How Performance Thinks

Edited by

Helen Julia Minors

An international conference co-organized by
the PSi Performance & Philosophy working group and
Kingston University's practice.research.unit

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Thinking through salt, thinking through bark, thinking through cables - an exploration of the 'stuff' of performance in relation to a trilogy of Shah's own works (*Mr Quiver*, *Dinner with America* and *Glorious*)

All presenters have been invited to contribute to these conference proceedings. A list of the presenters and their abstracts are provided within these proceedings. The Performance and Philosophy Network and the Practice Research Unit are not legally responsible for any violation of copyright; authors are solely responsible. Authors retain their copyright.

The varied natures of the papers, performances, interviews and so on, are inevitably represented in the form of these essays. Readers will find a varied style to demonstrate the content of the papers presented.

Conference Proceedings edited and compiled by Dr. Helen Julia Minors.

PSi Performance and Philosophy Working Group

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Introduction

Laura Cull, John Mullarkey and Helen Julia Minors
Surrey University and Kingston University

This conference, held on 13th and 14th April 2012 at the London Studio Centre, brought together practitioners and scholars concerned with the question of how performance thinks from a wide range of overlapping perspectives and contexts including practice-as-research, professional practice and the emerging sub-field of 'Performance Philosophy'. The conference was co-hosted by the PSi Performance and Philosophy working group, founded and then chaired by Laura Cull, and the Practice Research Unit, of Kingston University, led by John Mullarkey and Helen Julia Minors. The union of these organisations ensured that the delegation covered theatre studies, drama, dance, music, film, documentary practice, fine art, design, performance arts, creative arts technologies and experimental arts.

Both days and evening performance were sold out, with a long waiting list. Over a 100 scholars and practitioners came together over two days to explore the following questions:

- Can performance be understood as a kind of thinking in its own right?

- What value might such an understanding have for performance and philosophical research, for academia and for practices operating outside the academy?

The idea of practice-as-research has achieved a growing institutional acceptance in international Higher Education institutions over the last decade, with funding councils, government bodies and academic institutions increasingly recognising the capacity of arts practices, as well as text-based research, to produce new knowledge. Likewise, in his recent book, *Philosophers and Thespians*, Freddie Rokem argues that the question of how, or in what ways, performance and theatre "think", constitutes one of 'the most urgent issues on the agenda of today's institutions of higher education' (Rokem, 2010: 5). And yet, the tendency to treat performance as the mere application or exemplification of pre-existing ideas (for instance, from philosophy) remains a feature of scholarship in both Performance and Philosophy. In contrast, this conference questioned:

- Can we extend or democratize, perhaps, our conception of what counts as 'thought' without rendering the term meaningless?

- To what extent can performance be understood as a way of thinking rather than as the illustration, application or demonstration of existing ideas – including philosophical ideas?

Presenters addressed topics and questions included the following, and a large number are produced as essays in what follows:

- Performance practice-as-research, performance as a contribution to knowledge

- Performance practice as a kind of thinking, including dance, theatre, performance art, Live Art, music, applied theatre, performance in everyday life etc.

- Practitioner knowledge and its dissemination: knowing-how and knowing-that

- Thinking as the process of making performance and/or performance as thinking through/with the audience

- Can performance be understood as a kind of thinking? If so, what are the benefits and risks of doing so, for performance and/or for philosophy?

- How does performance present ideas, create concepts or produce knowledge in itself?

- Do current definitions of 'practice-as-research' effectively capture how performance thinks?

- What do we mean by thought or thinking? How does including performance within the category of thinking affect other disciplines such as philosophy?

- Is thinking something that only humans can do? Or can we speak of non-human thinking?

- What, if anything, is distinct about how performance thinks? What are the forms of thought that are native or indigenous to performance (in contrast, perhaps, to those that belong to other disciplines)?

- How, specifically, do different kinds of performance think? Through the body? Through participatory experiences? Through duration and liveness? Through improvisation and devising?

- Is there a difference between the ways in which thinking occurs in and as solo and collaborative forms of performance?

http://psi-ppwg.wikidot.com/london-2012

The Society of Dance Research offered a highly complementary review of this event in its *Newsletter No. 52* (July 2012). João Florêncio noted that the 'panels [had] such exceptional quality and, most of all, cohesion.' The 'several' keynote addresses were seen as 'punctuations' to the cohesive nature of the event. In particular:

> you will know how often one sits on a panel where the papers presented find it extremely hard to resonate with one another and where, during Q&A, most questions seem to be directed at individuals speakers rather than at the similarities (and, consequently, the differences) amongst them. In How Performance Thinks nothing of that kind happened... this was vehemently praised by the audience during the closing roundtable. (p. 4)

The essays presented here, collated and edited by Helen Julia Minors, represent the content of the speaker's presentations. The original conference pack is available from http://psi-ppwg.wikidot.com/london-2012

Directing & Dialectics: Re-thinking *Regietheater*

Peter M Boenisch
University of Surrey

If one was to look for an example in the field of theatre arts of what Jacques Rancière in his fashionable politico-aesthetic terminology calls *dissensus*, one could hardly find a field of more deeply entrenched *mésentente* than what is often (and even more often with derogatory undertones) called 'directors' theatre':[1] the production of mostly canonical playtexts and classics of the dramatic repertoire, staged by contemporary directors, usually in the subsidised state and city theatres of Continental Europe and their resident ensemble companies. Even some 150 years after theatre directing emerged in the wake of the Meininger, Wagner, Antoine and Craig, it is still perceived, not only in the Anglophone world, as something outright outlandish if not outrageous. In the memorable words of a New York theatre critic (writing on Flemish director Jan Lauwers' celebrated production *Isabella's Room*), it marks the fatal 'sins of Eurotrash theater', which the critic helpfully goes on to classify as 'wilful obscurity, over-the-top stagecraft, auteur-ish egocentrism' (McCarter, 2004: 19). Such short of pathological rejection is then counterbalanced by others who idolise the very same directors as *Wunderkinder* and prophets of a theatre that is different, fresh, or simply exotic. Not the least since moving from Germany to the UK a decade ago, I have been particularly fascinated by this remarkable gap in the perception and experience of Continental theatre work in the Anglo-American world – even more so since it quite strikingly mirrors a similar rift between Anglo-American pragmatic 'realist' thinking and Continental philosophy. An interesting parallel opens up here between what François Cusset has investigated as the phenomenon of 'French Theory' (Cusset, 2008) and what is branded as especially German *Regietheater* (Carlson, 2009). My following 'thinking in progress' therefore moves in that field that interlinks the vogue and the hatred of, say, Jacques Rancière and Thomas Ostermeier alike.

Such an exploration might be quite timely. In the heydays of performance art and the decades of devising, the production of playtexts was widely perceived as the *very* big Other from which experimental, innovative practices sought to distance themselves, with the director as personified figure of authority and disciple that was rejected (Oddey, 1994). More recently, however, both theatre theory and performance practice have begun to freshly embrace and explore the work with texts and textual legacies, which renewed interest in theatre directing as a core theatral practice (Delgado and Rebellato, 2010; Lavender and Harvie, 2010). Yet, while we find many 'How To'-manuals flooding the bookshelves, we still lack a more thorough reflection of, to paraphrase the title of this conference, 'how directing thinks' – despite Patrice Pavis' tireless attempts to articulate a theory of *mise en scène* (Pavis, 2007 and 2010). Of course, much directorial work has lent itself perfectly to considerations of postmodern deconstruction, gender critique, postcolonial re-readings of the Western canon, and other academic pursuits. I shall here attempt, however, a more structural approach to outlining an understanding directing.

To start with, let me propose the hypothesis that terms such as directing, producing, *mise en scène* and *Regie* are not simply mere 'translations' in different languages for one and the same general theatrical principle of 'directing' *as such.* Instead, the varying terms precisely reflect quite specific approaches, pointing us to variant underlying 'partitions of the sensible', to phrase it in Rancièrian terminology. This link

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[1] Rancière introduces his aesthetico-political thinking most lucidly in Rancière 2009.

between the artistic organisation of a wealth of disparate semiotic materials and differing modes of thinking is crucial. As Alain Badiou affirms, 'the assemblage of components directly produces ideas' (Badiou, 2005: 72). Badiou describes the theatre director as 'thinker of representation' who, in the name of theatre *as an event of thought,* 'carries out a very complex investigation into the relationships between text, acting, space and public.' (Badiou, 2007: 40). Furthermore, he asserts that the emergence of the new art of theatral *mise en scène* marks the very moment which 'transformed the thinking of representation into an art in its own right.' (ibid.). Yet, here we should bear in mind that Badiou's very idea of a 'complex investigation' precisely reflects a certain, a most specific *dispositif* that creates the categorical gap to directing in the pragmatic, 'realist' (Anglophone) sense of 'producing' a play. Of course, someone has always in a sense 'directed' and 'produced' a theatre performance – the question is: why had the emergence of *Regie* and *mise en scène* become a necessity in the early nineteenth century? The emergence of a new way of 'thinking representation' is exactly the background that underpins Continental directing or *Regie*, and links it to the simultaneously emerging Continental philosophy from Kant and German idealism onwards. To begin understanding 'how directing thinks', I therefore propose to turn back to this moment in the early nineteenth century that saw the paradigm shift which Rancière described as the transition from the representational to the aesthetic regime of art.

In particular, I turn here to Friedrich Schiller, who is – for different reasons – also one of Rancière's key heralds of the aesthetic regime of art. Schiller's legacy is ambiguous, to say the least. On the one hand, he remains for the German *Bildungsbürger*-establishment an icon of its self-definition, not the least in the field of theatre (Sharpe, 1995). Schiller's 1784 lecture on 'Theatre Considered as A Moral Institution' serves to the present day as principal manifesto of the institutionalised German *Stadt- and Staatstheater* system, which is taught on every introductory module in theatre studies.[2] *This* Schiller certainly embodies all the bourgeois conservative values for which he has undergone some harsh Eagletonian ideological grilling (Eagleton, 1990). Yet, Schiller also developed what Herbert Marcuse once described as 'one of the most advanced positions of thought' in its time (Marcuse, 1987: 188). Most interestingly this thought emerged from thinking through theatre and aesthetic theory, precisely a 'thinking of representation'.

I want to explore here some crucial contours referring to a particularly fascinating moment in Schiller's late work. Two years before his death, he staged an at first sight rather irritating attempt to reintroduce the Greek chorus into a contemporary tragedy, *The Bride of Messina* of 1803. The common interpretation explains this play as a nostalgic devotion to some lost ideal of Greek culture towards the end of Schiller's career, as his withdrawal into an aesthetic realm after the disillusioning turn into violent terror of the French Revolution, whose spirit had underpinned so much of his early dramatic works of the 1780s. Such a perspective, however, obscures the mature radicalism of this experiment. While the actual play may have been a failure on stage, we can also look at the *Bride of Messina* as a complex piece of 'practice as research',

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[2] 'Schaubühne' is the literal German translation of the Greek theatron, 'the place to watch', 'thea' being the 'gaze' or 'Schau'. Schiller originally delivered his notorious speech on June 26, 1784 to the Kurpfälzische Deutsche Gesellschaft at Mannheim, where he had just become an elected member. It first appeared in print the following year. At the time, it was still entitled 'What can a fine permanent theatre truly achieve?' Only when Schiller edited the manuscript for his Collected Works in 1802, he rewrote parts of it and gave it the new title, 'Theatre Considered as a Moral Institution'. An English translation is readily available at http://www.schillerinstitute.org/transl/schil_theatremoral.html (access 15 May 2012).

as we would say today. Schiller even provided us with an articulate essay in the preface that accompanied the published playtext.[3] Here it becomes clear that Schiller's motivation was far from recreating a lost theatrical past, but to point to the future through the past. He stresses that the function of the chorus only fully came into its own for the playwright of his own time. He describes this function, with a term that would later also occupy a key place in Walter Benjamin's aesthetic, as being a 'foreign body', a '*fremdartiger Körper*'. On the one hand, this strangeness of the chorus enhances the power and effect of (in Schiller's terms) 'exalted' theatrical representation. On the other hand, the chorus participates in the drama as embodied representation of thinking to which it awards sensory force, quite literally, giving 'gravity' to an idea, a material form in performance that gives the idea its 'exhaustive presence' as Schiller terms it (Schiller, 1970: 111). The central function of the Chorus is thus a mediation that enhances *both* sensual pleasure *and* intelligent reflection: 'Just as the chorus brings *life* to the language, so it brings *repose* to the action' (Schiller, 1970: 112; orig. emphasis). This idea of balancing out, of an equilibrium, is at the heart of Schiller's key aesthetic notion of 'play'. 'Play', for him, does not refer to ludic qualities of performance, not to harmless 'childish' play nor to ironic romantic playfulness that would relieve us momentarily from realities of work or from the political state of the ('superior') 'adult' worlds – this would be no more than an idea of *theatre as play* that reduces performance to the 'court jester' of our contemporary societies. Schiller's concept of play, however, evokes the sense of the German term '*Spiel haben*': to have the tolerance, flexibility, or 'play' in a technical sense, in order not to get stuck.

Theatre as play is hence above all an act of mediation that avoids what Schiller perceives as harmful excesses of either 'cold intellect' or equally of 'unreflected' sensuality. It is a mediating and regulating function which in many ways points beyond Kant, to whom Schiller declared all his allegiance, towards a dialectic thinking later systematised by Hegel with explicit nods to Schiller. Play is precisely something that intervenes in the binaries, such as those between text and performance, or between words and spectacle. It is what calibrates form and matter, subject and object, abstraction and fantasy, reflection and representation, the sensory and the sensual. It offers what Kojin Karatani has termed a 'transcritital position', from which we can challenge binary notions such as 'authorship' or 'presence' (Karatani, 2003). It is for this reason that play becomes a condition of Schiller's most central value: freedom, or – in the French coinage of his time, *liberty*. This *liberty of play* affords, above all, aesthetic autonomy – a key aspect of the aesthetic regime at large, which has often been reduced to a romantic withdrawal from reality. In his Chorus essay, Schiller resolutely proclaims his statement of intent for introducing the chorus as 'to declare openly and honestly war against naturalism in art, it should be for us a living wall, which tragedy builds around itself to seal itself off in purity from the real world, to preserve its ideal ground, its poetic liberty.' (Schiller, 1970: 108)

This autonomy is not a retreat, but a safeguard and security measure. It is, above all, a structural, a relational position. Only on this formal basis is art able to gesture towards 'true liberty' that goes beyond 'a fleeting dream of liberty', as Schiller terms it, with which even Schiller's own plays may inspire us when watching *Don Carlos* or

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[3] I will provide my own translations throughout for all of Schiller's essays referred to in this chapter, quoting for easy reference to standard editions of the German original. In English, the 'Chorus'-preface is readily available online from the Schiller Institute http://www.schillerinstitute.org/fid_91-96/931_chorus_trag.html (accessed 15 May 2012). Together with Schiller's other central writings on theatre, it is included in Schiller 1970, to which I refer as source for my quotations.

Wilhelm Tell. Yet Schiller's freedom is precisely not the *representation* of issues of freedom in a playtext: Just as the mere *appearance* of truth does not yet constitute truth, the mere *representation of liberty* on stage is not in itself an act of liberation. We can here usefully link with Rancière's prominent meditations on the 'emancipated spectator': actual freedom can only ever be achieved on the basis of a formal, structural liberation – and this is precisely what 'play' achieves. We now see what Schiller is after when he asserts that any 'true art' will 'not merely aim at a momentary play; its serious intention is not to excite us with, but to genuinely *make* us free' (Ibid.: 106; orig. emphasis). It 'emancipates' not by waxing radical, but by putting us in an actual position of liberty, a liberty which Schiller understands as 'the liberty of mind in the lively play of all of its powers'. (Ibid.: 105)

This is thus not freedom as directorial 'anything goes'. Instead, play suspends the Master authority of 'The Play' as well as that of the Author, and of the director. This is where the assumption of a competition for superior authority and *auteur*-ship between playwright and director that still to a large extent dominates theatre-academic thinking, needs to be rejected. The minute slippage in terminology from German *Regietheater*, a 'theatre of directing' to "directors' theatre" which emphases the individual artist, discloses an optic that seeks to explain if not to integrate the practice of *Regie* as 'thinking of representation' in terms of the very representational *dispositif* with which it set out to break. It solidifies the position of an individual director-*auteur* who fits the concepts of modern Western individuality, subjective agency, and a history of (theatre) art written in terms of the works produced by creative makers who – between producer delivering his goods and inventive geniuses – command and authorise the direction.

