legacy Builder is to inspire people like you to escape their unsatisfactory present. The Legacy Project must constantly expand to sustain itself, otherwise people will forget how to build a better future. If you choose to come and join us it will be your job to inject the 2012 Spirit into your friends and family. That's why we erected these statues to help inspire visitors to the Village. The idea was to combine a traditional image of labour with a green ethos; the perfect image of the twenty-first century Hard Working Family, whose toil not only benefits themselves and their loved ones, but the entire planet. But like a lot of progressive images, it was accused of all sorts of ridiculous things. Some people found a woman sweeping a floor as something to aspire to as offensive, yet most people didn't mind at all. And I'm sure you aren't as sensitive as those scaremongers, are you? Of course you're not. You recognise the value of tradition, and understand that hard work is the most valuable tradition we have.

[Sounds of protests fade in and continue to play as the Legacy Builder speaks]

Legacy Builder: Besides, the people who objected to the statues were only the usual mob causing trouble: the students; the unemployed; the eco-warriors; the vegetarians; the artists; the teachers; the intellectuals; in other words, no-one we need to worry about. The protest demographic is mere noise, and after a while, we all learnt to tune their feeble cries out. For all their Twitter feeds and skinny jeans, protesters are a small and insignificant blot on this clean landscape, so they were silenced quite easily.

[Protest noise abruptly stops]

Legacy Builder: No trouble at all. You see, people like that don't belong here. If they somehow managed to break into the Village the 2012 Managers would instantly know. Here, everyone is watched by someone all the time. And the best part is, the part that makes this community safe, is that no-one knows where the cameras are - you're probably staring at one right now. No one knows, that is, except us and the

2012 Managers. The Managers are the front line staff of the Legacy Project; they are the eyes and ears of the Legacy Builders. They are based in the building you're standing in front of, the E20 Marketing Suite. Walk inside and see what they do. Say hello to the receptionist and ask if you can have a look around. Please remember to smile and be friendly at all times.

[Muzak fades in. The Legacy Builder speaks over the music after 30 seconds. She speaks slowly and methodically, allowing each image to form in the listener's mind before continuing]

Legacy Builder: You are looking at the Legacy Project in miniature. Isn't it...just...beautiful? This is the place everyone wants to live in. And why wouldn't they? No one outside of the perimeter fence lives in homes like this, including you. Cobwebs grow in your wardrobe, dirty plates lie in brown water in your sink, your shower curtain is torn and the tiles in your bathroom are cracked, your carpet is ugly and frayed. There's no view of a shopping centre from your bedroom window. The nearest school is miles away. There are no local green spaces for the little ones to play in, no parade of restaurants for romantic and intimate dinners on your doorstep, and no canal to take your kayak for a spin on. Actually, you don't even own a kayak. How sad. You sit alone in this hell, staring at the television which shows you the better life that you crave. Well, now you can have it. We have made television dreams the new reality. The E20 community, summarised here in easy to read slides, has got it all. *This* is the home you've always dreamed about, but you didn't know it until now. You never dared to dream it was possible to live in such a place, where *everything* is at your fingertips. A place where you can have fun on your journey to work, knowing your family is kept safe from danger by a group of conscientious managers. If you were to come and live here, which I hope you choose to do, you will have fewer responsibilities; less stress, less worries, and more quality time. The Managers will decide what you need to worry about, and they're always right. Any events which aren't in the brochures simply won't happen; every desire, every want, every need and vice has been prepared for you. The residents of the Olympic Village sustain the

Legacy Project just by doing what is expected of them, nothing more. It sounds so easy, doesn't it? But, I should warn you, it might not happen for you. Living here demands sacrifice; the E20 lifestyle is a brave one, and not everyone comes up to scratch. Now, please, don't get upset – that's not the 2012 spirit, is it? Turn your sadness into determination! One of the aims of this tour is for you to learn how you can fit into this model. Look for the model of the village. Can you see it?

[Muzak continues to play for 10 seconds]

Legacy Builder: The people who live in the apartments you can see are in the process of learning their lines (many of them are on the walls around you). The E20 residents understand what jobs they need to apply for; what they need to wear, and all of the desirable qualities they should look for in a potential husband or wife. They have learnt who they need to ignore, who they should shun, and who they need to impress. When you walk through these streets in a moment, you'll see and hear the car you need to drive, the apps you need to download onto your iPad, and the right music you need to listen to as you board the right train to the right station. Are you ready? Then let's go and see them! Walk out of the marketing suite.

E20 Marketing Suite to Liberty Bridge Road

[Muzak fades. Silence for 10 seconds]

Legacy Builder: Turn left and walk up Celebration Avenue. The Marketing Suite should be on your left hand side.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Legacy Builder: When you reach the traffic lights cross the crossing and walk down Liberty Bridge Road. When you turn into Liberty Bridge Road walk for a few paces and wait further instructions.

[Silence for 30 seconds]

Legacy Builder: You are now walking through the next stage of a working class heritage that's much safer and more fun than the old past, the past the E20 residents have escaped from. The people who live in the apartments surrounding you now have taken the necessary steps in transforming Stratford's industrial wasteland into a thriving hub of sustainable and eco-friendly enterprise.

[Silence for 1 minute]

Legacy Builder: You should now be standing still. Look up at one of the balconies.

[Lullaby music begins to play. The Legacy Builder speaks over the music]

Legacy Builder: Inside the apartment you are looking at now, a child is sleeping in a climate controlled room. He is dreaming about the summer of 2012, when the Olympic Games showed the world how to live a better life. He doesn't remember it, of course, but his parents read him the Olympic fairy tale every night. He can see the athletes running around the tracks, cheered on by an ecstatic crowd, and he is smiling. Now look at another balcony.