In this model, the playwright's authorised text becomes the 'Text with capital T', the Master Signifier that commands and controls the direction of a theatre production should take, the way it should run. The director can in this perspective only be judged in terms of his (dis-) obedience to that legitimating authority – there is no room for the Badiouian 'thinking'. Directing as *Regie*, however, introduces a minimal gap that would forever interrupt the hermeneutic *exegesis* of the text *as one* with the drama that characterised the representational regime: the *mise en scène* becomes a contingent complement that mediates and sublates the Text. It is a dialectical operation which *produces* the Text as Master Signifier but at the very same time introduces this very shift of perspective, this minimal gap or distancing which Slavoj Žižek has termed 'the parallax view' (Žižek, 2006), describing this dialectical approach as 'the basic attitude of philosophy' (Žižek, 1993: 2). The director is thus not only the philosopher as 'thinker of representation', but with Žižek's Lacanian stance also the analyst who insists on the contingency of the Text.

The Chorus is Schiller's 'practice as research' experiment to create a theatral tool to achieve this aim: as Schiller explicitly states, as a foreign body, it irritates, halts, and interrupts the effortless progress of the play. It is in a term closer to Schiller's own time what Hölderlin outlined as poetic *caesura:* an intervention, a rupture, an interval, a border that opens up in the seamless imaginary world of the play – and as such *play* is indeed ultimately a philosophical gesture. It affords the space for a different 'partition of the sensible', for precisely a thinking through of representation à la Badiou. Schiller's chorus thus embodied *play* – it was an attempt to give a body *on stage* to the very function that would soon be 'directed' *off stage* by *Regie*: the indispensible mediation between the ideal and the sensual, between action and reflection as guarantor for the spectator's emancipated liberty, which is not about 'understanding' and thereby commanding 'The Play', not about consuming and thereby turning the

playtext into a commodity, into the Master Signifier of 'The Text', and hence precisely not about appropriation, ownership, and authority. Far from merely rethinking the *production* of performance (and one should pause here to reflect on the direct connection to the simultaneously solidifying contexts of industrial, capitalist modes of production in the nineteenth century), *Regie* is not at all exhaustively grasped as merely a new 'craft' of staging a text, hence as solely *functional* relation. Far from articulating the 'practical' representation of a playtext, *Regie* is a in the Hegelian sense 'speculative' practice. At the very moment when the gap between text and performance, just as much as the gap between the material world and our rational understanding, became a prime concern, *mise en scène* entered the scene as a resolutely autonomous, third factor that sets in motion the dialectical 'play' – a relational process which sees the continuous metamorphosis of the same play-text in its persistent mediation and sublation, above all, in its persistent motion that cannot afford static standstill: set in motion by the *mise en scène*, we are offered non-standardised, non-unified, non-homogenised gazes of play that offer us, precisely, a (parallax) perspective. Schillerian play is the name for this ceaseless transposition that never arrests a structure in fixed hierarchies or stable positions. That is what the theatral practices of *Regie* and *mise en scène*, as historically specific manifestations of 'theatre directing', share with the (quintessentially Hegelian) aesthetics of Continental idealism.

The legacy of *Regie* as the organisation of texts, spaces, bodies, voices and sounds, costumes, light, and not the least of the spectating public in order to think through representation strikes me as particularly relevant in the context of our own mediatised digital global economy of the 21st century. Let me conclude by just pointing briefly to the three most crucial prompts which directing and *Regietheater* as a 'thinking theatre' may offer:

> There is, to start with, the insistence on play as a resolutely non-pragmatic, non-functional autonomous act, where 'playing' or 'thinking' is precisely *not* 'doing' in the sense of performative instantiation – we should here bear in mind the uncanny cross-over between ideologies of 'performance' in theatre and in economic globalisation, which Jon McKenzie had reminded us about (McKenzie, 2001).

> Equally important is, secondly, a reflection on our own role as theorists. Directors as well as academics and philosophers are only too prone to assume the position of the 'Masters' who possess the knowledge. We may think of Lacan's analysis of the inaugural moment of philosophy – which is precisely the appropriation of Knowledge by the Master, its universalisation and detachment as 'disinterested knowledge' from the Slave's utilitarian practical application (Lacan, 1988: 21) Rancière insists, of course, in the face of this intellectual alienation on 'ignorance' as the basis of emancipation.

> Lastly, directing offers us a model for negotiating our relation with the past, with history and legacies, as embodied in the canon of Western playwriting. Have we not been inclined to discard the past, precisely by assuming a superior, knowing standpoint of 'critical deconstruction'? Not the least Derrida himself had in the very term of de-construction offered a far more nuanced outline for what me might also term an, in the Schillerian sense, 'playful' reappropriation and reflection of our enlightened tradition. Similarly, Žižek's re-thinking of Hegel and the legacy of German idealism, Badiou's appropriation of the Pauline

legacy, and not the least Schiller's own revocation of the Greek chorus follow precisely the structural model of re-thinking the dramatic legacy in contemporary *Regie* and its controversial *mises en scène.*

Perhaps, it has become a central challenge for us today not to leave the conservation of our legacies to the 'Conservatives with the Capital C'. One of the lessons to be learned not only from Schiller, especially from his work towards the end of his life, when after a thirteen year hiatus that followed 1789 he returned to playwriting, is that rejecting the symbolic and imaginary orders also deprives us from the only position of agency to engage with the realities of our lives, and prevents us from glimpsing 'real' freedom in play which Schiller made out as the core of being humane.

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Biography

Peter M. Boenisch, originally from Munich/Germany, is Director of the European Theatre Research Network (ETRN) at the University of Kent. His primary research interest is in the aesthetics and politicity of theatre performance. His research specialisms are in theatre directing and dramaturgy, dance, and theatre and intermediality. Recent publications discussed the works of Thomas Ostermeier, Frank Castorf, Jan Fabre, Michael Thalheimer, Guy Cassiers, Rimini Protokoll, and William Forsythe. He co-edited, with Lourdes Orozco, a special issue of *Contemporary Theatre Review* "Border Crossings: Contemporary Flemish Theatre", and currently is writing his monograph *Regie: Directing Scenes & Senses in European Theatre* (Manchester University Press)*.*

How Wrestling Thinks: professional wrestling and embodied politics

Broderick Chow
Brunel University London
Tom Wells
Independent artist and researcher

This short paper attempts to document a presentation in which we rehearsed both verbally and physically, some theoretical reflections towards an embodied politics, considered through an unlikely source, the art and craft of professional wrestling. As the reader of this may gather from the images that accompany this text, our original presentation attempted to disseminate an embodied or tacit knowledge through a demonstration of practice. Live, in the studio, among what Fischer-Lichte (2008) calls 'bodily co-presence' of performer and audience, this knowledge is communicated not only through the synthesis of verbal and visual signifiers, but through the conjunction of such signifiers with a series of affects — I remember sounds ('bumps'), heat, sweat. This raises a problem common to most practice-as-research projects: if the 'thinking' immanent to practice exists only in the moment of practice, how can it be inscribed, set-down, transformed into 'knowledge'? In this paper we acknowledge but do not solve (how could we?) this fundamental difficulty: our contribution to these conference proceedings reflects the dual methodological strands of the research project. On the one hand, the project is an ethnographic exploration of professional wrestling training and culture, in which Broderick as researcher trains, watches, and writes in the manner of what the sociologist Loïc Wacquant, in his auto-ethnography of boxing, calls 'observant participation', contra participant observation (Wacquant, 2007). On the other hand, the project is an artistic exploration through practice, as Tom and Broderick work through wrestling, contact improvisation and other forms of contemporary dance in the studio, building a unique dialogue between bodies that trades in a dialectic of conflict and cooperation, antagonism and intimacy, friction and flow. In this vein, we offer here some theoretical reflections along with an excursus on practice, in the hopes that the tacit, embodied knowledge we describe might be captured in another form.

On 'work'...

Professional wrestling (or 'pro-wrestling', and hereafter, simply 'wrestling') is often presented as the worst example of what Adorno and Horkheimer call 'the culture industry', the distribution of spectacle in order to placate and pacify the masses. The journalist Chris Hedges' description is representative of such thinking: '[the] ritualised battles give those packed in the arenas a temporary, heady release from mundane lives. [...] For most, it is only in the illusion of the ring that they are able to rise above their small stations in life and engage in a heroic battle to fight back' (Hedges, 2009). Wrestling is often criticised for its characters and personae (gimmicks) as well as its story-lines, which have been read as jingoistic, racist, sexist and/or homophobic. But concomitant with this vulgar exterior is an opportunity through physical and embodied practice for the labouring bodies of wrestlers to model, practice, and live the political principle of solidarity. Crucial to this reading is the notion of 'work', which is at the heart of professional wrestling as a practice. In the early 20th century, American promoters discovered that by determining the outcome of a match in advance they were able to present increasingly spectacular moves and draw in greater crowds, as audiences were less interested in gambling on the outcome of matches than in other sports. These predetermined matches were known as 'worked

fights.' Today work is a complex term that signifies a number of conventions: the repeated attack on a certain body part ('work the arm'); the ability to string together an improvised series of moves (matches are not choreographed, contrary to popular opinion, with the exception of the finish, though certain 'spots' are worked out in advance); the ability to 'sell' moves as real; and the ability to work with and for one's opponent. The opposite of work is shoot, the ever-present potential for real violence, injury and pain. Therefore, working, in wrestling can be read as a duty of care to the other worker, the practice of protecting one's partner/opponent from violence. The form therefore presents a fundamental contradiction, in that it can be read by its audience as manifestly antagonistic and violent, and felt by its performers as cooperative and empathetic.

On 'action' and 'thinking'...

In keeping with the theme of the conference, we argue that the practice of work is a form of 'embodied political thinking.' However, such a concept raises a number of issues. Not least of these, for scholars interested in articulating the relationship between artistic practice, theory, and a practice of concrete social change, is the distinction raised by Hannah Arendt (1958, 1999) between the viva activa and the viva contemplativa, between action, which is to say, politics itself, and thinking. Thinking can be about politics, but, for Arendt at least, it was not yet politics-in-itself. And yet the viva contemplativa is necessary lest we hasten into action that will ultimately make things worse; this is the fear of mis-recognition with which the relation of theory and practice has long been fraught. To embody thought, then, is to do it, to practice it, bringing the viva contemplativa into the realm of the viva activa. Therefore, we submit that the practice of chain wrestling is a practice of the principle of solidarity, and thinks, in that it presents a new and uncertain situation to be negotiated between its practicing bodies with each performance — a condition it shares with Contact Improvisation (which we develop in further detail below).

The individual body in relation to the political sphere raises other issues. Foremost is the relation between the body as a site of individual agency and the structuring metaphor of the social body. The body is that which does upon the world, and that through which power operates, as in Michel Foucault's analysis the body as the 'object and target' of power. But extended agency, in political terms, often unifies many bodies under the signifier of a single 'body': consider the term 'public sector bodies.' The body is physically inserted into economies of work, production and consumption, but is also an important social metaphor and synecdoche. In our practice, we are aware of the body, specifically our male bodies, as real, individual, carnal — the body as an instrument that works and labours, and is circulated as variable capital. But we are also conscious of working bodies as metaphorical and synecdochal, reflecting and refracting larger narratives of the public body. Fintan Walsh argues that the male body in performance may help to define the limits of hegemonic norms, and thus the 'boundaries of the body politic' (Walsh, 2011). While Walsh is interested in instances of performance that pierce and penetrate the male body, exposing its 'resilience and resistance [...] through endurance,' (Ibid.) wrestling offers the possibility for practicing radical politics within hegemonic norms, while all the same, challenging them.

Excursus on/through practice: on wrestling and 'conflict improvisation'

BRODERICK:

Wrestling emphasises kinaesthetic or proprioceptive awareness. A worker must drill and train in order to embody a number of different performance traits simultaneously. One must learn 'ring awareness', what workers call 'psychology' (that is, the logic of the match), 'storytelling', moves, and safety, both for oneself, and one's opponent. This impressive range of performance skills is made more impressive by the improvisatory nature of the practice. This is most evident in the technique of 'chain wrestling', which refers to the process of stringing together a series of moves with a partner.

Image 1: Conflict Improvisation. Chow and Wells.

TOM:
After my introduction to Contact Improvisation nearly eight years ago I have worked as both a solo/ensemble movement artist and movement director.

Contact Improvisation (CI) and Contact Choreography feature heavily in both the style and approach to my creative work. Until Broderick introduced me to the form, wrestling was unfamiliar however similarities and correlations to Contact Improvisation became apparent. In our most recent piece Work Songs, I have worked to integrate the two disciplines to enrich and form a coherent piece of physical performance. As forms of physical practice that are based in working with partners both contact improvisation and chain wrestling involve a physical dialogue that then speaks to the spectator. Both forms rely heavily on learning through doing; in all aspects the performers must learn to understand not just the technique and discipline but also the signals spoken by the partner's body.

Contact Improvisation as a dance form originated in America in the early 1970s and is accredited mainly to the choreographer Steve Paxton. Contact Improvisation UK describes it as an 'art-sport', which is 'about sharing weight, rolling, suspending, falling, passive and active, energy and awareness' (http://www.contactimprovisation.

co.uk/, accessed 11 July 2012). Since its earliest days, fighting forms have been related to CI. Paxton himself notes that what he had previously learnt in the Japanese martial art of Aikido had developed the nature of Contact Improvisation on an 'unconscious level' (Paxton, cited in Burt, 1995). The performance Magnesium (1972), was described 'like drunken wrestling at times' (Novack, 1990). But as the form developed from '[...] a rough and ready, all-male wrestling dancing' (Burt, 1995) into an internationally practiced discipline and a major feature of post modern dance, certain repeated features, or structures developed which might be said to foster free play.

Image 2:   Contact

Improvisation. Chow and Wells.

Similarly, as Laurence de Garis writes, chain wrestling provides 'endless opportunities for creativity within certain structures' (De Garis, 2005: 192-212). The wrestlers dance a duet bound with a language spoken with hidden rules, the end result being a beautifully brutal practice of what we can call 'conflict improvisation.' Holds, grips and other set moves are worked with and not against by the partner in an improvised manner. In both wrestling and contact improvisation, certain expressive movements between bodies that 'flow' can be seen to echo again and again. The awareness of one's partner is paramount in both forms. As partners become attuned to each other, they can manipulate instinctual reactions, resulting in a safe flow of movement.

BRODERICK:
Observing and participating in training, I have noted that bodily cues that wrestlers respond to are either semiotic or purely somatic. For example, a worker will slap his chest twice as if to signal aggression, though this reads to the partner as 'let's lock-up', but as R. Tyson Smith notes, sometimes no visual or audible cues are shared at all (Smith, 2008: 157-176). This is called working 'loose', which is valued by seasoned workers — and Smith himself likens this synchronicity to two dancers well acquainted with each other's bodies. Pro-wrestling requires a kind of internalised physical dramaturgy — what workers call 'logic.' De Garis describes this with regard to a headlock: 'Both wrestlers must internalise the logic of the headlock in order to be completely effective. Not only does the wrestler applying the hold need to make it look like pressure is being applied; the wrestler in the headlock must "sell" the pain to illustrate the effectiveness of the hold' (De Garis, 2005: 192-212).

Image 3: Internalised physical dramaturgy. Chow and Wells.

TOM:
In terms of dramaturgy, the professional wrestling match is an augmented version of sporting reality. The narrative mimics the turbulence of the real life contest and struggle. Similarly, the body of the dancer also highlights and reflects a heightened version of reality, movements of support and physical proximity between bodies mirrors internal emotional states. The dialogue of the dance exchanged between dancing bodies then on a metaphorical level connects and evokes a sense of familiarity with the spectator on a larger level. We, as spectators, interpret these signifiers in the context of life or the sporting arena.

Image 4: Dancing Bodies. Chow and Wells.

BRODERICK:
See, for example, Roland Barthes' analysis of the mythic nature of pro-wrestling.

TOM:
And this myth is structured through logical codes — Barthes himself wrote that wrestlers must make each movement logical (Barthes, 1957, 2009). Using contact improvisation and/or wrestling in the studio to devise movement I have found that logic as a concept plays a vital role. Filming our improvisations, which sometimes last over an hour, we can order these to create a 'contact choreography' with meaning and legitimacy. The sequenced dance born from improvisation gains integrity as it begins to mirrors the fluctuations of the relationship between us as dancers/characters/personae. The concept of the 'spot' in wrestling usefully reflects this process. The spot is a rehearsed sequence used to structure the fight, so that the eventual improvisation is underpinned with set check points which are recalled and returned to during the live event. But the audience read the movement as a coherent drama, especially when combined with expressions of the face: the 'sell' of the wrestler to depict pain is no different to the face of the dancer expressing their emotion.

BRODERICK:
So in practice our synthesis of wrestling and Contact Improvisation exists somewhere in a dialectic between structure and free play. Using certain structures, codified moves, holds and so on allows us as performers to attune and open up to the other. This attuning to affective, embodied gestures of trust and reciprocity is, I would argue, an ethical act, one that we like to describe as an 'ethics of rowdy play.'

Image 5: Contact Improvisation. Chow and Wells.

On 'shoot': the political economy of pro-wrestling…

Like a dance form such as CI, wrestling is a cooperative physical practice. Just like the practice has certain structures and limitations that bring a freedom of play, wrestling as a performance form exists within certain structures, against which it can be read as a practice of freedom. In the 'real world' of wrestling, the embodied practice of solidarity of wrestling work both resists and is constituted by its labour conditions which can only be described as 'precarious.' Precarity, in labour analysis, marks those workers who do not and cannot claim forms of security enjoyed under Fordist capitalism — for example, job security, pensions, stable working hours or contracts, and maternity pay. Wrestlers are defined, even in the WWE, as 'independent contractors' and therefore cannot legally form a union of their own. As David Harvey (2009) argues, the body of a worker makes visible his/her insertion into what, in Marxian theory is called the circulation of variable capital. For example, certain bodily 'disciplinary practices' may be adopted. In the precarious labour economy of wrestling such practices are clear, all taking the form of damage to the physical body. Often, wrestlers work injured. Others may elect to work for promoters who go for extreme wrestling, with 'death matches' featuring smashed light tubes, staple guns, and barbed wire increasingly common. Above all there are the extreme physical training measures workers adopt, to attain a hyper-muscular ideal, with the use of anabolic steroids a common practice (see, for example, the case of Chris Benoit).

But while the wrestler's body is alienated, reproduced and endlessly circulated in a punishing economy of precarious labour, that same body is also a site of resistance, following Foucault's suggestion that 'power, after investing itself in a body, finds itself exposed to a counter-attack in that same body' (Foucault, 1985). Work, for wrestlers,

has value separate to that of the money wage for which that work is remunerated. We might characterise this value as ethical or political; Smith suggests emotional: 'hostility is almost always displayed, although empathic feelings of cooperation, trust and protection are actually being felt' (Smith, 2008). The underlying bond of trust in work, in laying down one's health and safety to another — this is a bond we can call solidarity. Working allows wrestlers, regardless of differences in identities, to identify with each other through practice. In an economy of precarious labour where survival is individual rather than collective, such solidarity may be seen as radical as it refers back to disappearing organisational models of guilds and craftsmen.

Perhaps, however, solidarity is better replaced by 'friendship.' The political theorist Leela Gandhi conceives of friendship thus, drawing on Derrida: 'all those invisible affective gestures that refuse alignment along the secure axes of filiation to seek expression outside, if not against, possessive communities of belonging' (Gandhi, 2006). A politics of friendship, is crucially not based on shared identity. In the case of wrestlers' work, these particular affective gestures, which manifest as violent, might be thought of as a way of practicing, through the body, a resistance to the individualising nature of the economy of precarity. One historical example may help to illustrate my claim: in the early 1940s, an Argentinian wrestler of Italian descent, Antonino Rocca, was brought to New York by a promoter and quickly rose to prominence. In a shameless piece of stereotyping designed solely to bring in money and audiences, promoters played up the 'Italian' angle, in order to draw in the local immigrant community. All the same, a practice of physical cooperation is taking place between Rocca and his American opponent/partners, which might not have taken place if friendship were solely based on shared identity. It is the practice and training of a subjectivity open to the other.

Conclusions…

Bringing an observant participation of wrestling training into cooperative conflict with the practice of Contact Improvisation in a creative, generative studio process has provoked reflections on the affective gestures of trust, friendship and physical communication beyond the verbal or visual. Reading these reflections against the labour economies of professional wrestling, we can argue that the affective gestures of wrestling work can be read as a form of embodied politics. Yet it is important to acknowledge that such embodied politics exist in a strange paradoxical relation with the exploitative conditions which generate them. How can such embodied politics be expanded from the work between two individual bodies to the larger social body? Let's return to the problem of the relation between the body and the body politic. If we take Fintan Walsh's argument that the male body in performance might be read as a social synecdoche, the limits of which reflect the limits of hegemonic norms, the practice of wrestling operates well within hypermasculine and individualistic limits. In other words, while 'what's in it for the workers' is solidarity and friendship, 'what's in it for the fans'? How might the experience of cheering on a melodramatic physical theatre of antagonism between caricatured and stereotypical personae be read as anything other than politically regressive? Sharon Mazer's (2005) study on wrestling fans suggests one answer. For Mazer, it is not only wrestlers who work, but fans too. Wrestling involves 'kayfabe' (a term which refers to the convention by which staged events are treated as real) on both levels. Fans are savvy enough to read wrestling in terms of its codes, looking for the moment when work collapses into shoot (these fans are referred to as 'smart marks'). In the event of a wrestling performance, this encompassing work of wrestling and reading points towards the possibility of a

shared community of practice, the experience of affective bonds that cut across fields of differences.

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Biography

Broderick Chow is a Canadian scholar-artist based in London, and a lecturer in Theatre and Modern Drama Studies at Brunel University. Broderick's current research focuses on the labour and work of the performing arts in relation to the training and disciplining of subjects for precarious work more generally in neo-liberal economies.

Tom Wells is an independent artist-researcher.

Broderick and Tom together are a dance and physical theatre duo called The Dangerologists. Their work explores masculinity, effort, exhaustion, violence and intimacy. Their performance Work Songs has been seen at the Turn Festival of Dance 2012 in Manchester, PSi18 in Leeds, Chisenhale Dance Space in London, and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Their short dance for camera, ROSE, adapted from Kafka's A Country Doctor, will be featured as part of Kafka's Wound, a digital literary essay by Will Self and hosted by thespace.org.

Choreographic Presence: Time, Memory, and Affects

Noyale Colin
Middlesex University, United Kingdom

My doctoral inquiry into collaborative practices has led me to question the implication of the mediatised history of performances. While drawing on historical analysis my research seeks to demonstrate how performance practice could account for a rethinking of historical time in the way in which it endures in our immediate present, beyond representation. I have engaged in a meta-discourse, which reflects upon the way in which contemporary choreography can reposition time not as the subject of our thinking but as a constitutive force of our process of thoughts. This paper examines how the question of memory relates to the way in which the past survives in the present, through the emergence of a choreographic presence in the events of performance. Through the discussion of the choreographic process of my solo, *'They tried to stand [I am still falling]',* I will explore the issues around the capacity of a performer's body to be always in adjustment with the real. While this work focuses on exploring how the audience members could be considered as an imagined component of composition in becoming, I will focus on examining how presence in dance composition contributes to the articulation of a choreographic thinking in terms of time.

In his work *Of the Presence of the Body*, Andre Lepecki re-assesses the tradition in dance studies to consider the ephemeral nature of movement as a weakness of the form. Drawing on notions of deconstruction, Lepecki problematizes the theorisation of performance ephemerality as 'the body's self-erasure in time'. He suggests to consider how is it that 'presence' challenges the very stability of the body. He argues that this challenge of presence of the body constitutes dance's unique relation to temporality.[4]

The problem of disappearance persists in dance if we consider the body to exist only in a boxed present. Henri Bergson proposed we think of time in terms of duration: 'to explore inner experience –the sensation of qualities and affects – things, he argues, that cannot be measured.'[5] Drawing on such thought, Brian Massumi affirms that 'it is not the present that moves from the past to the future. It is the future-past that continually moves through the present'. He observes that 'a body present is in a dissolve [...] a thing cannot be understood without reference to the non-present dimension it compresses and...expresses in continuity'.[6]

The performance element of this inquiry is in dialogue with these ideas, which are explored here through an assessment of the legacy of the Judson Church Theatre Group - the avant-garde New York-based collective which is widely credited with the creation of postmodern dance. Although less concerned with the idea of reconstruction itself, '*They tried to stand [I am still falling]' (TTS)* draws on visual research techniques. In the first section, for example, I have copied three typical

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[4] André Lepecki, *Of the Presence of the Body: Essay on Performance and Dance Theory*, Wesleyan University Press, USA, 2004, p. 5.
[5] Susan Guerlac, *Thinking in Time*: *An Introduction to Henry Bergson*, New York, Cornell University Press, 2006, p. 5.
[6] Brian Massumi, *Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affects, Sensations*, Durham & London, Duke University Press, 2002, p. 201.

poses of Judsonite aesthetics from photographic documentation of three leading group members, namely Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown and Steve Paxton.

While in the performance I reproduce these poses, the audience will perceive them changing through time – or through duration – through becoming. Framed in that way, the body is unable to hold the pose. Instead, the body, being alive, transforms the pose and then in the absence of impulse the pose dissolves.
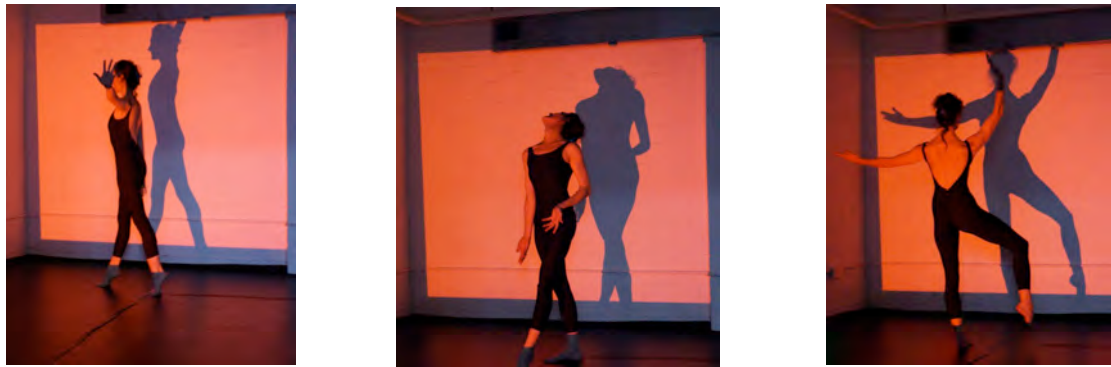
Image 1: Poses. Colin.

The body is unable to maintain its fixity with the past. Instead, what remains seems to embody the capacity of the body, in Paxton's terms, to be always in adjustment with the real. What, then, are the implications of the notion that the body is always in such adjustment?

In *TTS*, I seek to problematise the historicising of live-ness in dance. How can choreography, at the level of reception as well as at the level of practice, allows us to explore ways to engage with the non-present dimension (abstract yet real) of things to find a logic of thinking in terms of time? I will discuss this with reference to a section of my performance where I have sought to deconstruct work associated with the piece - *Continuous Project – Altered Daily* initiated by Yvonne Rainer.

The section begins with the voice of Yuri Gagarin, the first cosmonaut to voyage into outer space in 1961. A description of *Continuous Project – Altered Daily* has been produced by Banes, drawing on film footage of rehearsals and an account from Rainer.

dressed casual
from one to another   as if it is a ball
the attempted hoist turns into a pas
de deux
looking as if she's about to block a
pass
punts
laughs
twarting the expectations of the group
as if they are playing in water
the interchangeablity of the box and
the body
seeing how far they can
like football players between plays
boxing movements
a game
in kickoff   position
gymnast's flying angels
using each other's weight to lean,
stand and sit
they try to stand
she couldn't get up so i used that
now we are discussing how
balance of subdued formal carrying
out of tasks and informality
then i have to try to see what it feels
like[7]
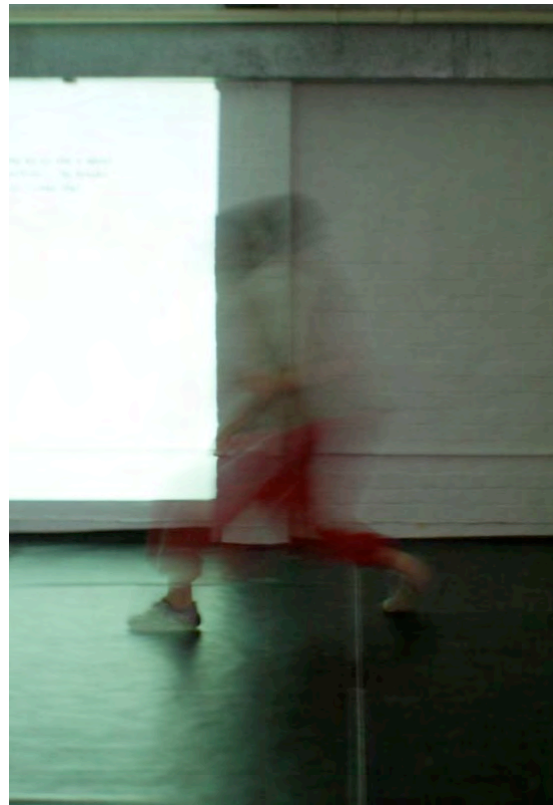
Image 2: Continuous Project.

Text from this description - 'Dressed casually, a game, etc' - appears on screen during my performance. Using improvisation I began to create connection between this account of Rainer's piece and the abstract link with gravity in the cosmonaut's experience. I have then edited the words of Gagarin and Banes, and with my voice, re-appropriated their words while suspending the movement of the dancing body. Standing down stage I perform this section gazing at individual spectators.

This section can be seen as an accumulation of the previous one, by which I mean that elements are repeated, even if sequences are not mathematically duplicated. Instead, I re-present material that the audience has already seen/heard (Gagarin's voice, text from Banes and Rainer, and my own movement) through another form: my speaking body.

While the main intention in juxtaposing the voice and the body was to explore the embodiment of the thinking body engaged in a process of affective exchange, I also explored the potentiality of meaning created by the colliding of accumulated elements of performance.

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[7] Text edited from Sally Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers. Post-Modern Dance: with a new introduction*, Wesleyan University Press, USA, 1987.

Image 3: Colin.

As I am looking out and in, my body connects to those different potentialities in relation with the spectators, exploring what Trisha Brown has powerfully encapsulated when talking of her solo *Accumulation with talking*: 'the silence suspends my intention while the audience continues with theirs.'[8]

Before discussing in more detail what this composition might imply in terms of thinking in time I would like to return to the problematic of the body always being in adjustment with the real. If we consider the time of performance as a unfolding of multiple events or, in Laura Cull's terms, as a constructed event 'in which differential presence is released'[9], what is the real for each individual bodies involved in the experience of the performance.

In order to discuss further the choreographic thinking of that section I would like to expand on the notion of event borrowing from the Deleuzian concept as an empirical fit to my work. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze posits that the relationship between events 'seem to be formed [of] extrinsic relations of silence compatibility and incompatibility, or conjunction and disjunction, which are very difficult to apprehend.'[10] Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, Elizabeth Grosz argues for a shift away from notions of deconstruction and representation to a re-grounding of the politics of becoming capable of accounting for *a real* without unity or boundaries and outside representation - a 'non textual real' which she then identifies as chaos.[11] She defines *the event* as, 'the impact of chaos on the body with multiple resonances, fluid, unpredictable and dynamic, [which] is irreducible to a structure.'[12] I propose here to locate the moment of the performance which I have been discussing earlier as a space of intensification of the event – a suspension of the time of the performance into a durational dimension, or in Bergson's term a time of hesitation.[13] Although the timing of the light frame is set, in this section the perception of time contracts or expands depending on the number and positioning of the spectator(s). While fragments of phrases are being stammered, my speaking body vibrates traces

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[8] Ann Livet, 'Trisha Brown: an interview' in *Contemporary Dance New York,* Abbeville 44-54, 1978, p. 48.
[9] Laura Cull, 'Deleuze and differential presence in performance', unpublished conference paper delivered at Performing Presence conference, University of Exeter, March 2009.
[10] Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation,* New York: Columbia University Press, 1990, p. 170.
[11] Elizabeth Grosz: keynote at the 2007 Feminist Theory Workshop, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwHoswjw5yo (accessed 23 June 2011).
[12] Ibid.
[13] 'Thus the living being essentially has duration; it has duration precisely because it is continuously elaborating what is new and because there is no elaboration without searching, no searching without groping. Time is the very hesitation.' Henri Bergson, *The Creative mind: an Introduction to Metaphysics*, New York, Wisdom Library, 1946, p. 109.

of a dance engaged in a kinetic dynamic with the audience – on the verge of movements and words. What interests me here in terms of compositional technique is the potential for the body of the audience to become one of the components of the composition and therefore to contribute to the emergence of choreographic presence in the events of performance.