[Pause]

Legacy Builder: The child in this apartment is dreaming of all the possibilities the Olympic Park can offer. She is dreaming about setting up a business centre in the Park. She is dreaming about growing up to become a Chief Executive of a multinational corporation which generates a healthy profit margin. In this place, the children dream the same dreams every night, because they are the dreams everyone here dreams. You, too, must start dreaming these dreams, as without them you'll never accomplish anything worthwhile. This is what it took to build this place: people who dare to make their dreams come true by accepting they need to join a thriving and sustainable community. Only by dreaming can better communities be built on the

ruins of their past. We have to start forgetting what once was if we want to live in the future.

[Music plays for 5 seconds and then fades to silence]

Legacy Builder: Continue to walk down Liberty Bridge Road until you reach Prize Walk. Turn left into Prize Walk when you reach it.

[Silence for 1 minute]

Legacy Builder: The playground in front of you is what we Legacy Builders like to think of as a piece of regenerated fun in action. Go and stand by it.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Legacy Builder: Under our instructions the 2012 Managers designed a play area which reflects how dangerous materials like sand and wood can be regenerated into safe forms. And as you can see, the children who play in this delightfully rustic mini-garden are safe at all times. They are protected by the high walls and the CCTV cameras, so they are always being watched. The 2012 Managers know how hard the parents work – they held a focus group – and understand that time is a luxury. The Manager’s built the play areas so arduous trips to the local playground were no longer necessary. But it’s also important to stay fit and healthy: exercising is just one of the ways to keep the 2012 Spirit alive. You mustn’t think the E20 residents just have fun here. As I said earlier, sustaining the Legacy Project is hard work. Where better for the 2012 generation to learn about hard work than a school?

Prize Walk to Chobham Academy

Legacy Builder: Continue walking to the end of Prize Walk and then turn right. Walk straight AHEAD until you see the Chobham Academy.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Legacy Builder: You should see some circles on the wall outside the school. When you reach the Academy, feel free to stroll around the forecourt, but stay in front of the school.

[Corporate music fades in. The music is similar to the music played during the train ride but is much slower and simpler. The atmosphere being created here is one of grim conformity. The participant should begin to feel increasingly easy as the Legacy Builder speaks. The music plays low underneath the Legacy Builder's voice. Music plays for 30 seconds and then Legacy Builder's voice fades in]

Legacy Builder: The students here are learning the skills they need to expand the Legacy Project beyond the perimeters of the Village; remember, this is just the start. The school's motto is 'To Strive, To Seek, To Find, and Not to Yield'. The students at Chobham Academy recite this motto daily to instil a sense of entrepreneurial zeal in their characters. They then apply this spirit, the 2012 Spirit, to every task they do in life. Classroom activities are designed to train them for the future roles they will play. Inspiring figures from the financial sector come to the academy to deliver talks on topics ranging from trade negotiations to product design. Other guest speakers are from the armed forces. These sessions are targeted at the less intelligent but intensely patriotic students. Patriotism is a very flexible concept in the Village. The residents here are fiercely loyal to efficient systems of corporate management, and why wouldn't they be? The Legacy Builders aren't tired and useless politicians; we're business leaders. As the Village's children grow up they become loyal to brand names and products, all of which can be bought in Westfield. They then equate loyalty to shopping with loyalty to their families: buying products and selling assets sustains their lifestyles, after all.

[Legacy Builder's starts to sound disappointed]

Legacy Builder: There are a small group of students who we have struggled to inspire. These are the ones who can't add up or prepare a spreadsheet, who daydream and argue for lives they say the Olympic Legacy can't provide. We've learnt to spot the signs: an interest in the history but not the *application* of economics; a love of painting and literature and drama; a desire to sing and dance; students who thrive in groups but can't function individually; students who don't talk about politics in the right way. To combat this, we made some adjustments to the school. Firstly, the library was re-developed into a literacy suite. All of the books were removed and plot summaries were written onto attractive canvases and mounted onto the walls. The students were issued with tablet computers so they could download selected books from the Chobham database. Next, performing arts programmes were re-designed to develop the student's skills in organising talent shows, which the E20 residents attend every Christmas, Easter and summer. Towards the end of their school career the most talented students take part in the 2012 Festival, hosted every year in the Olympic Stadium to commemorate the Games and to celebrate the E20 community's achievements. These measures have had some success, and this is only to be welcomed, but there's still a lot of work to do. Those students who – and let's not be afraid to use the word – *fail* at Chobham Academy are clearly not destined to contribute to the Olympic Legacy. They fail to embody the 2012 spirit and so must leave the Village to live in the ruins beyond the perimeter fences. We wish them every success, but we also recognise some people are destined to remain in the past, and so can't be part of our vision.

[Pause]

Legacy Builder: We understand Hackney Wick is a popular location to move to, but the rumours you hear... Perhaps you've been there, or passed through it on the train? Hackney Wick's residents carve out a bare life for themselves, but we're working to change that.

[The Legacy Builder becomes very excited]

Legacy Builder: Although we haven't made any official public announcements yet, a regeneration project is already underway in Hackney Wick. Some people are hesitant to join us, so it will be a gradual process, but it will eventually be complete. Just wait and see.