While my intention was not to re-construct historical dance pieces, in this work I have informed my creative process by a historical research. I was interested to explore questions of presence of a dancer's body in relationship to time and more specifically historical time. What were the relationships between my dancing body, its own history of performance, training and the way in which dance had been historically recorded?

In another section I use three improvised versions of Rainer's seminal solo *Trio A*. As Rainer's instructions of the solo are being typed on the screen I perform my interpretation of the tasks in low-intensity level movements. Another fully danced version follows in silence, followed by a filmed version in a busy London street accompanied by Rainer's voiceover.
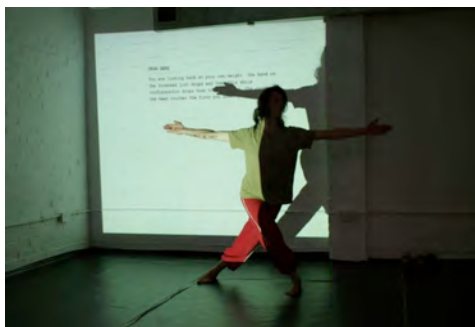
Image 4: *Trio A*. Colin.

This section loops back to the first part of the piece, following again an accumulative sequencing from written words - to quasi-movements - to movements - to re-contextualised movements. It persists in addressing the issues around the capacity of a dancing body to be always in adjustment with the real. A sense of continuity defies the transformations, which raises the questions of how the dance is resisting the context, whether historical, personal or ontological.

> What is left of the original 'dance'?
> What has been re-appropriated?

The question of memory in this performance was crucial to explore the relations between my dancing body and its history of performance. If we adopt here a Bergsonian approach to 'thinking in time',[14] we can assume that memory is part of time and time – defined in terms of duration[15] – is a force, which is constantly at work in the compositional plane of a performance as well as in the reception of a live

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[14] 'Thinking in time, Bergson affirms, requires the breaking of many frames. It lets us recognize the obsession with space that orients western philosophy, limiting what we think.' He suggests that thinking in term of space leads to a 'static conception of time [which] is a defence against the heterogeneity of the real '. See: Guerlac, *Thinking in Time*: *An Introduction to Henry Bergson*, pp. 2-3

[15] Guerlac defines Bergson first approach to duration in term of the exploration of' inner experience - the sensation of qualities and affects – things, he argues, that cannot be measured.' See Guerlac, *Thinking in Time*, p. 5.

piece. If as I have previously demonstrated the emergence of choreographic presence implies the foregrounding of the body of the performer and of the spectators at the centre of an extended experience of time, the way in which performance relates body and memory is equally important to understand the experience of time in performance. Suzanne Guerlac, offers important insights into Bergson's views of the relationship between body and memory. Guerlac underscores that whereas 'the body is a centre of action that acts in the present', consciousness - which is here equivalent to memory and therefore to the past - operates as a *coping* mechanism for the body 'by synthesising the heterogeneous rhythms of duration into temporal horizons of past, present, and future.'[16]

In this performance, two main compositional devices conditioned the involvement of memory/consciousness for the audience members as well as for the performer. Firstly the use of an accumulative structure generates that each addition to the composition changes the perception of the whole. While this structure intensifies the spectator's process of consciously thinking through what they have previously experienced, it also intends to stimulate the subjectivity of each participants' perception, which according to Bergson 'consists above all in what memory brings to it'.[17]

Similarly, the intervention of particular musical soundscapes is also used to suggest temporal information potentially memorised in individual consciousness. However, if as previously mentioned the soundtrack of Yuri Gagarin's first space flight is a deliberate choice to contextualise the Judson Church Theatre Group's era with the echoes of a highpoint of the Cold War, it might not be a recognisable reference for the spectators who experience the aural montage while seeing me running through space.

However, as previously mentioned, my intention in this work was not to reconstruct a repertory piece or to represent dance history, but rather to explore the potential of choreographic practice to 'render time sensational'[18], through what I have previously termed a *choreographic presence.* If we return to Bergson we find that the difference between representation and presence is again inherent to the relationship between time (duration) and the body (sensation). Representation forms through memory which refers to the past, and the present is sensed through perceptions which occur in time. What would be the implications of this finding for the practice of choreographic presence? If representation fixes to the past, what strategies can we explore to grasp the movement of the past in the present? Bergson suggests a theory of recognition that he defines as an 'attentive recognition' when 'memory images [past] regularly rejoin present perception'[19], affecting the interpretation of the incoming perception'. If this phenomenon of memory affecting perception is an assumed condition to the state of attentiveness required for a dancer to perform – by which I mean that part of the skills of a performer is the development of enhanced perceptive awareness, an 'extra-daily' use of the body and mind which is acquired

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[16] Ibid, p. 122.

[17] Ibid, p. 121.

[18] Drawing on Deleuze' concept of the 'force if time' Grosz affirms that the goal of art is to be ''always seeking a way to render time sensational, to make time resonate sensibly. For no art can freeze time or transform its forces except through the invention of new techniques, new forces and energies.'' Elizabeth Grosz: *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the framing of the earth*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2008, p. 87.

[19] Ibid, p. 131.

through training[20] – in thinking about the reception of the piece, it is the potential for memory to interfere during perception that I have chosen to use as a material for composition. Being explored is the production of affects that can emerge from a combination such as the disembodied recording of a historical moment – which does not occur in space – and the movement of my body running through the space of performance; or how the intensity of the sound of the space shuttle taking off, layered with the over-triumphant classical soundtrack and the human voices including Gagarin himself telling each other that everything is normal,[21] might trigger individual memories (past) and intensifies the live (present) repeated (in becoming) action of running.

While the musical references which I have chosen to include in the piece relate to precise historical time, this practical inquiry has been concerned with an aspect of time which does not refer to the cognitive thinking of representing things in term of past but rather following Bergson to an experiential approach of the heterogeneous rhythms of duration. Bergson demonstrates that this quality of time is only experienced through 'an effort of intuition', which is fundamentally unrepresentative.[22] If choreographic practice can be considered as a composition of relation between time (duration) and bodies (sensations) - which perceived through the affect of memory - forms a presence operating at the level of the imagination of the audience members, my choreographic thinking – in dialogue with theoretical discourses - rehearses a re-appropriation of their ideas as a way to professionally engage with elements, which are of greater significance for the practitioner.

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[20] For the theatre practitioner Eugenio Barba the development of the performer's awareness is central to what he calls 'technique'. Barba suggests that 'In an organised performance situation the performer's physical and mental presence is modelled according to principles which are different from those applied in daily life. This extra-daily use of the body-mind is what is called technique.' See: Eugenio Barba, Nicola Savarese, *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of The Performer,* Routledge, first published in 1991, 2004, p. 7.

[21] This soundtrack is extracted from the film *The First Orbit* by Christopher Riley with original music by composer Philip Shepperd. http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2011/apr/17/yuri-gagarin-first-space-orbit-video?intcmp=239 (accessed on 11 November 2011).

[22] Bergson speculates that, 'duration must be defined as unity and multiplicity at the same time? But singularly enough, however much I manipulate the two concepts, portion them out, combine them differently; practice on them the most subtle operation of mental chemistry. I never obtain anything which resemble the simple intuition that I have of duration; while, on the contrary, when I replace myself in duration by an effort of intuition, I immediately perceived how it is unity, multiplicity, and many other things besides.' Bergson in An *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Hackett Publishing Company, USA, 1999, English translation first published in 1912, p. 31.

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Biography

Noyale Colin is a dancer/choreographer, exploring notions of time and memory in the form of solo or collaborative work. She trained in contemporary dance at national superior conservatoires in France and at the Martha Graham Dance School in New York. She then specialized in somatic and choreographic practices including a practical study of the work of Trisha Brown. She co-founded *Imago Mundi*, a collaborative cross art platform. In 2009, she received a research Studentship in Performing Arts at Middlesex University where she is currently leading a doctoral inquiry into collaborative practices in contemporary performing making.

SPA(E)CIOUS PRESENT, Dynamics of collective and individual experiences of space and duration within *specious present*, adopting technologies for enhancing audience engagement, while producing forms of documentation[23]

Elena Cologni
University of Cambridge
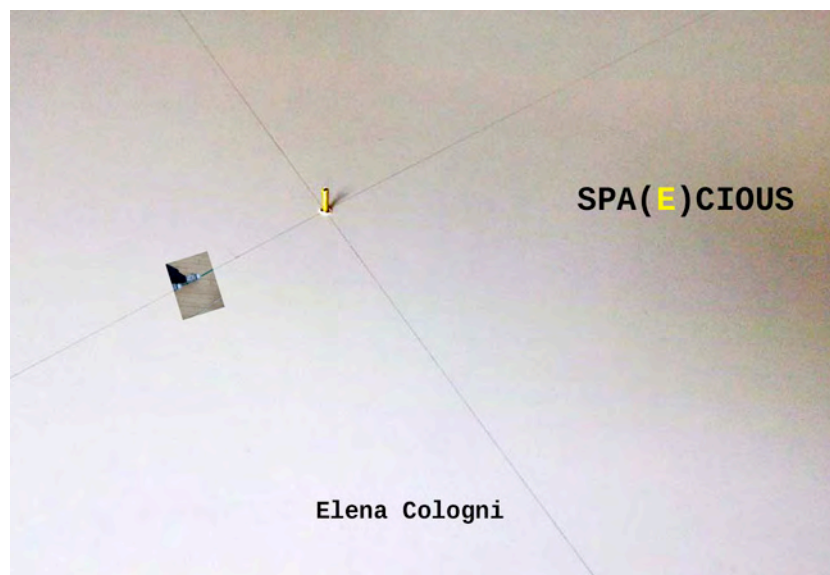
Rationale:

I consider the workshop as a form of peripatetic participatory practice where produced and shared knowledge informs the artist's creative process. This is based on the multidisciplinary approach of my current project Rockfluid (rockfluid.com), where site specific art practice is underpinned by elements of cognitive psychology and philosophy. Hence, here the relationship **Memory – Time – Perception** is informed by Bergson's notion of the present within duration and as produced by the body in space,[24] and by Merleau-Ponty's reference to 'sensation' as the basis for knowledge.[25] On the other hand the role of memory in the present is seen from a shared perspective (psychology and philosophy of science) including the definition of specious present[26] as well as the nature of retention as involving perception of

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[23] Micro-geographies, *microphies.*

[24] Bergson, *Matière et Mémoire*, 138-139, 'present as that which is, when it is simply what is happening. [...] in this continuity of becoming which is reality itself, the present moment is constituted through the quasi-instantaneous cut that our perception operates in the mass in the process of flow". "My present consists in the consciousness I have of my body. Extended in space, my body experiences sensations and at the same time executes movements. Sensations and movements become localized at determinate points in this extension; at any given moment, there can only be one system of movements and sensations. . . The actuality of our present consists of its actual state. Considered as extension in space, matter, in our opinion, should be defined as a present that is always beginning again.

[25] Merleau-Ponty citation of Gestaltd Theory in *'Association And The Projection Of Memories*, Phenomenology Of Perception, 13-25, p 18, "Our perceptual field is made up of 'things' and 'spaces between things'" and: 'our bodily experience of movement is not a particular case of knowledge; it provides us with a way of access to the world and the object, with a Praktognosia, which has to be recognised as original and perhaps as primary.' p.140.

[26] James, William. 1890. *Principles of Psychology* 2 vols. New York: Henry Holt, p 608, in Anonymous [E. Robert Kelly], *The Alternative: A Study in Psychology* (London: Macmillan and Co.,1882), p. 168. Time, then, considered relatively to human apprehension, consists of four parts, viz., the obvious past, the specious present, the real *present*, and the future. Omitting the specious present, it consists of three … nonentities – the past, which does not exist, the future, which does not exist, and their

duration.[27] The variable within this is an element of interference in our experience, which will vary every time Spa(e)cious takes place[28] (e.g. the image above is for the next few events where exercises will take place on an unstable platform). As the series develops from this, a dialogue with art critic and film maker Helena Blaker also shapes the contextualisation of the outcomes.

Methods:
The exercise aims at creating the physical and psychological conditions to enhance an awareness of the perception of time and space through interaction in three parts, involving psychology, drawing, video and performance.

- what happened:

Participants followed instructions, within this overall condition: audiences and participants can see two projections, one of the views is from above and the other view is from the remote CCTV camera on one of the participants. The latter will record their movements within proximal space. They experienced:

Memory in the present. To focus on moving through space and retaining information. It is believed that by introducing an element of interference in space our awareness of the present condition is enhanced.

How has digital time disrupted our sense of subjective time? The perception of time, subjective time (non measured time) and distance in *specious present* (the time duration wherein a state of consciousness is experienced as being in the present). The exercise will test how differently we experience distance within a set amount of time, depending on certain conditions.

How does technology effect our perception and memorization of place? by relating memory to our experience of space in time. Starting from the observation that there is a time distance between the now of perception and the after of the recollection, and a space distance between where we start from and where we return: What does 'this' gap tell us? Is such gap there at all? Starting from a memory exercise (participants to draw the walking activity from memory), this will highlight similarities and differences between our mnemonic archive and technology produced documents of personal space, which I shall call *microphies*.

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conterminous, the present; the faculty from which it proceeds lies to us in the fiction of the specious present

[27] *Metaphysic of Experience* (1898) 4 vols. London: Longman, Green, and Co. [reprint (1980), Garland Publishing, New York]. pp 59, 60, 71, Now retention, or memory in its lowest terms … is actually involved in the perceived element of duration. [...] the least possible empirical present moment is one in which perception and memory (in the sense of simple retention) are indistinguishable from each other è[...] retention of a past in a present moment, has now been shown to take its place among the ultimate facts of experience, being involved in the simplest cases of perception, for which, in fact, it is but another name.

[28] Spa(e)cious presentations include: *Re-Collect*, Wysing Arts Centre, Bourn, UK, 28 June 2012 !KF Institut für künstlerische Forschung Berlin, Germany, 17 September 2012 *Cose Cosmiche*, Artra Gallery, Milan, 27 September 2012. MK Gallery, Milton Keynes, UK, 25 October; 8,15 November 2012

Image 1: From a participant's viewpoint (thank you Michelle)

Images 2–4: How long did it take? Which shape was it?

20 seconds

41 sec

14 seconds

40 seconds

IT TOOK THE MEASUREMENT OF
MY FEET TIMES THE PERAMETER
OF THE SPACE CIRCLE
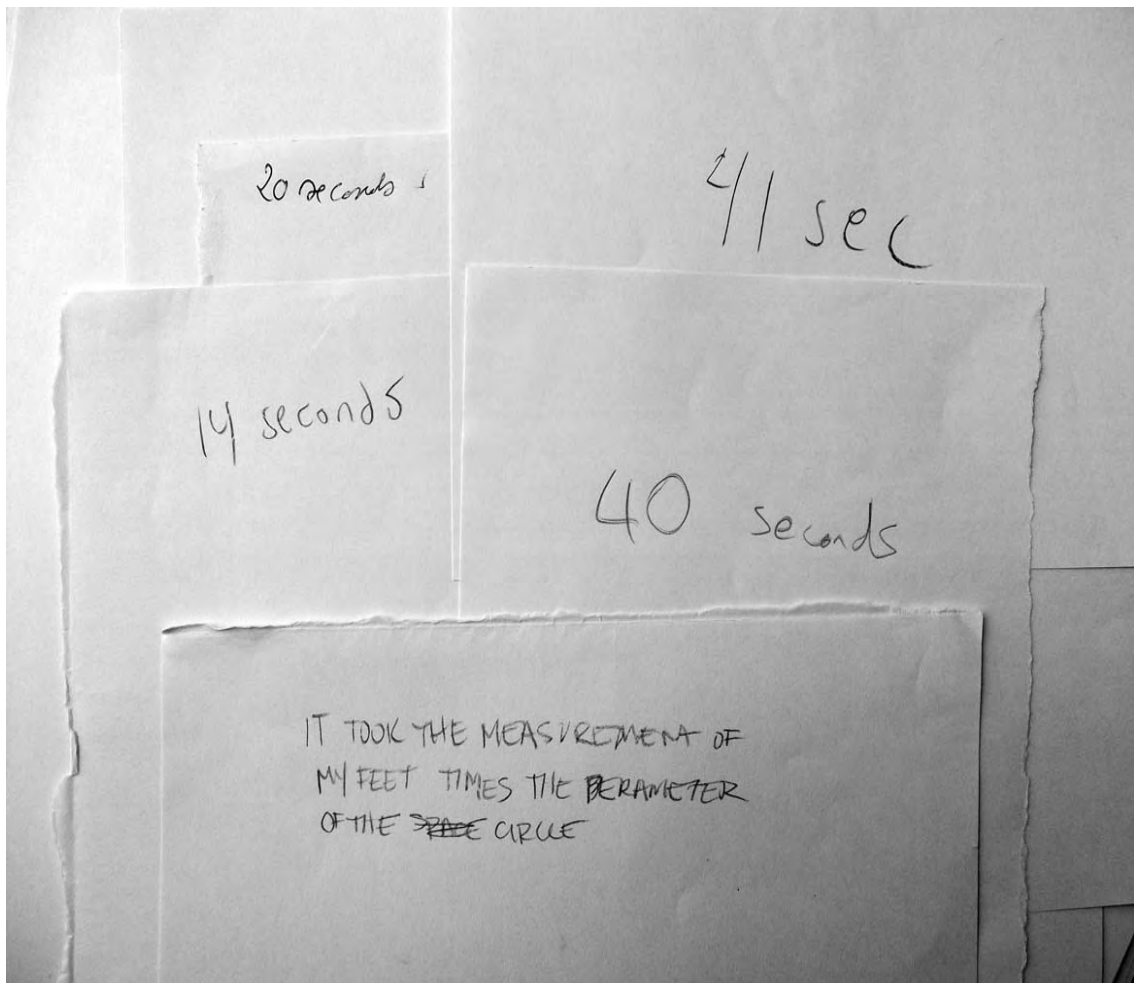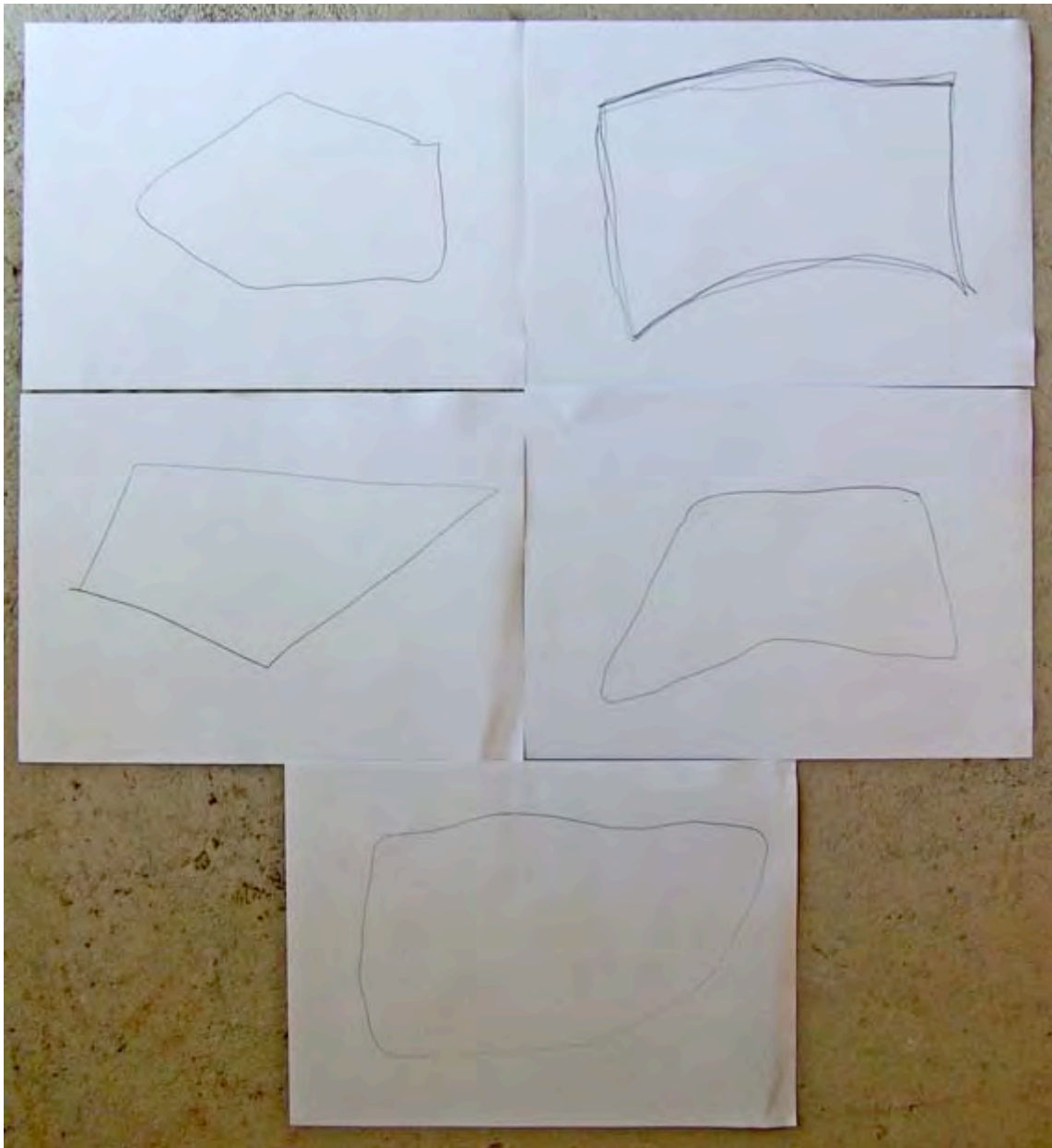
The Context:

SPA(E)CIOUS, is one of the outcomes of the project ROCKFLUID. This develops from a residency at the Faculty of Experimental Psychology, University of Cambridge (since March 2011), with a collaboration with scientist Lisa Saksida, with whom Elena shares a research interest in the relationship between memory and perception. The dialogue evolves and is highlighted by open events in front of an audience (e.g. Science Festival 2011, Science Festival 2012 chaired by Caterina Albano), to inform the artist's creative process. As the project developed particular focus is on the influence of interferences of various nature on the perception in the present of space and time. After a number of people have responded to a call for participation (Wysing Arts Centre Open July 2011) to suggest places in Cambridge to meet the artist and share related memories with the participants (October-November 2011), Cologni recollected those journeys form memory and produced a body of work including drawings and a public art intervention (presented on 5th July at Anglia Ruskin University Gallery). The latter is based on peoples suggested locations in space as well as a game the artist used to play in her childhood.

Throughout the project on of the driving concerns was to do with how technology has influenced our way of conceive space and mapping. Through her work Cologni wants to point the attention towards the experience of physical space and in particular the space proximal to the body, in relation to other views to which our technology filled life allows access to ('views from above' video and text installation, Institute of Astronomy June 2012).

Since my PhD (2004) I claim my art research to be part of the critique to the ocular-centric discourse within western philosophy, with reference to Martin Jay. Yet, the fascination I have for perception and its psychology, and geometry (all linked to the primacy of vision) is a recurring aspect in my enquiry. My critical position is manifested through overturning given assumptions therein by adopting paradoxical formats, including: juxtaposing visual perception with physical positioning in space, drawing 'proto-geometric', non-exact shapes, setting up contradictory research hypotheses. In this context 'SPA(E)CIOUS' is built around a need to make the viewer aware of the space proximal to the body in the present. This in relation to a technology driven life where most of us become increasingly familiar with (and hooked into) the views form above (GPS, Googleearth, NASA satellites). A way to feel in control, by locating ourselves in the world, which Cologni parallels to renaissance perspective systems, whereby the central focus perspective represents man and structures of power.
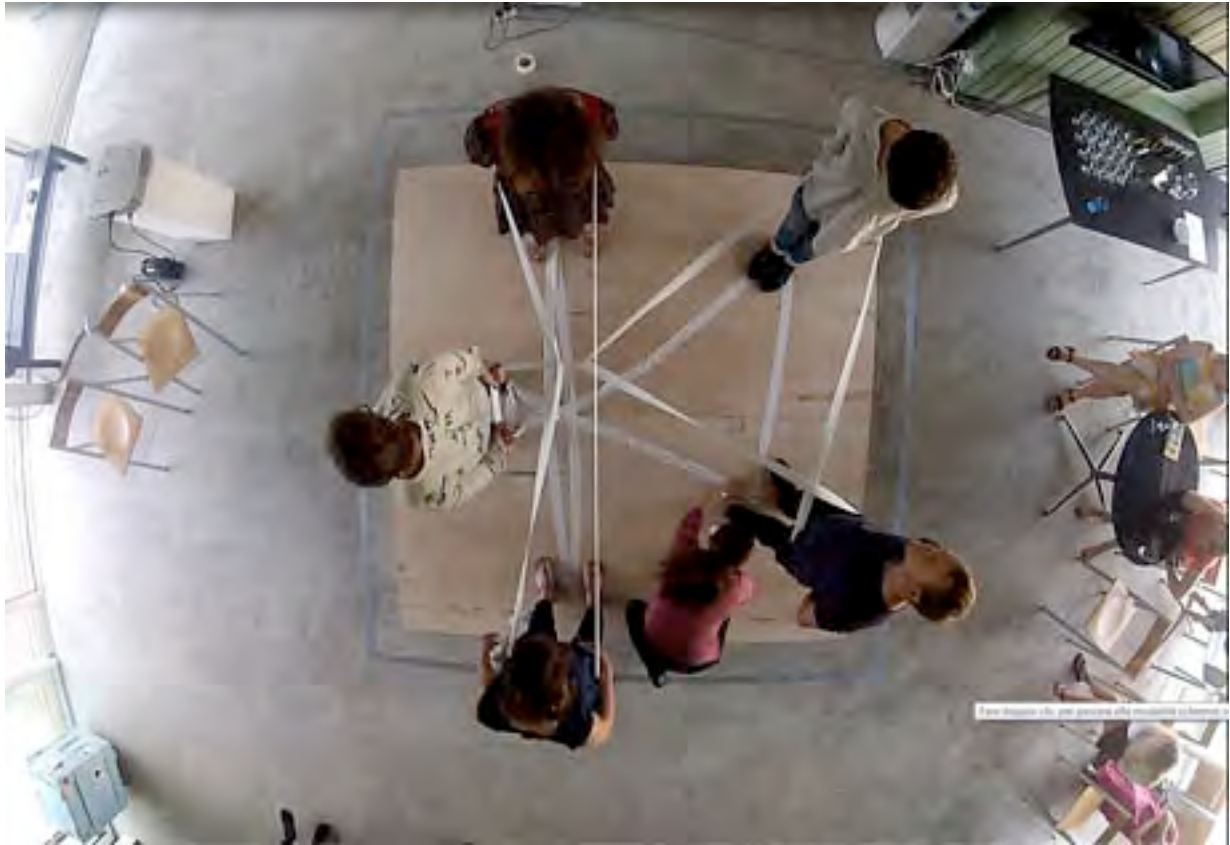
Images 5–6: Images from documentation of *SPA(E)CIOUS,* Wysing Arts Centre, 28 June 2012

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Biography

Elena Cologni is studio artist at Wysing Art Centre and Artist in Residence at University of Cambridge, Faculty of Experimental Psychology. She studied at Brera Academy of Art, Università Statale in Milan (Italy), University of Leeds, and she has a PhD from Central Saint Martins College, London (1999-2004, Fine Art with Philosophy and Psychology). She was awarded from the Arts and Humanities Research Council for her Post Doctoral project at Central Saint Martins addressing issues of memory and liveness (2004-2006), Research Fellow at York Saint John University (2007-2009) when her work became primarily site specific and participatory (www.elenacologni.com/experiential). She was selected for a residency at Centre for Contemporary Arts Glasgow (2006), participated to Glasgow international (2008) and received funding from Arts Council of England for a project at Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2009). Her current residency is funded by Arts Council of England, Escalator Program through Colchester Arts Centre and is supported by the University of Cambridge and Wysing Arts Centre. She is Associate Lecturer at University of Cambridge

The International Theatre Festival: Gaps, Interruptions and Unpredictable Crossovers.

Jenny Duffy
Northumbria University.

Hello.
My name is Jenny, but you can call me Jen.
Everybody does.
J-e-n.
Jen.
Juh – eh – nuh
Jen.
Like the bird - wren.
(Start wings action)
Jenny Wren.
(Look down at chest)
Women?
Jen.
(Smile)
Is there anybody else here whose name is Jen?
Or Jenny?
Or, whose name begins with a J?
…

(Yes? No?)
So, it begins with a J …
Maybe it's j for jetlagged. Maybe its j for joining in. Maybe it's j for journey.
For the journeys which you took to get here. Maybe some on the midnight train.
Journey … Midnight train …
Like the song by Journey! The 80's band, YOU know the one:
(Sings)
'Just a small town girl, livin' in a lonely world. She took the midnight train going anywhere …'

<div align="right">(Cain, Perry & Schon, 1981)</div>

Jenny singing Journey!
Talking about journeys, singing about journeys …
….

Maybe it's J for is she JOKING?
But, for now at least, it looks like it's just J for Jenny.
So it begins with a Jenny.
And this Jenny begins:

And then, somehow, it's four (one, two, three, four) or maybe even five in the morning and you find yourself attempting to teach a Croatian MA student a rhythm, (a rhythm which looks almost like a dance step, but which is much, MUCH, more complicated than this implies), a rhythm, which actually sounds like a beat, which actually was part of a show which you made three years ago, which you performed at another festival, a Romanian festival, not a Croatian festival, a Romanian festival

where you met this Croatian, the one you're trying, slightly drunkenly and completely exhaustedly to teach this rhythm to.

> "It begins with energy (an impulse, an idea, an intuition, a hunch)"
>
> (Fleishman 2012, 34)

So it begins with energy, which might be an impulse, or an idea or an intuition. Or a rhythm.

And so, somehow, you find yourself, trying, very hard, to teach this energy, this rhythm, this small piece of your training to the Croatian. The rhythm, the beat (one, two, three, four), from the show, which he remembered from when you first met. In Romania. Three years ago. The Croatian's name is Peda, who, you remember was actually dressed as a penguin the first time you met, back when you were both at the beginning of your respective trainings: it began with a J, for Jenny, for joining in and a P, for Peda, for penguin and now look at you both!

Look how far you've come!

It's four (one, two, three, four) or maybe even five in the morning and you're in a corridor of some army barracks, in Dakovo, in the North East of Croatia where you are staying, along with 165 other students (and the soldiers), to participate in the Dioniz International Festival of Student Theatre! Trying to teach Peda, the penguin, the rhythm, the beat, from the show...

And the corridor is full of them. Students. Some, maybe fifty, even sixty. From the far flung corners of Europe and just beyond, some Slovenian, some Czech, some Turkish, some Slovakian, some Austrian, some singing, some dancing, all chatting, shouting, all languages, all drinking, many smoking, too many smoking, and you remember just how difficult the rhythm, the beat, from the show, was to learn yourself, let alone to try and teach it to Peda, the penguin, under the influence of the couple of strong, European, post show beers you had in the festival bar.

But here you are! Look at you!