[Pause]

Legacy Builder: Now, I promised you a shopping trip in Westfield, didn't I? Walk back to the E20 Marketing Suite and wait for further instructions. My colleague a 2012 Manager will look after you for the next part of your tour.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Legacy Builder: I hope you enjoyed walking through the 2012 future we are building here. Please, do consider joining us. We'd love to have you. Have a very pleasant day. Play the next track when you reach the Marketing Suite.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

END OF PART ONE

Part 2: Training for the Next Stage of Regeneration

[The 2012 Manager is a salesperson and is extremely enthusiastic. When she talks about people from the Old Quarter her tone darkens and becomes irritable, as though just having to think about them is an inconvenience]

Manager: I'm a 2012 Manager, and I'm going to take you on a journey through Westfield. Cross the road and walk towards the shopping centre. Wait at the foot of the stairs and escalators which should be directly ahead.

[Silence for 30 seconds]

Manager: You should now be standing in front of the stairs and escalators.

[Pause]

Manager: Part of my job is to enhance the Olympic Village's character and fun factor by designing unique retail experiences in Westfield. Westfield's architecture is designed to impress upon people how much can be achieved if we dream big. All of the entrances to Westfield are designed to inspire a sense of awe in the shoppers. Doubtless you sense it now and simply can't wait to spend some money! Don't worry; it's a perfectly natural desire (whatever some killjoys might say).

[Pause]

Manager: Walk up the stairs or take the escalator to the entrance.

[Silence for 30 seconds]

Manager: Open the door and stand by the balcony to your left.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Manager: Look down. You should be looking at a children's play area below you.

[Pause]

Manager: Adjusting people's behaviour is the first phase of the Legacy Project, and the 2012 Managers are the perfect facilitators of the training program. Take a good, long look at the Westfield shoppers, because many of them would be at the advanced stage of the program by now (not that they're aware of that, of course). Many of the families you can see now live in the Old Quarter, so you can understand why they'd want to come here.

[Sound of police sirens and rioting fades in as the Manager continues to speak]

Manager: It's a jungle beyond the perimeter fences. No one is safe. These people's lives are nothing more than fights for survival. You've seen the news; gangs of teenagers patrolling the streets, armed with knives designed for concealment, their faces hidden under black hoods; women prostituting themselves out to their neighbours, producing babies to increase their benefits from the government; old people terrorised by children from local estates, desperate to hurt them and steal their hard earned money to buy drugs. The stories are just too common to be untrue, do you NOT think?

[Siren and riot noise slowly fades to silence as the Manager continues to speak]

Manager: But in this shopping centre, they can become new people. This is a place where *fashion lives*; in Westfield, shoppers purchase clothes so they can slip into entirely new identities, and the best part of it is they don't even have to decide what these identities are. The Legacy Builders have been writing them tirelessly, and now the scripts are finished. The Legacy Builders understand that Regeneration is about more than giving people a better future. We have to make people ask for it. By giving them the option to choose what they wear, they are incentivised, perhaps even inspired, to visit us again and again and again. [WHISPERS] But I'll tell you a secret. What we don't tell them is that difference in Westfield is an illusion; we manage people's desires by making them believe this is *the* best way of living. The shoppers never ask for what we don't have, and what we have is all the shoppers' want.

[Muzak slowly fades in and the Manager speaks over it].

Manager: Eventually everyone will dress the same. This is a long process, and the Old Quarter residents are slow learners, but we are making excellent progress.

[Pause]

Manager: But let's get you kitted out! If you're going to come and join us you will need to blend in, so let's get you a new outfit. Can you see the champagne bar in front of you? Walk towards it and continue walking past it until you reach Primark.

Four Dials Entrance to Primark

[Muzak plays louder. After 10 seconds the muzak quietens and the Manager speaks over it]

Manager: Try and fit into the rhythm that everyone else is moving in. Don't stare at any one thing for too long. Don't point or make sudden movements (never, ever run!). Don't avoid eye contact, but don't deliberately meet someone else's eyes; any contact with people should occur naturally. And smile, always smile. Do you remember how *happy* you are to be here? I know, I know, it's difficult, especially as many of the shoppers are at an advanced stage of training, but do *try* to blend in.

[Pause]

Manager: When you reach Primark, go inside and browse.

[Muzak returns to normal volume and continues to play. The music quietens and the Manager speaks after 3 minutes have elapsed]

Manager: Now, I want you to choose some clothes very, very carefully. Try not to let your own tastes dictate what you choose. We're trying to forge a new identity for you, remember?

[Muzak returns to normal volume. The muzak quietens and The Manager speaks over it after 2 minutes have elapsed]

Manager: If you haven't chosen any clothes choose some now.

[Muzak returns to normal volume. After 30 seconds the muzak quietens and the Manager speaks over it]

Manager: Take your clothes to the changing room and try your new outfit on. Press pause now and press play when you are wearing the new outfit in the changing room.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

[The Manager's voice is quiet and insistent, as this is a very intimate moment between the Manager and the participant]

Manager: Look in the mirror.

[Pause]

Manager: You are looking at the future you, the regenerated you, which you could become if you live in the Village. Don't you look happier, healthier and wealthier? Surely you agree the regenerated you is just *better* than the present one? This outfit could mark the start of an exciting adventure.

[Pause]

Manager: Look into your eyes.

[Pause]

Manager: Ask yourself: are you the kind of person we are looking for? Can you say, hand on heart, that you can commit yourself to living in the Olympic dream? Imagine you are living in E20. See your future apartment with its plasma screen TV and three-piece suite which sits in a spacious living room. See yourself enjoying the benefits of luxury heating appliances, with a roof garden and electronic locks on every door. If

you can see this picture clearly then, truly, you should *choose* to come and live in the Village. Just think, you could spend all day and night shopping, just shopping. In the future the Legacy Builders are creating, it will be everyone's job to shop. (Wouldn't shopping be a better job than the one you have now? You *know* it would). Everyone likes to shop.