> "We see something that is the tip of a creative and ideological iceberg … we … see a whole Pandora's Box of experiences opened up via the act of performance".
>
> (Witts 2011, 1/2)

And then Pandora's Box is flung wide open as, somehow, you find yourself being pulled into the army barracks urinals by another Croatian, one that you haven't met before. This Croatian wants to discuss setting up an Erasmus scheme between your respective institutions, he wants to discuss his potential PhD application, he wants to know what you want to do with your life and then he wants to discuss the politics of performance and capital P, for Politics today.

It's four, (one, two, three, four) maybe even five in the morning and you're in the urinals, of some army barracks, in a small Croatian town, being asked about why you think the riots happened in London last summer.

And then you remember, in the urinals, in the army barracks urinals, the words of your Professor:

> "We are in deep educational, political and ideological water".
>
> (Witts 2011, ibid)

The Croatian continues and begins to comment on the show that you (the UK reps) made specifically to perform at the festival, to represent your training grounds.

He comments on the openness of the show, on the invitation to (J for) join in, on the freedom of the students, on the stylistic choices you made, how the potential of these interested and excited him.

He also asks what the show was about. What the point of it was? He wants to know what next …

(At this point, a stranger enters the urinals and throws her arms around you and the Croatian (whose name you're still not entirely sure of) and kisses you both.)

You say: "Good questions".

What does it mean to come together in a space, a festival space, a theatre space, a studio space, a run down, graffitied amphitheatre space, a cinema masquerading as a theatre space, a classroom on the first floor of a rundown old fire station, which is now a rehearsal room space?

What does it mean to come together in these spaces?

Together, gathered, gathered together by a festival, in an unknown corridor, in a foreign city, in a new space constructed by, for and through a specific group of people, individuals.

Writing with regard to the paradoxes of political art, philosopher Jacques Rancière states:

> "Politics invents new forms of collective enunciation; it re-frames the given by inventing new ways of making sense of the sensible, new configurations between the visible and the invisible, and between the audible and the inaudible, new distributions of space and time – in short, new bodily capacities".
>
> (2010, 139)

Is this Politics? Could this be Politics? Should it be?

What it does feel like is a new distribution of space and time. A new space. An alternative space perhaps. But above all an open space to begin to attempt to explore what matters.

Does this, this conversation at four (one, two, three, four) maybe even five in the morning, in the army barracks, in the army barracks urinals, with the Croatian student whose name you're not entirely sure of, matter?

Does it matter that you're slightly drunk?
Does it matter?

And then you realise, of course:

> "Creative research, respecting the materiality of thought – its localisation in the act of invention – has a different object. It studies complexity and it defends complex systems of communication against over simplification. It explores the irreducible heterogeneity of cultural identity, the always unfinished process of making and remaking ourselves through our symbolic forms"

> (Carter 2004, 13)

In the middle is the interval.

This is the interval, the middle, the gap.

In between.

How does it feel?

Aware of what's come. Not sure where the hell this is going, perhaps. Unsure but excited, hopefully, you attempt to begin to understand what exactly is going on here.

Here are some thoughts then:

The core thing that happens at these festivals is the opening up of space and of potential opportunities and of experience. It's about the opportunities which are created as a result of the coming together of a diverse group of people, individuals, in a specific context. A context, where you might find yourself scrambling around on the floor outside a bar playing a silly kids game with various well respected Professors of Theatre. It might sound like that what happens is everyone drinks a lot and just 'has a good time' and, of course, there is that part and that, arguably, is an important part, but there's also the part which leads to that part being a possibility to be able to happen and the part where it becomes a reality, even if fleetingly. The process part. So maybe it is as Bahktin highlighted in his discussion of Carnivalesque, about a: "place for working out a new mode of interrelationship between individuals" ('65 p. 123). Maybe that's a large part of it. I think it is a large part of it. And this is enabled through the space created by the context. The space and freedom to play and move between different roles, to interrelate, to encounter, to initiate accidental explosions, to participate and I'm not talking about participation in the way you can 'like' something on Facebook or the way you can 'follow' someone or something on Twitter, or the way you might increasingly find that funding streams necessary for you to make work, to make things happen, are shaped by a language surrounding 'participation' which feels slightly unsettling. They want everyone involved. Especially in those areas which have low participation in the arts and possibly high unemployment and high truancy rates in the local public schools, which are quite possibly underfunded and therefore participating in the arts, is a must because, after all, participation is about J for joining in and consenting and unifying and being an active participant or an active citizen (uh oh). I'm also not (necessarily) wishing to undermine those ways of J for joining in either because they have their uses, and we have seen this through global events of massive significance, and, of

course, increasing participation in the arts in areas which experience low levels, is an important thing; but these also have their own set of uses for corporations and businesses and the Government who utilise them and they also have their own language.

"Deep educational, political and ideological water".

If, as John Tusa highlighted back in November last year:

> "giving the arts a chance to be excellent – and we are talking of chance, of risk, of the variable, the impulsive, the uncertain, the irrational, the uncalculated, the shocking – depends on allowing the arts to talk of what they do, argue for what they do, justify what they do and explain what they do in their own terms."
>
> (Tusa 2011)

Then, perhaps, providing a space, a context for this to occur, creating space, opening up a space, perhaps this is the core thing that happens. Maybe it's about taking yourself outside of your comfort zone, or of your country, or of your language, or of your expectations of what a certain context might produce. Maybe it's really about feeling, the experience of feeling something uncertain or irrational or maybe even shocking (ibid). Maybe it is this feeling of participating, of J for joining in, which is the core thing that happens in these spaces and through this we begin to see the potential of operating in the interval, of being in a process, in the process of working it out. (One, two, three, four).

A breathing space.
(Breathe deeply)

An open space to just experience, in a new context, maybe it is that which is at the core.

Maybe that's what it's about.

Maybe if the Croatian, who's name, appallingly, you still can't quite remember, maybe if you see him again you'll be prepared with your answers.

So, what next?

As part of a talk commissioned by *London International Festival of Theatre* for a recent symposium on the future of festivals, Tim Etchells highlighted the importance of:

> "processes which along with togetherness, sharing and mutuality also involve difficulty, dissent, and disagreement, hard work, uncertainty, doubt and dispute. They flow. They alter. They contradict. They involve tension and change."
>
> (Etchells 2012).

Maybe in this space, in the process of figuring out what this space might mean or the 'pedagogical potential', which the abstract for this paper spoke of, somewhere in the midst of it all, we experience something extraordinary.

So, this is the part where you realise that:

Your supervisor was right when she said:

> "A festival is a place where anything can happen".
>
> (Craddock 2012, Personal Communication)

As another wise woman, Luce Irigaray, once said:

> "In spite of everything, I have a great desire to be with you. But how will we succeed in being present and together at the same time? Here an entire history must be examined: not only yours and mine, our small misunderstandings and differences, but also that of a culture which for centuries, and still today, does not allow us to be two, as two, with each other."

So I refer back to a man (uh oh), Fleishman, who, in his paper *The Difference of Performance as Research* states:

> "We need to find ways to feel and live the intervals'. This is the radical project of performance as research".
>
> (2012, 35)

- Because maybe that's what it's really all about.

Being RADICAL.
Finding ways to live the intervals, the gaps, the interruptions.
Being open to the possibility that this could, and perhaps should, be radical. Creating the freedom to explore. Exploring the edges, the space in between, the interactions. Crossing and sharing of practice.
Practicing research, finding ways to be together, in uncertainty, working it out. (One, two, three, four)
Making connections.
The radical nature of the space of performance as research, of festival as a methodology of this.

And so it ends with an L for list.

A List of learning.
Of festival learning.

Learning to sit with your eyes closed for half an hour, amongst a group of students from Croatia, Romania, Turkey and Austria, speaking only sentences which began with:

'The silence when … '
The value of the space created by silence. The potential and sound of silence.
The first verse and chorus of 'The Sound of Silence' by Simon and Garfunkel.

You learn a new devising exercise. The one where you choose a spot in the space, walk to it, do an action and deliver a line of text.
You know the one.

This one:
"I've had tonsillitis thirteen times"
(Walks into space, slaps face)
That being 'vegetarian' in Croatian often means you will be referred to as a vegetable.

You learn about the current difference in price of living and renting in Croatia compared with the UK.
How to say thank you in Croatian …
'Hvala'.
You learn, or, re-learn, or just remember, that, if you were ever in doubt, when you've been inside a tiny festival bar for four (one, two, three, four) maybe even five hours, just what a good idea the smoking ban was.
That 'Sali' is Turkish for Tuesday.

You learn about your body in a different space, a different context.

That using your body, your face, your eyes, your facial expressions, your hand gestures, your awareness, and your mannerisms can speak volumes, crossing language barriers.

The importance of presence and smiling.
(Smile)
The value of looking people in the eye.
(Look them in the eye)
So maybe what you've actually learnt is the importance of communicating ideas, offering ideas, being open to accepting and exploring new ideas.

You learn again, that football, is a universal language and that the middle-aged soldier who desperately wanted to communicate with you, despite you speaking no Croatian and him hardly any English, of course knew that Newcastle Football Club are called the 'toon army'.

You re-learn the importance of experiencing freedom to operate in an open space, where someone assumes that you are a Croatian. Before discovering that you are, in fact, a British female amongst a Croatian body of performers.

Jen blends, remade in her symbolic form.
This is festival thinking. Festival as thinking.

I refer again to Paul Carter, who highlights:

> "To work collaboratively, passing the shuttle of creative vision back and forth, in a way that advances or changes the pattern … is a technique for making sense of the gaps, interruptions and unpredictable crossovers."
>
> (2004, 5)

What I'm positing, what I'm attempting to try to (not so drunkenly but slightly exhaustedly) playfully illustrate, what I'm trying to say, is that this model of international theatre festivals matter.

The potential of the space created within this context matters.

That the opportunity to explore and participate, to 'do', in a complex network of social relations, outside of corporate or government intervention, outside of expectations of what, could or should or will happen, that operating within this specific context, through the localisation of creative research, might provide a grounding for and the roots of something radical.

Here is where we might begin to see the potential of festival as thinking today.

I would like to end with a reflection from the Polish theatre maker Tadeusz Kantor, shared with Professor Noel Witts, which he kindly shared with me:

Kantor, reflecting on his own situation, in another country at another time:

> "Freedom in art is a gift neither from the politicians, nor from the authorities, Freedom is not bestowed on art by the authorities, Freedom exists inside us. We have to fight for freedom, within ourselves".
>
> (Witts 2011, 10)

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Biography

Jenny is a performance maker and writer, who has collaborated with various artists in presenting performance work both nationally and internationally, most recently at Stockholm Independent Art Fair and Dioniz International Festival of Student Theatre. She is GIFTed coordinator for the Higher Education strand of Gateshead International Festival of Theatre (GIFT) and a post graduate student, currently

undertaking a practice-led Arts MRes at Northumbria University. Her research explores the development of audience/performer relationships and notions of participation within contemporary performance practice.

Staging the World: Performance, Object-Oriented Ontology, and that thing called Knowing[1]

João Florêncio
Goldsmiths, University of London

Introduction: The State of Affairs

Today, we hear, performance is everywhere. It has become an everyday word, heard in every corner of the world, from the black box of theatres and the white cube of galleries to the billboards outside advertising the latest model of sport car or, at an ever increasing rate, as part of the guidelines of our higher education funding councils. However, regardless of all the nonhuman behaviours increasingly measured or grasped in terms of performance – e.g., rituals of animal courtship, fluctuations of stock market indexes, or the behaviour of computer viruses – we, performance theorists, are still used to think performance from a humanist standpoint, to see it as the exclusive domain of humans and their displays of behaviour. Performance, in our habitual work theorising human rituals or our actions on stage, has very rarely been pushed beyond its actualisation as performance-by-us. In the very few occasions we have looked beyond the human in search for instances of performance, e.g., Nicholas Ridout writing about animals on stage (Ridout 2006), Richard Schechner reflecting on animal performances in the wild (Schechner 2003), or Jon McKenzie trying to intersect cultural, organisational, and technological performance (McKenzie 2001), our concerns have still been on the side of the human: what can animal performances tell us about our own? What can performance reveal about our societies when it is used as an indicator of the speed of our computers? Even if performance has gone beyond performance-by-us in these cases, by its always referring back to the human as its ultimate referent, it has never really become something other than performance-for-us: this being the farthest we have allowed it to go. In the end, we are the masters, we are at the top of the food chain, we are the lords of the land, the conveyors of meaning. Surely, performance must stick with us if we are to keep our titles.

However, while we obsess with ourselves, like Narcissus by the lake, the world around us seems to have become increasingly unpredictable, unapologetically strange, unforgiving. Stuff has been happening that we can't seem to be able to control: economies have crashed, hurricanes have destroyed cities, previously curable diseases have now started killing millions, and airplanes have become the new bullets. Everywhere, from the glaciers of Greenland to the computers that literally keep us alive and well, from the devalued dreams of a single European currency to the viruses that have started learning how to resist our chemical attacks, the world has become foreign, and all the certainties claimed hitherto by the men of science and those of letters have, slowly but surely, started melting away. Our reign as masters of the universe has never before been questioned to such an extent. Progressively, we have started realising that the world exists and that it will keep on existing despite us.

In recent years, academia itself has become increasingly aware of the faults in our current paradigms of knowledge, in the way we seem to justify the existence of the world with our own existence. From Manuel DeLanda's work on assemblage theory to Bruno Latour's development of Actor-Network Theory; from a recent renewed interest in panpsychism to the increasing popularity of Speculative Realism; from the

new materialism of Jane Bennett to the several conferences on the so-called "nonhuman turn" that are popping out everywhere around the globe, academia seems to be firmly en route to think a world in which we are not present or, at least, not in control.

Given all that, what is left for Performance Studies? How can we, performance theorists, contribute to the current academic debates that seem to posit our main object of study, the human actor, out of the equation or, at least, to make it share with fellow nonhuman actors a newly found and widely distributed notion of agency? How can performance think a nonhuman world or, most importantly perhaps, how can performance survive it? If the whole world is a stage, can there be a theatre without humans? What happens when performance becomes not only the way through which humans give shape to their world but also the way through which the whole world is able to both experience and express itself regardless of there being humans present at the scene or not?

In what follows, I will try to explore these questions in the style of a provocation. While being largely informed by the postulates of object-oriented philosophy, the following section of this paper has tried to leave behind more established forms of academic discourse and to replace them with a style of writing that is closer to storytelling and the anecdote than to dominant styles of knowledge production and dissemination. The reasons for that are manifold but can be staid to derive both from the interest that, since the 1990s, performance theorists have shown for writing as performance, and from an awareness that, if writing is indeed to try to tackle the nonhuman, it must simultaneously become aware of and think its own materiality. Like Ian Bogost has proposed in his recent book Alien Phenomenology, in order for philosophy to approach the nonhuman, it must become a craft, the thinker, himself, having to become a carpenter of thoughts (Bogost 2012, 90). In other words, thought (and writing) must become performance.

Now, do take this as a provocation: The Whole World is a Stage

The West African priest summoned the sacred. From behind a sculpture carved out of wood, the sacred flickered and announced its unfathomable presence. The congregation started singing and dancing in awe and reverence while, a few miles away on the coast, an army of conquerers disembarked a flotilla of ships flagging the colours of 'civilisation.' Scared of the power wielded by the carved wooden fetish, Western priests, soldiers, and philosophers quickly took over the reins of knowledge and claimed the supremacy of the human and its immunity to the flickering presence of objects, to their inhuman attraction. Today, if the object is to keep any kind of glimmer, its glimmer is that of the commodity; if it is to wield any power, its power is that of demanding consumption. In our societies, deprived as they are of shamanic rituals, first by the autocracy of the church and then by the priesthood of reason, objects can only find their lost glimmer in the shopping jungle of our high streets or within the sweaty walls of the fetish club, the last remaining temples where objects are still allowed to glimmer beyond their givenness in experience, where a pair of leather trousers is always so much more than what you will ever do with it. Touch them, wear them, smell them, lick them, and still you will never be able to exhaust their being.

Nevertheless, and to the increasing despair of the lords of the land, objects do sometimes still surprise us when we least expect it. Say, for instance, in this moment

(right now) when I stand here reading the words on this sheet of paper. As I get on with it, I know the paper only in as much as it works as a blank support for the words I'm reading (right here, right now). I can say, when asked what am I doing, that "I am reading this piece of paper". However, what I am in fact doing is reading the words printed on it (right here, right now). This is my current relation to this sheet of paper, this is metonymy: knowing this piece of paper through the words that are contiguous with it.

Another relation can follow the first one (however, only if I allow it): if, right here, right now, I am suddenly taken by a childlike curiosity and a scholarly devotion to knowledge, I cease to be satisfied with knowing this piece of paper simply though the words printed on this page and my eyes start wandering over it, attempting to probe its being – top, bottom, left, and right. All of a sudden the black ink of these words becomes merely accidental to the being of the paper, it matters no more. I realise that other words could have been written right → here ← and still the paper would have remained the same. I look beyond these accidental words and, with a smile on my face, I dive into the blankness of the page (right here → ←, right now). The paper becomes this 11.69 x 8.27 inches of whiteness and I feel reassured: I must be on to something. Still, there must be more – there is always something more – as I become aware of all the qualities of the paper I had hitherto not taken into account: its touch, its texture, its ability to be turned into a boat, a hat, or a paper plane; its capacity to be burnt by an unexpected fire or to soak up the water from a puddle into which it has been thrown and then quickly forgotten… I am drawn to accept the blank canvas I had previously thought this sheet of paper to be as just an instance of the innumerable metonymic relations I may come to establish with it, as one of the many roles it can play for me.

And yet, yet here I am (right here, right now), not having really grasped the true substance of this piece of paper and suddenly aware that I might never be able to do so. No matter how differently I may have approached it – with my eyes or with my hands, or with my nose or with my ears, or with my tongue or with my thought – this piece of paper kept on refusing to fully disclose itself to me. Like the black leather trousers I wear when the lights are dim and touch and smell replace sight, this piece of paper, like any other fetish, has proved itself to always be more than what I will ever make of it and, by doing so, has made me aware of the secret that is its being.

A burning question now arises (and, quickly, I put my hands under cold running water to prevent any blisters): if I can never really access the hidden being of this piece of paper, if the closest I can get to it is by letting myself notice (and be obfuscated by) its glimmering aura, by being aware of its presence while never really knowing it, then what is this thing we call knowing? How can I know something without ever being in direct contact with it, if my relation to it is always tangential, metonymic? How can I summon the opposite margin of a river I won't ever be able to cross (because no engineering will ever be able to bridge the here and the there; because no matter how much you love something or someone, you will always be loving at a distance, all touch never really touching, all distance never really being walked… Zeno's paradox)? What is this world we live in, a world in which, no matter where we are, we are always far away from all the other objects around us? What is the real if not a world of fourth walls, walls that have never really been broken down, walls that will always exist between the tips of our fingers, or the edge of our noses, or the surface of our tongues, or the retina in our eyes, or the membrane in our ears, or the thoughts in our heads, and everything else that we touch, smell, taste, see,

hear, or think. This is a world of theatrics, a world of performers and audiences, where every encounter happens at a distance, where communication is always both partial and noisy: the information being transmitted hitting bumps and holes, rubbing up against other messages and other bodies that refract it on its ways from object to object, from performer to audience. The whole world is a theatron, a place for seeing, in which communication attracts parasitic information, accidental data, feedback noise. On its rocky path from here to there, from real object to perceived phenomenon, information changes and becomes a contingent, incomplete, and provisional translation of its original, carrying with it the traces of the innumerable obstacles it has encountered in the space between you and me. No window is ever fully clear, no telescope can ever look this far away, no performance can provide me with full access to the being of the performer, be it human, animal, or thing, material or abstract, dream or reality. no matter how devoted I am to this object, to this piece of paper, no matter how much strength and dedication I expend in trying to know it, the only thing I will ever get from it is one of its masks, one of its personae. Every time I try to approach it, it gives me one of its characters, one of its performances. Sometimes it plays the surface for my writing, sometimes the raw material for my paper boat; sometimes it convinces me it is a letter, sometimes it reminds me it is nothing but the trace of a tree. Understood in this way, performance implies the transformation of an always hidden real object into a graspable phenomenon, the translation of performer into performed, of actor into role being played, of idea into movement or sound, of body into image, of real into world. And stage after stage, performance after performance, I keep on chasing it, from tree to paper to letter to boat, trying hard to overcome the white blindness caused by the stage lights that follow me in my crusade. However, no matter how fast I run or how educated I am in the thespian arts, I can never reach the dressing room backstage where (in my dreams at least) the object calmly removes its costume and cleans up its make-up before sitting there, naked, on the sofa by the lit mirror, waiting for me to come knocking on its door.

Having said that, you should never think objects perform only for us. In the end, the show is open, free, and everyone and everything has been invited. (Advice: come early if you don't want to sit on the floor at the back of the room.) Imagine the black ink of these words, for instance. Even if, unlike me, it can access the paper's capacity to absorb liquids (by itself being absorbed), it still can't experience its shade of white or its capacity to be turned into a paper plane. Or, to expand this scene slightly, imagine a tree being cut by an axe (it can, if you want, be the same tree that produced the cellulose for this sheet of paper – it's always good to keep things in the family, you know?). So the axe hits the trunk of the tree (once, twice). The tree trunk screams open with the impact of the blade. An axe-imprint, an image or a performance, is left on the inner surface of the trunk, now exposed to the atmosphere and bleeding dry at the mercy of the elements. Yet the tree grasps nothing of the axe but the shape and momentum of its blade; it has no access to its colour and is oblivious of the shape of the handle attached to it, of its temperature, texture, or even of the muscled harm of the hot lumberjack holding it. The axe hits again (and again, and again), expanding the surface of the cut, licking open the wound. The tree falls and becomes paper for this writing, canvas for these words. And still (and again), while the ink penetrates the paper and slowly dries in the empty spaces amongst its cellulose fibres, it remains blind to the tree that the paper once was and to the particular shade of white it has in my eyes.

And now we are back at the beginning, just before I realised this piece of paper must be more than the words written on it, more than its blankness, more than its look, touch, taste, smell, or sound; more than any thought I will ever have on it, more than any use I will ever give to it.

And so, both here with this piece of paper and out there where the tress keep on growing, the world has suddenly become a quasi-Brechtian play, one of those in which the foreigness of the actor behind the persona is revealed and the unbridgeable distance between audience and action is announced: Verfremdungseffekt. This, however, is not due to the fact that the masks were too loose or the acting not up to scratch. It has only to do with a particular way of looking, one that makes us aware of the absolute alienness of all objects beyond any acts through which they make themselves appear to us: a special way of looking that is usually associated with the experience of something we call art. But don't be fooled: more than a specially crafted object waiting to be experienced, art is first and foremost a way of looking (in doubt, just ask Marcel Duchamp): looking beyond accidental appearances, beyond givenness in experience; looking beyond the ordinary in search for the world's hidden surprises while nevertheless knowing that what lies beyond appearances and beyond the reassuring ordinary will always remain dark, silent, and inaccessible. However, this is not a game to be won. This is the game of the rediscovered joy of playing, not the game of accumulated victories. And it is happening everywhere: it is happening here, it is happening out there in theatres and gallery spaces, it is happening everywhere else around you, from the internet to the ozone layer, from bird nests to fairytales, from dreams to microwaves, from libraries to the rusting metal of the benches outside. You just have to look around and embrace the game.

Note

[1] A shorter version of this paper has been published as part of the pamphlet for "Field Static," an exhibition curated by Devin King and Caroline Picard, which has taken place at the Co-Prosperity Sphere in Chicago, Illinois. The pamphlet was published by Holon Press.

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Biography

João Florêncio is a PhD candidate in the department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London, where he researches the intersection of object and event drawing from performance studies, continental philosophy, and information and systems theories. João is also an associated researcher of 'Performance Matters,' a three-year AHRC research project, and has published in journals such as Dance Theatre Journal, New Theatre Quarterly, and the Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology. His first book, co-authored with Chicago-based artist Devin King, is due to be published later in 2012 by Green Lantern Press.

The Thinking Performance: René Pollesch's Interpassive Theatre and Beyond

Moritz Gansen and Elisabeth Schilling
Free University, Berlin and Freelance Dance Artist

Philosopher and Dancer enter the stage.

> B: NO! NO! You simply can't tell me that any role I'm supposed to identify with refers to reality. It only ever refers to the theatre. The ancient Greeks, all of that only ever refers to the theatre. Please, nobody tell me this aims at my reality, this old old old male gibberish! […] But it simply *has* to be possible to say something about a life that is being lived. And that is without this machine of awe. It simply *has* to be possible to say something that can be shot coldly from the hip. (Pollesch 2009e, 209)[1]

How can we think, how can we express what actually concerns us? Gilles Deleuze, in his preface to *Difference and Repetition*, anticipated a time "when it will hardly be possible to write a book of philosophy as it has been done for so long" (Deleuze 2004, xx). Today, we (*but who are we?*) find ourselves no less (*perhaps more than ever*), thrown into a "search for new means of philosophical expression", pursued not least, as Deleuze wrote, "in relation to the renewal of certain other arts, such as the theatre or the cinema" (Deleuze 2004, xx). Here and now we would thus like to examine one of these arts, namely theatre, or the performative arts more generally, as another mode of doing philosophy, or, more precisely, of *doing thinking*.

You will have gathered from our title (*and possibly also from the introductory quote*) that we will take the experimental practice of the German author and director René Pollesch (*it is in fact difficult to determine what exactly he is*) as a way of approaching the question of how performance thinks. Based on our literature review, we assume that anglophone audiences are relatively unfamiliar with Pollesch's work. Although he spent some time in London on a working scholarship at the Royal Court Theatre as early as 1996 (*'once I was in London, and I was absolutely desperate because of the shitty theatre that is being produced there'*; Pollesch 2009g, 330), it was only in late 2008, when *Death of a Trainee* was shown as part of the contemporary visual arts exhibition *Molten States* at the Royal Academy of Arts, that British audiences were for the first time introduced to one of his pieces (*a year earlier, in 2007, Pollesch's* 24 Stunden sind kein Tag / Escape from New York *was restaged at the New York Theatre Workshop*). At the time, Pollesch was advertised as "one of the most influential and exciting directors working in Germany today" ("Welcome to the Now Show" 2008) – but as far as we know, his work has never returned to the UK (*in fact, Pollesch did not even make it onto an actual theatre stage there in 2008!*). Yet this predicate seems nevertheless still valid, regardless of Pollesch's recent lack of innovation (*and one might add, that after all he seeks to escape the neoliberal capitalist logic of innovation*). Especially among younger academic audiences, Pollesch enjoys great popularity; he has been commissioned to produce performances of his work at stages throughout the country and has won a number of awards (*at present, the Berlin theatre Volksbühne lists six of his pieces as part of their repertoire*). But we cannot go into all this here. What is most important for us now is that over the past decade or two Pollesch has been seen as a true theatre revolutionary. His signature style of collective theatre practice goes hand in hand with the development of a new form of discursive theatre, a strange hybrid of metatheatre and metatheory (*– always grounded in concrete experience –*) that

presents a multilayered performance of thinking, or, as we will show, a thinking performance.

For Pollesch, theatre, or rather public performance (*it is very difficult to merely resort to the term 'theatre'*), must be a way of thinking, ideally of thinking something different. Performance must be part of the thinking that changes our lives (see Pollesch 2009a, 305). It is thus quite appropriate that the initial step of Pollesch's staging of thought is always to be found in his peculiar production practice. The first week or so of rehearsals usually consists of reading and discussion sessions with the actors. Pollesch himself brings his own unfinished manuscript alongside various theoretical texts, and within a few weeks author and actors produce a cast- and often also site-specific performance. Fragmentary ideas and quotes from a relatively wide range of contemporary theory (*one could for instance mention Jean Baudrillard or Giorgio Agamben*) are incorporated into the text, a text in motion, one that is in the process of being thought together (*a composition in community*) (see Pollesch 2009g, 328, 331). Writing these texts is hence a "writing-further" of theory (Pollesch 2009b, 348). They are assembled around a few crucial phrases that fold and unfold along an axis of individual experience; they are spun further and sometimes repeated *ad nauseam* or developed *ad absurdum*. In this sense, we can understand the performance as extending into the very making of the text, the process of production.

But let us just consider another example, a very brief section from *Love Is Colder than Capital*:

> K: There hasn't always been filming backstage! Or has there?
> F: Everybody ready! Setup for Mr Stephenson!
> K: Darling! What has happened to reality? It used to be here in the back. You know, it's as if the two of us play noughts and crosses and you keep erasing my crosses. I cannot play like this, with you always breaking the rules that our reality is based on. One used to be able to exit a stage, that was tradition!
> S: But perhaps only a collapsed reality is real. Perhaps we need another visit of the shah in order to become aware of the police state that is so obviously turning against its citizens. This confusion that makes our unspoken social rules or realities break down. Perhaps we need them? Rules which otherwise remain quite invisible. (Pollesch 2009e, 176)

As one can hopefully see from this example (*it is very difficult to excerpt a passage from Pollesch's plays*), we can understand primary text in Pollesch (*and his scripts consist almost exclusively of primary text*) as a discursive performance of thought rather than traditional dialogue between characters. Pollesch's plays are non-figurative. The actors on stage do not enact intact body-speech relationships (*what we might call a person, a character*); they are rather the media of a discursive (*and experience-based*) abstraction that speaks through them (see Pollesch 2009g, 328-332). One could perhaps think of conceptual personae moving from one actor to the next and back.

With this movement of thought, theatre becomes transformed. A different theatre must allow for the staging of different thoughts beyond and in defiance of, as Pollesch calls it, an "anti-democratic" institution that essentially conserves outdated social and economic modes and relations (Pollesch 2009d, 323-326). Theory has to

be liberated from the booklets and left to roam the stage (*"In the theatre, theory always has to be held captive in booklets, otherwise it would blow up the entire institution."* Pollesch 2009f, 306). Theatre must become "a thinking space", one that, as Pollesch says, "has to do with community" insofar as it negotiates new modes of subjectivity as well as collectivity (Pollesch 2011b). But what exactly is this thinking space (*or thinking environment*), and how is it constituted? How does performance think?

Here we can, although the connection is not explicitly made by Pollesch himself, draw upon an experimental notion that he has introduced in more recent plays such as *I Look You in the Eyes, Societal Relation of Blindness* (*Ich schau dir in die Augen, gesellschaftlicher Verblendungszusammenhang*) and *Whatever you do, don't do it yourself* (*Was du auch machst, mach es nicht selbst*): "interpassive theatre". The concept of interpassivity was largely developed in a philosophical exchange between Slavoj Žižek and the Austrian philosopher Robert Pfaller (*although arguably we find a prefiguration of this notion in Lacan's discussion of the chorus in Greek tragedy or even in aspects of Aristotle's notion of catharsis*). In a nutshell, we can say that interpassivity is the obverse of interactivity. Pfaller sees an interactive artwork as one that is "not yet finished", one to which the observer is expected to add some creative work. The interpassive artwork, on the other hand, is already "more than finished" – neither creative activity nor receptive passivity have to be added to it. In a sense, the interpassive artwork is entirely self-sufficient (*Pfaller and Žižek invoke examples such as the canned laughter that laughs for us, the VCR that watches our favourite movie for us, and the Tibetan prayer wheel that prays for us*; see Pfaller 2000; Žižek 1997, 144-147).

Pfaller's theory of interpassivity is immensely problematic, and we cannot adequately discuss it in its own right here. Instead, we would like to focus on Pollesch's transformative use of the notion of interpassivity, which should eventually enable us to come to terms with the idea of performance as a thinking subject. In the works we have mentioned, Pollesch presents the idea that the apparently inevitable art of interactive theatre, which has "terrorised" audiences for decades now, forcing them into an undesired ideal of activity, has to be overcome.

> J: Interpassive theatre, in contrast, could mean that one does not experience the things one had thought one wanted to experience. For instance the repeated broadcast of your favourite movie on TV. Most of the time you would set your VCR in order to then watch your favourite movie some time later. But possibly we have already, without knowing it, delegated this to the VCR. After all, it has already seen our favourite movie for us. And perhaps we are then finally redeemed from the things that we love.
> […]
> L: Delegate your enjoyment of art to the artwork! Just like the Greeks did it through the chorus. […] The ancient Greeks, they didn't know emotion, the chorus delivered them from it. They would have declared war on any form of interactive theatre. […] They could lean back, the ancient Greeks, and leave emotion to the others. The chorus comes on and they are free of all sorrows because it bears their emotion. The chorus says that our most intimate emotions can be transferred to others. Artists go on dates instead of their audiences, correspond with their acquaintances, crash their cars. The goal is relief. Nobody reads, we relieve ourselves from

reading. The book that you wanted to read. I've photocopied it! The copier has read it for you. And here I stand now, happy and with a feeling of redemption! (Pollesch 2011a)

But what is this interpassive theatre really? One could, of course, think of it in terms of a generalised notion of catharsis through vicarious experience. But that would not actually add anything to theatre – it would not construct a different (*as we might call it with Deleuze*) "image of thought".[2] Let us thus try to take the notion of interpassive theatre seriously and, importantly, beyond Pfaller.