[Pause]

Manager: Why not wear your new outfit for the rest of the tour? Not that I'm trying to pressurise you, of course, it's your choice. But why not take that first, brave step? It sounds like a good idea to me. Anyway, we must move on. Change back into your everyday clothes and leave Primark. If you choose to, buy the clothes before you leave. Pause the recording now, and press play when you are standing outside Primark.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Primark to Great Eastern Market

Manager: Well, wasn't that fun? As I'm sure you've learnt by now, children are the keystone to the Legacy Project. One of my responsibilities as a 2012 Manager is to teach children how to live in the future. But like all lessons in Westfield, it's not one the children learn directly. Rather, it's a question of lifestyle. Go down the escalator to the lower ground floor in front of Primark and I'll tell you more.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Manager: When you reach the bottom of the escalator turn around and walk straight ahead. The Fast Food Court should be on your left hand side. Stand still when you reach the Great Eastern Market.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Manager: As you continue to walk remember to keep in rhythm with everyone else. I would hate to scare you, but as someone who may be responsible for contributing to the Olympic Legacy it is important you understand the challenges we face. Crime is a constant companion to the residents of the Old Quarter. The Legacy Builders feel their shopper's pain, but sympathy only gets you so far. We need to drag these people with us or we'll remain stuck in the past. The past these people come from can't be part of the regenerated future we are creating here. The present these people live in exists as ruins; it is a time in desperate need of regeneration. (Without the Olympic Legacy, what have these people got to look forward to, really? Be honest with yourself). Westfield gives them some hope, some glimpse of a sustainable future. Most of the people here won't see the fruits of regeneration, but at the very least parents can ease the transition for their children into a better time, a time which offers so much more than the one they live in now.

[Pause]

Manager: Take a closer look at the children you pass by. Try not to be too obvious. Remember, you're being watched at all times. We wouldn't want people to get the wrong idea now, would we? The children that come to Westfield are learning a vital lesson: when children go to school, their parents go to work, and when their parents go shopping, they eat ice cream and go to Playworld. When these children grow up they will come to see shopping as just another job, while shopping assistants are on hand to make sure their retail experiences are hassle free. Although they are adorable, children risk spoiling the Westfield experience for the adults who, to put in bluntly, have the money. To prevent ugly scenes of crying babies and shouting mothers and angry fathers, children here have been given new roles to play. When they enter Westfield they are transformed from innocent, wide-eyed babes into security risks; they are objects of vulnerability that require protection. When families visit Westfield they are given wristbands for mum and dad to write their phone numbers on. This is just in case their child gets lost, or is abducted by a terrorist, or is abused by a

paedophile in the toilets. The wrist bands are a gentle reminder to the children that in the best available future people will be expected to stand on their own two feet. We'll help them, yes, but we won't carry them. The 2012 Spirit is about self-determination, and if mummy and daddy are always there to protect their children then they won't learn to fend for themselves. But you can see how happy they are here. I truly believe they will enjoy living alone. I'm even a little jealous.

[Pause]

Manager: Perhaps you'd like something to eat? I recommend the bread – it's a true experience. If you haven't done so already, please take a seat inside the Great Eastern Market and wait for further instructions, but stay inside the Great Eastern Market. When you're ready, play track three and we'll move on.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

END OF PART TWO

Part 3: A Walk in the Park

Great Eastern Market to Olympic Stadium

Manager: Remember when I said choice is an illusion in Westfield? Well, there are other sorts of illusions being prepared underneath your feet right now. As you can see, many people from the Old Quarter embrace Westfield, and will eventually embrace everything about the Legacy Project. But there are some who still cling to their memories, their own interpretations of the future; these are the ones who resist our history. They will need to be forced to accept the Legacy Project whether they like it or not. So in the car parks, actors are rehearsing crimes to commit in the Old Quarter. Soon they'll make their stage debut and be dispersed over the perimeter fence to perform their criminality in the streets. When these crimes are committed the police will always be busy, but miracle of miracles Legacy Security will be on hand to save

the day. They won't arrest the actors, but pretend to bash their skulls in with crooked pieces of lead pipe or cut their eyes out with scraps of corrugated iron, spewing fake blood across their pristine suits to demonstrate their working class background. Good, common sense policing tactics that the communities will demand the police adopt. The police will refuse, so then communities will demand Legacy Security guards replace the police, and by that point they would have replaced them anyway. In the mean time, the Old Quarter residents will be evicted and their homes will be bulldozed to the ground. The residents will demand to be regenerated, and the Legacy Builders will be only too glad to help. One day, all of London will be under one roof, and every community will live in houses built on ceramic floors.

[Pause]

Manager: Well, I hope you're well rested, as I've got a real treat in store for you now. You are now going to visit one of our sacred monuments: the Olympic Stadium. Go up the escalator to the ground floor. When you reach the next floor you should see John Lewis in front of you.

[Silence for 30 seconds]

Manager: You should be looking at John Lewis. Turn left and walk outside.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Manager: Walk straight ahead and then take the first right. Walk towards the Olympic Stadium which should be in front of you. Cross the road and look at the Stadium.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Manager: Magnificent, isn't it? To think that the 2012 Olympic Games were staged in this very spot; it is a truly humbling thought. We must always remember that

without the Stadium none of us would be here. I do hope /you enjoyed your shopping trip, and remember that for all of your shopping needs Westfield will always be here, and I hope you choose to come back and shop with us again.

[At / static noise starts interrupting the Manager's voice as though the recording is being tuned to a different frequency. The Documenter's voice can be heard underneath the Managers'. The listener can make out some of his words. By the time the Manager says 'shop with us again' her voice has been completely tuned out and all the participant can hear is static. After a few second the Documenter's voice comes through saying 'I've got you. Thank God for that. It worked!' The static continues underneath his voice until 'Listen, we haven't got much time' and then fades out]

Documenter: Are you hearing this? Can you hear me? Hello! HELLO! I'm trying to tune into their frequency...shit! I thought I had it. Can you hear me now? Yes? YES! I've got you. Thank God for that. It worked! I've been trying to hack into this frequency for weeks. You're the first person I've managed to reach. Are you all right? These initiation tours can fuck with your mind. Listen, we haven't got much time. Legacy Security guards are everywhere and if they know I'm talking to you then I'm screwed. I'm not going to risk telling you my real name. You can call me the Documenter. I need to warn you about the Legacy Project. I've been documenting the regeneration process for years and now it's finally complete. I'm talking to you from Hackney Wick in the regenerated future. My archive is full but the documents are useless – no one wants to read them. That means you need to see Hackney Wick before its history disappears. You must warn people about what's going to happen. I want you to take a walk in my past now.

[Pause]

Documenter: But maybe you're not the one I need to speak to. Maybe you've liked what you've seen here. Do you like the future the Legacy Builders are creating? You

can stop listening now if you want to stay and buy some more crap. I don't want to waste any more time.

[Pause]

Documenter: Still listening? Good. I knew someone would want to listen.

Perimeter Fence to Olympic Park

Documenter: Start walking down the hill towards the traffic lights. The Stadium should be on your left hand side. Keep walking straight ahead past the traffic lights until I tell you to stop. Keep an eye out for Legacy Security; if they think you've gone off route they'll make you go back.

[Sounds of static and a radio tuning begin to play]

Documenter: It all started with that stadium. I hate looking at it, but living in the Wick means I can't get away from it. I see it everywhere, along with that helter skelter bollocks next to it. Do you remember when London won the bid? I was only a kid. I remember being taken on a school trip Park when it was being built. My teachers were always talking about the opportunities the Games would bring. We were told the Games represented everything good about being British. I didn't know then what I know now: how could I?

[Static and radio tuning play for 2 minutes]

Documenter: You should be able to see the RUN sculpture in the distance. Walk towards it. Stop when you reach the entrance to the Park which will be on your left hand side.

[Pause]

Documenter: The Games were the future. The government created the Legacy Builders to control local communities through a massive building programme and propaganda campaign. The popular appeal of the Olympics meant anything with a 2012 or Team GB logo would be accepted as something inspirational – what the Legacy Builders have called the ‘2012 Spirit’. In my time, that Spirit has infected everything it touches. You can’t move in London without being reminded of 2012. People are already starting to forget the city’s history. Nearly all of the pre-2012 buildings have been destroyed. The local libraries have been transformed into literacy suites, which means the Legacy Builders control the content of the digital documents. Their version of Hackney Wick’s past is warped; they make it sound like we lived in holes in the ground. All of the documents refer to the Wick’s industrial past, with stupid little sound-bite facts like ‘Britain’s first dry cleaning firm was set up there’, or ‘you could smell soap when it rained thirty years after Yardley’s Soap factory closed’. Most of the Wick you are going to see has been painted over and erased in my time.

[Static and radio tuning play for 2 minutes]

Documenter: You should be standing at the entrance to the Park by now.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Documenter: I’m giving you a choice for the next part of your journey: If you want to explore the Park keep playing this track and wait for further instructions. If you want to go straight to Hackney Wick play track 4.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Documenter: You’ve chosen to walk in the Park? Fair enough, but I should warn you, you’ll be taking photographs and Tweeting as you explore, which is a big risk, even in your time. You never know what list you might end up on. Get your camera ready. I’m not going to guide you on your walk, so feel free to go where you like. But be careful. If you get stopped by Legacy Security don’t mention me or Hackney Wick.

Don't let them take your camera either – in your time, Legacy Security don't have the powers they're going to get in the future, so you don't have to take their shit. Are you ready? Walk around the Park and take as many photos as you can. You never know; perhaps some of them will end up in my archive one day.

[The Olympic soundscape plays]

Documenter: Let's get out of here. You've probably stayed too long already. Walk back to the entrance you came in through. When you reach the entrance play track 4.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

END OF PART 3

Part 4: An Exhibited Community

Documenter: Face the RUN sculpture. Continue walking towards it until you reach the traffic lights. At the traffic lights turn left and walk down the road.

[Silence for 30 seconds]

Documenter: You should be walking down a hill now. A large black building should be on your right hand side.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Documenter: When you reach the end of the road you should be standing by some traffic lights. Turn right at the traffic lights.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Documenter: Can you see the white graffiti in the distance? Walk towards it. When you reach the bridge wait for further instructions.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Documenter: When you get to Hackney Wick I'm going to describe what the estate looks like in my time. Hopefully, you'll understand why it needs to be saved. As you're walking I *beg* you to take as many photos as you can – you don't realise how soon it will all be gone. The most important thing you can do with the photographs is to share them - don't let them stay locked in your camera. You're a documenter as well now and people need to know. Get your camera ready.

[Silence for 30 seconds]

Documenter: You should be standing by the bridge now.

[Pause]

Documenter: In my time a purple neon sign hangs over the bridge that says LIVE IN THE FUTURE. At night, the electric letters illuminate the bridge. When people walk in their bright purple glow everyone seems...fuzzy somehow. But Legacy Security can see everyone in high definition. Micro-cameras and movement sensors have been installed everywhere. But no one in the Wick knows where the guards are based. I once asked a 2012 Manager where Legacy Security's headquarters' is, but she just smiled and said she could answer any queries I might have. Not that it matters; all of the data Legacy Security compile is probably kept in a lot of different places, some of them might not even be in this country. Some of the cameras filming you now are already controlled by the Legacy Builders. If I ever manage to hack into their network maybe I'll find a video of you, listening to me.

[Pause]

Documenter: Walk up to the middle of the bridge and look out across the canal. Stay on the right hand side of the pavement.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Documenter: All of the graffiti you can see has been painted over in the future. The wall is a grey metallic colour and a row of five pictures hangs there. The pictures are protected by thick layers of Perspex glass. They are photographs of graffiti – graffiti is now officially illegal. And those houseboats you can see? All gone. Only marine security guards and rowing teams are allowed on the canal – it makes the community safer, apparently. Now walk across the bridge and walk to the bottom of the stairs. You will be standing outside the White Building.

[Pause]

Documenter: The White Building is still here in my time, but that's because it was built as part of the Legacy Project, back when we all thought we could manipulate the Legacy Builders into giving us some cash. They must have thought we were thick, and they were right. Let me show you an example of a Legacy logo. Walk past the tables and walk to your left around the outside of the White Building.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Documenter: As you can see the buildings moniker is 'London's Centre for Art, Technology and Sustainability'. I hate that fucking word – *sustainability*. The only thing we're told to value is what is sustainable. *All art* has to last forever now; anything temporary is considered worthless. But it's the Legacy Builders who decide what is worth sustaining, so any hint at true creativity is quickly branded *unsustainable*. I'm supposed to be part of a 'sustainable community', just like the E20 residents are. I was told I should be grateful to live in such a thriving culture; everyone in the Wick was told the same thing. But we hate it. Our lifestyles are intensely monitored. Three times now I've been visited by Retail Facilitators from

Westfield, pushing me harder and harder to shop there. They came in a Legacy Security van the last time. I got the message, I just wasn't shopping enough. They knew I'd seen what the guards do to non-conformists, the ones who are guilty of 'consumer resistance'. But I won't go there. You see, I know what Westfield's real purpose is, and I guess you do too. No cheap clothes are worth that. The 2012 Managers are intensifying the training programme in your time. Don't believe them when they say you 'have all the time in the world'; they're not going to wait until you ask for your neighbourhood to be regenerated; they won't give you any choice.

[Pause]

Documenter: Go and stand on the edge of the canal. Look out across the canal at the graffiti.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Documenter: Can you see the black circle with constellations and nebulae surrounding it? Stare straight at it.

[Pause]

Documenter: If you were in my time, you would be looking at a red flashing light. Legacy Security has installed micro-cameras into the brickwork all along the canal. Your image would be uploaded onto a database and remain there forever. Legacy Security keeps every scrap of information it can gather. Just before the developers moved in, any artist the Legacy Builders considered to be a problem were arrested. After the Games people in the Wick began to notice that a lot of artists were arrested because of – what did they call it? – oh yeah, 'suspicion of potential vandalism and incitement to cause unrest in the community'. I think the Legacy Builders paid some locals to spy on the artists and photograph them working. The photographs were probably sent to Legacy Security. At that point, the Legacy Builders just wanted to scare us, to drive us away; they made it clear local artists weren't part of the plan. You

should move now. Turn around and walk straight ahead. The canal should be behind you and The White Building should be on your left hand side.

White Building to White Post Lane

[Sad music fades in to extenuate the feeling of impending abandonment. The Documenter speaks over the music]

Documenter: Keep walking straight through Queens Yard. You should be walking through a car park.

[Music plays quietly for 5 seconds]

Documenter: Keep walking straight. You will pass some garages and a car mechanics.

[Music continues to play quietly. The Documenter speaks after 10 seconds]

Documenter: Can you see the Mint Cream painting on your right? Slowly walk up White Post Lane and look at the mural.

[Music fades to silence as the Documenter begins speaking]

Documenter: As you can see, the Wick's history – the history the Builders want you to read – has already been painted on the streets. The mural you can see was commissioned by the Legacy Builders. By painting a logo of Mint Creams and hanging plaques on the walls, the Legacy Builders are reminding people about what they call Hackney Wick's 'industrial heritage'. The past is being branded into a sellable asset, something which can be controlled and easily digested by passers-by. The artists who made the mural have said it was designed to make the area more 'attractive'. But for who? Who would find this 'attractive'? Do you think this is

‘attractive’? It’s for the tourists, plain and simple. The mural is still here in my time. It’s been preserved, of course. Like all art in the Wick, the mural is behind a glass screen. You need to share this. Press pause now and take some photos. Press play after you’ve finished/

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Documenter: Have you finished taking the photos? Hopefully someone will take notice. If you haven’t reached it already, walk to the end of White Post Lane and stand opposite the Lord Napier Pub.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Documenter: You should be facing a multi-coloured building. In my time, right where you’re standing, a huge apartment block has been built in the yard behind you. Remember the apartment blocks in E20? Well, everyone in the Wick lives in an apartment like that now – including me. The wall has been knocked down and replaced with an electrified fence, identical to the perimeter fence around the Olympic Stadium. And right in front of you, where the Lord Napier Pub is, is a café. It’s one of the many cafes and restaurants that are dotted around the Wick now. I can’t even remember what it’s called, they all look the same to me. Actually it probably doesn’t have a name. The front is made of glass, and there’s a sign on the window saying ‘A Place for Local Artists’. ‘Local’ has become a euphemism for safe and unchallenging. The local community have all bought into the 2012 Spirit. After the pub was destroyed everyone in the Wick starting worrying that the regeneration was going too far.

[Drum and bass music starts playing. Documenter continues to speak over the music]

Documenter: The Napier used to be a great venue. Local DJs would play there every Friday and Saturday night. It was also a hotspot for squatters. They never stayed for

very long, but it was a home for a lot of people. You're standing where the first and biggest protest was held. It was organised to try and stop the pub from being demolished, but it quickly became a protest against the Legacy Project.

[Music cross-fades to sounds of a protest. Documenter speaks over the noise]

Documenter: By then, some ex-E20 residents had come to live in the Wick, so we had started to learn what the Legacy Builder's real plan was. I've got a lot of photos from that day. Many of the protestors were families, young couples with children. People held banners saying 'We Need Affordable Homes' and 'People Live Here'. It began peacefully, but as soon as we starting marching towards the Olympic Park Legacy Security moved in fast. They met us here on White Post Lane; a long line of blank white vans blocked the road. When we tried to walk through the guards began pushing us to the ground and even throwing a few people in the canal. Before we had a chance to fight back the guards beat us with clubs and chains.

[Sound of people screaming and barking dogs fades in. Documenter speaks over the noise]

Documenter: A friend of mine was badly hurt in the fight. A guard hit her with a chain. The scar runs all the way down her back. Eventually, she managed to run away and call the police, but they only showed up after it was all over, so Legacy Security were able to make up any excuse they liked. More protests were held, but they were smaller and easier to control. And easier to ignore. We tried to get the media interested, but no-one wanted to know. By then, everyone wanted a piece of the Legacy Project – the Builders were chucking money at anyone who promised to regenerate so-called dilapidated areas like the Wick. So there were more protests; more people were beaten up and humiliated. By the end most people were forced to leave their homes. I've managed to cling on, but it's not been easy. I stayed because I need to warn people about what's coming. Just before the new residents moved in some houses were fire bombed. The Legacy Builders wanted to make sure we knew

who was in charge. There are rumours about criminals being trained in Westfield, but I don't know what to believe anymore. Maybe you know; were you told anything about that? Anyway, it doesn't matter now. Neither the police nor the government gave a toss; Hackney Wick was being regenerated, and to hell with anyone who tried to fight the Builders.

[Sound of violence quickly fades to silence as the Documenter continues to speak]

Documenter: I think it's time your journey ended now. You've seen enough, haven't you? There's more I could show you, but you need to find Hackney Wick's past for yourself. You can't always let a voice tell you what to see. But perhaps there is one more thing you should see before you go. Yes. Look at the Lord Napier Pub. Walk straight ahead towards the bridge. The pub should be on your right hand side.

[Silence for 10 seconds]

Documenter: Turn right into Hackney Wick station.

[Silence for 5 seconds]

Documenter: Walk up the ramp. When you reach the platform, walk to the top of the bridge and look to your left. You should be looking at the Olympic Stadium.

[The sad music plays again. After 1 minute, the music quietens and the Documenter starts speaking]

Documenter: You're looking at the future. It's coming at you and it's not stopping. Take one last photo.

[Music continues to play at a low volume. The Documenter speaks after 10 seconds]

Documenter: Hackney Wick's legacy hasn't been written yet, but there are people who live in the Village who are determined to write a history for this community and use it against them. It doesn't have to be this way. I don't want to live in the time I do now. I wish my archive didn't exist, that the thousands and thousands of photos and newspaper clippings and videos and scraps of paper would all fade away and vanish, but they won't. If you look in the streets below, and look really carefully, you might see me, taking photographs – just like you were. Can you see me? No, maybe not, but I'm there, somewhere. But now, in the future, I'm being forgotten; all of us who remember a different time are fading from memory. No one has ever visited my archive; it doesn't tell people the story they want to hear. They want to hear that the Olympic Legacy / is the only future worth having. But it's a lie, a con job, a piece of user-generated history. Perhaps that's the history that needs to be erased, but what would take its place? Well, the futures in your hands now. Use it wisely. And, most importantly, *remember*.

[At / fragments of the previous sounds slowly fade in: the muzak, the 'inspiring' music; the mall; snippets of the Legacy Builder's and Manager's voices; sport commentary; the national anthem. Soundscape plays for 1 minute after Documenter has finished speaking and gets progressively louder until the Legacy Builder's voice breaks through the static]

Legacy Builder: What on earth are you doing here? Come on; let's continue your tour of the future. You've barely scratched the surface.

THE END

Appendix Two

Aberystwyth Workshop Plan

Body-Site-Encounter

This workshop was developed during a two-day research and development process with the two members of Tracing the Pathway Cara Davies and Mads Floor-Andersen. The workshop took place at Aberystwyth University on 10 and 11 November 2012.

Day One

Part One: Site

1. Walk to the site and consider ‘how can a walk be taken with us?’
2. When you reach the site, look for evidence of its past. Record details and impressions in note books.
3. Write the site’s biography.
4. Choose an object from the site to take back to the studio.
5. As you walk back to the studio, consider ‘how we can take this place with us?’

Part Two: An Experiential Topography

Instructions

1. Standing in the space with eyes closed, hold the object you took from the site.
2. Imagine you are going on the first walk again and move about the space. Note as many details as possible, seeing the landscape in your mind’s eye whilst attempting to remember the sensation of traversing this path.
3. When you feel you have re-walked the path and reached the site, place the object on the floor to signify your arrival.

4. Open the eyes and survey the topography you have created. These objects now function as markers to denote the multitude of paths leading to a place which is now comprised of memory, transcribed from lived experience.

Part Three: Expressing Experience through Movement

1. In pairs, attempt to find an active verb to describe your experience of the site.
2. Now with the eyes closed bring the image of the walk into mind and express the word through a repeatable gesture. Continue to repeat.
3. Discuss the process of transforming a series of memories into express, repeatable movement. How does it change? What does it represent?
4. Make the gesture again until it evolves into a repeatable score of movement. Slowly, reduce the gesture until it becomes internalised. Continue until the gesture is completely internalised (you are still making the gesture when you are stood still – the gesture informs how you move through the space).
5. Place yourself on a path between two objects.
6. Now, with the internalised gesture, begin to move across its plane. Objects define your path. Allow others to cross your path. Meet them, inhabit these encounters. What type of encounters does this landscape produce? How is this landscape experienced?
7. In pairs. One person describes their gesture whilst the other attempts to trace that journey onto a map of Aberystwyth.
8. Pairs are given an envelope with a set of instructions. Follow the route marked on the map. When you reach the site, open the envelopes and follow the instructions to create a performance

INSTRUCTIONS:

Look where the path you created has taken you. How did you get here? Where could you go from here?

Look back at the path. What happened on this journey? Write everything down, attempt to describe everything to your partner. Be sure to include everything you don't remember

Who lives in this place? How do you move across it?

Find a way to tell the story of your walk and this place tomorrow. How can you affectively represent it in an object or gesture or sound? Perhaps you need to point to what isn't here

Day Two

1. Mark the location you found on a map. Walk with us to the location and show the performance.
2. Now make a new performance in response to the other group's work. Incorporate a gesture or word you found particularly striking.

DISCUSSION: How have the previous activities been described as a representative performance of the archive? What will the archive become, and how will it function in the future?

Appendix Three

Bristol Workshop ***Body-Site-Encounter***

This two-day workshop was held at the University of Bristol on the 2 and 3 February 2013.

Day One

Part One: Remembering a place of significance

1. Write about a significant place from your past. This can be in whatever form you feel is suitable (prose, a poem), although try and be selective with the details and be as specific as possible when describing particular events.
2. In pairs, read your text to a partner. After you have finished speaking, the listener writes a series of questions based on what they have just heard (what was unclear, what intrigued them, who a certain person was, where something took place etc.)
3. Roles are reversed.
4. Now ask your partner the questions you wrote and discuss the text.
5. By yourself, re-write the text but this time focus on specific aspects of that place. Try and capture the experience of that time and place.

DISCUSSION: What happens to us when we retrieve the past from our memories? How do we make them *remain* in the present? How is our presence altered?

Part Two: The Invisible Archive

1. Find a place in the room and sit on a chair.
2. Imagine you are sitting in a transparent dome. This is your place to remember. The surface of the dome is soft so the outside world can enter into it.

3. Now with the eyes closed go back to those places in your memories. Note the changes in your body and your sense of the space; how is your presence altered when you remember?
4. Open your eyes. Sense the atmosphere of the dome; what is its feeling? How is it playing on you? Begin to move around the space but do not leave the confines of the dome.
5. Walk through the dome and come into the shared presence of the group. Note what happens to your body during the transition.
6. We will be storing fragments of the two days inside the dome so they can be stored and retrieved.

Part Three: Memory as Atmosphere

1. Sitting in the Invisible Archive, imagine the memory of the place is coursing through your body
2. When your body becomes full of the memory, imagine it exudes out into the archive until the atmosphere of the archive is altered.

Part Four: Excavation of Site

1. Stand in a place where you feel most *present*.
2. Excavate the site by attending to its effect on your body. Note how this place is composed and how your presence alters it. What does it demand you do?
3. Record impressions of this place, considering what might have happened here, and what remains of the past can you detect.
4. Choose an object from the site and take it back to the studio.

Part Five: If Stones Could Speak

1. Standing in the Invisible Archive, place your object in front of you and study it closely.
2. Write a history for this remain in the first person on the studio floor.
3. Now, standing around the room find a gesture to express a particular word.

4. Find the gesture which is most satisfying for you...the one which fully articulates the object's presence and produces the strongest presence effect.
5. Repeat until it has become a complete and repeatable score.
6. Occasionally stop moving. *Listen* to the body you have created...what presence effect does it have? How is it affecting your surroundings?
7. Standing still return to your daily body. Slowly alternate between the two, sensing the shift in your body and perception of the space.

DISCUSSION: Reviewing today's work and preparation for the next day.

Consider this quote from Brian Dillon:

"The ruined building is a fragment with a future; it will live on after us despite the fact that it reminds us too of a lost wholeness or perfection" (2011, p.11)

In small groups walk through Bristol until you find a ruinous building or site to work with the next day. Create a performance which expresses a quality of the site's past based on today's exercises.

Day Two

Each group performs in the sites they chose the previous day. Once each group has shown their responses they then incorporate a gesture, sound or moment from another groups and re-work their original piece.

Walk back to the studio and share responses

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