Generally speaking, Pollesch's critique of interactive theatre is that it has lost all emancipatory potential and can now only ever assist the reproduction of hegemonic forms of subjectivity that dictate the desires of a good life (*activity, flexibility, etc.*). In short: interactive theatre has lost the ability to say something different – it can no longer *think*. Interpassive theatre, on the other hand, Pollesch suggests, might introduce a new and hitherto unknown freedom into artistic and cultural practice; it might ultimately prove to be the key to the construction of a different subjectivity, a different image of thought (Pollesch 2011a). For Pollesch, interpassivity is mainly, as we have seen, the art of delegating that which one used to think one wanted to experience to something else (*having the VCR watch the film, etc.*); it is a freeing from the burden of being governed by the desires of a given subjectivity. We can hence assume that if Pollesch's discursive theory-theatre is indeed interpassive (*which may remain debatable*), its main task must be to allow its audience to delegate their *thinking* to the performance, thus creating a "thinking space" that thinks for them. Only in this way can we make sense of the idea of interpassivity in the context of Pollesch's theatrical experiments: the image of thought as an internal process that draws the boundaries of the classical thinking subject (*I think therefore I am I*) must be transformed into one that understands thought as something external to such a (de)limited subject. Thinking must come to be conceived as a collective process which itself inaugurates a different sense of collective subjectivity. Ideally, then, the performance in its entirety assembles a multiplicity as a thinking community. Thinking is no longer a matter of the individual audience member but a collective discursive process. There is no more drama on the stage (*we are post-dramatic*) – all there is are dramatic thoughts in the process of being uttered and developed. In fact, there is not even a stage anymore – there is only a performance, a thinking space (Pollesch 2008).

All this leaves us with the question what such a conception of a thinking performance might have to offer for contemporary performance in general. We will hence, by way of a long conclusion, raise two questions that arise from Pollesch's method of bringing thought to the stage.

Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, Pollesch has repeatedly formulated the contemporary artist's double-bind: what has long been considered the freedom of the aesthetic is "no more than the training for a demand for creativity out there" (Pollesch 2011a). "Initiative, flexibility, and creativity" are the key requirements for both the artist and the contemporary individual in general (Pollesch 2011a). In a sense, the artist-subject has become the caricature of subjectivity under neoliberal capitalism.[3] Of course this problem extends far beyond the theatre. Allow us to take the practice of contemporary dance as an example. Besides being highly-skilled performance workers, dancers are moreover required to correspond to the dance scene's image of what it means to be an artist: to be creative and proactive, to have a strong

personality and opinion, and to display an individual style of movement and presence. However, traditionally, the production process in contemporary dance includes a single legislator (*behind which we can suspect the forces of the market*), a master-subject giving tasks that represent his or her artistic interests to the dancers who are then expected to adequately respond to them. Creative expressivity tends to be treated as a raw material or force to be moulded and canalised at the choreographer's will. Although the avant-gardes of the 1960s and after (*one could for instance think of the influence of the Judson Church*) have tried to overcome this predicament, we still find the performative arts in a largely "anti-democratic" state of existence (Pollesch 2009d, 323-326). Realistically speaking, even the idea of collective creation (*and this criticism may easily include Pollesch's own rules of production*), so frequently evoked as a method of research in contemporary dance practice insofar as it allows dancers to have an impact on the artistic process, is usually framed by an external set of rules that remains beyond their influence. Ultimately, performance may seem doomed to stay disconnected from any process of real collective thinking. As a consequence, a performance that truly thinks must always be a threat to the established image of performance.

As Pollesch points out, this renders the creation of a genuinely thinking performance virtually impossible: "thought, [or] theatre that actually forms resistance [...] is immediately absorbed or defamed" (Pollesch 2009d, 325). His works can hence (*both in terms of form and content*) be understood precisely as an ongoing search for ways of thinking throughout the overall process of performance, ways of thinking beyond the prevalent rules of language and institutions, beyond the "automatism of the master language" (Pollesch 2009c, 360).

But it is here that we must raise our second question. It concerns, once again, the nature of the thinking that is at stake. Especially (*but not only*) if we extend Pollesch's interpassive theatre to performance as such, we encounter an inadequacy regarding the new image of thought: something gets lost if we focus exclusively on the performance as a collective thinking subject. It is not the least of the virtues of dance and performance that they are capable of investigations into sensibility. And indeed, in the same works in which the idea of interpassive theatre was invented, Pollesch also poses the problem of the body:

> J: Why are the bodies invisible? After all, we do encounter them. None of the words of our culture tells us anything about our bodies. Not a single one. They're always supposed to go away! That which cannot be thought! (Pollesch 2011a)

Bodies are, Pollesch suggests with reference to Jean-Luc Nancy, always hidden from sight, overcoded by structures of meaning. There is no language of bodies – traditionally neither theatre nor dance have been able to conceive one (Pollesch 2011b). The new task is thus precisely to develop such a language, a form of experience that allows bodies to be freed from structures of meaning that are only contingently and conventionally connected to them. What could non-hidden bodies be, and how are we to discover them?

The question of a new subjectivity must thus not only be posed in terms of thinking but also, more generally, in terms of sensibility (*here we can only in passing mention Jacques Rancière's work on the sensus communis*). We can understand the performative arts as a play of sensibilities between perception, experience, and

thought. Performance can then become the site of general adventures and experiments that enable us to construct new forms of subjectivity – the interpassive performance must thus not only conceive a new image of thought based in a collective subject, but also create new collective sensibilities. In the words of *Whatever you do, don't do it yourself*:

> J: We need an adventure, and perhaps it is this: to act as if all of this didn't yet exist. These tools such as arms and legs, and the manner in which one touches them, in which one encounters them. It isn't enough to just dig up our bones and only find embraces again, and arms that make this an arm or this a leg; none of that is obvious. (Pollesch 2011a)

Notes

The colours indicate the performative situation of the presentation: passages given in brown were read by Elisabeth, those in black by Moritz, and the purple parentheses are optional for the reader.

[1] Although Pollesch's works have occasionally been translated into other languages, all publications so far are in German. Accordingly, all translations in this paper are ours.
[2] On the image of thought, see Gilles Deleuze's Difference and Repetition.
[3] See also McRobbie 2004 and Boltanski and Chiapello 2005.

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Biographies

Moritz Gansen has studied English, philosophy, and sociology at the University of Freiburg, at Goldsmiths, University of London, and at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, Kingston University, London. Currently, he is a postgraduate student in philosophy at the Free University of Berlin. His research interests include Deleuze, Hegel and his reception in France, psychoanalysis, aesthetics and its relation to politics, and the relationship between literature and philosophy. Besides his academic work, he has collaborated on different projects with artists and institutions in Germany and the UK.

Elisabeth Schilling is a contemporary dance artist. She has studied dance and performance at The Place and Trinity Laban in London and at Dr. Hoch's Konservatorium in Frankfurt/Main. Her choreographic work, which has been shown at the Bonnie Bird Theatre, Blackheath Halls, the International String Quartet Festival Greenwich, Teatro Bolzano, and several urban sites around London, is guided by a curiosity concerning the development of dance as an art form and engages performance as an interrogation into different constellations of the body, movement, music, and thinking. As a performer, Elisabeth has worked and toured with various artists throughout Europe. Over the years, she has received a number of awards for her work.

And here's something prepared earlier* OR *Museum of the Sublime: relic # 9

Nikki Heywood
University of Wollongong NSW Australia

This paper reshuffles selected moments from some of the eight *relic* 'exhibits' I have presented in Sydney and Wollongong over the last two years, where I have been performing a series of small linked studies under the title ***Museum of the Sublime: relics***.

I attempt to speak simultaneously through the remembered past and a hypothetical future of this serial work in progress, such that it becomes another staging - the 9th variation - on a fragmentary theme of a fragmented body. My intention in this telling is to allow you the listener / reader to experience the described parts and pieces, to reassemble them into some kind of virtual whole; for you to witness, and *think through*, an unseen performance across your own time and in whatever dimension this jumbled reading offers.

My usual approach in these works is curatorial, where I construct a loose choreography in relation to a collection of objects that have caught my attention, that I have sniffed out or stumbled across, and allow the gathered *things* themselves to speak, to move, to look back at me, to move me, and to speak to each other. Assembling objects that range from the banal & everyday- such as a rope, a mirror, a stick - to the more elliptical - a desiccated fur coat, a text from Proverbs or George Bathaille - and hovering ideas that refer to or approach the sublime – such as paintings by Rembrandt and the figures on the walls of Lascaux ... These objects offer up their particular qualities and textures to the 'museum', and as their curator I am at their service, I put them in place, in shifting contexts where their 'meaning' is not quite stable; in these contexts I am performed *by* them and their qualities, or by the logic of their proximity to each other and to me as performing subject inside the unfolding space and shape of performed time. My presence slips between the role of curator and that of an exhibit, shifting between poles of curatorial wilfulness on one hand and a surrender to *their* thinking on the other.

As something I might have prepared earlier, this paper is a record of some new and some left over ideas for action - my intention being that, through presentation before attentive witnesses, testing the usefulness of memory joined with conjecture, some new thinking and questions may arise toward the emergence of ***relic#10*** and beyond.

First memory
In ***relic #1*** a heavy stone mortar and pestle grinds and grinds … rhythmic, stone on stone, pounding down on black, white and red peppercorns... until a sneeze is imminent. But it never ah ah ah... it never arrives.

Second memory
In ***relic #3*** the audience are gathered outside. They have been spoken to... a woman, one finger pointing upward, gives a kind of framing talk…. 'the research question is...' that kind of thing.

Then she disappears.
Moments pass. A male attendant stands before the big door as it opens a crack for you, the audience to be admitted. Strictly one by one.
The doorway is a narrow seam, in this instance - a defined threshold to pass through, and you are told by the attendant to 'mind the gap'.

As you squeeze through she is right there, just inside, too close, slightly blocking your entry, forcing you into a further side-on manoeuvre beyond the threshold.
At least she seems to be there, but she is not available, attention elsewhere.
How can she have absented herself so quickly? Twice disappeared.
She wears white gloves and is working on a puzzle, a mess of fine coloured paper threads, right there at the door, by a mirror, and you pass by her and the mirror, so that you see yourself and her at the same time as you hear her breath, her muttering, and you catch her eye and then she sees you in the mirror too. Ah so she is there! Mind the gap'.

You have entered a large curtained room that is completely empty but for a plinth somewhere close to the centre that holds a scale model that you are drawn to look in upon. It is a model of the same room that you are in. A room inside a room, and your location is marked.

When the others have squeezed through the crack (and there are maybe 20? of you, and you are small inside the large near empty room - and even smaller in the simulacra room), a pervasive droning sound that you hadn't noticed until it stops, stops. And the sound falling away empties the room further to make room for the 20 of you. Without sound, the room is even emptier.

You turn back toward the door and she has moved the mirror at such an angle that she sees you all in the room. Spread out and quiet... In her empty room.

Then the lights go out and as your eyes adjust there is only enough light to see that she has gone... but then you hear her stumbling about behind the heavy curtain, as she slowly and clumsily navigates the hidden perimeter of the room. She mumbles and curses and hums to herself, opens boxes and intermittently opens a crack in the curtain to insert an object into the space. Your curiosity draws you toward these small exhibits. One of them being this wooden bear, with a letter attached.

... and so on. She later makes an appearance, pulls back a side curtain to reveal a row of seating for the audience, an event unfolds, etcetera ...
At a mid point she appears in a tattered full length fur coat (looking like a tired Catherine Deneuve or maybe Gina Rowlands in her later roles) with an exploding party popper.

Near the end, accompanied by a loud bang, the curtain opens in a corner of the room, and there you see the fur coat that she had worn earlier, suspended upside down by butcher's hooks. Empty, arms hanging, it's smooth inside lining catching the light.
Returned to a 'skin'. An animal hide.

*****

In Rembrandt's painting 'the Slaughtered Ox', the hanging carcass has no head, no entrails and no skin. In her essay *'Bathsheba or the Interior Bible'* Helen Cixous (1998) describes the animal's flayed eviscerated body:

> *before me spreads the agitated space with its sombre thicknesses of fatty haunted gold, ... of flayed scarlet stairs in the geologic matter, the ground sheer like a deep hanging, past upon past, ...overflowing.., with thoughts , with passions, with kin, before me my personal foreign land: everything that in its night dough, I discern for the first time , I recognise. The world before me so great, is inside, it is the immense limitless life hidden behind restricted life.*

<center>*****</center>

One week ago (a week in April 2012), I caught sight of the original Rembrandt in a darkened room in the Louvre and audibly gasped...

Having for so long held the reproduced image of the Slaughtered beast in the cellar as some kind of borrowed memory or teleological totem, after meditating on the mystery and carnality of this painting, especially as seen through incisive beauty of Cixous' language, I had been engaged in a personal myth making, a vaguely pagan idolatry... and here was the *real* artefact. The original. Although as the original it is already a conscious re-presentation and, for me, highly mediated by the writings of Cixous and John Berger.

'The Slaughtered Ox' 1655. A potently distilled memento of the savagery concealed beneath the civil codes of our existence. We kill things and remove their entrails. Mostly out of sight. And here is the hidden sacrifice. The corpse beneath the stairs.... or as Cixous would have it 'our anonymous humanity… the portrait of our mortality'.

There it was, still waiting in a dusty wing of the Louvre for another visiting pilgrim. Was it pleased to see me, breathing life, cells vibrating, as Rembrandt himself in portraits of all ages – youth to senex – looked on sagely from across the room?

And there 'Bathsheba bathing' (1654), just as Cixous promises, luminous on the other side, still holding the page in her hand…

> *before us, very near, very far from us… We see a mixture of slowness and agitation…*
> *It's dark here. We're down below. We're here.*
> *In the breast. Immediately. Such an absence of exterior!*
> *The country is a room of palpitating folds…*
> *The source of the light is cut off. The light remains. The secret fire that emanates from the flesh.*
> *Of what secret lights are we made? Of what densities?*

To close the performance of relic #3, for over 2 minutes the woman moves from standing to sitting, impossibly slowly, poised to read the small bear's sad letter. The words are difficult for her to see, she needs her glasses and to move the page to a

distance where they do not blur. She squints and mouths the scratchy words of the animal in fading light.

Fourth Memory
Relic #4 … a small gathering in an antechamber where the floor has just been washed, calling for a yellow plastic sign – SLIPPERY WHEN WET.

Here, I am wondering how to have the audience actively shift *their* focal length and thus mildly alter their perceptual field. To move from our normal fixed-point focus and perhaps in doing so, to shift from the position of passive audience to that of witness/participant. To rethink their looking. I introduce an eye exercise chart that firstly instructs the user to breathe deeply, to relax and soften the gaze. By focusing on their own finger in front of two large dots on a page, then removing the finger but retaining the altered focal length, it is possible for the 2 dots to become 4 then 3 and then one. There are also exercises with 4 dots that become 8 that become 2 that become one. With some practice!

I later decide (and even later reject the same idea) that this process is the perfect model for my thesis as well as for the presentation of the performed material. Each dot as a discreet image or conceptual thread that may be held apart or, by softening the gaze and shifting distance and perspective, the ideas blur at the edges, overlap temporarily and mark a momentary synthesis.

After the eye chart my audience are given the image of a small boy standing with a balloon in the doorway of a 16th century Flemish house. The balloon is of course made from the bladder of the flayed animal suspended further inside the room. And I tell them that it was not uncommon for painters of this period to place an air filled bladder/balloon as a counterweight to the heavy presence of death. It lightly connotes the spirit, the immortal. For me the balloon is the held breath, the personal exhalation captured and creating form, filling the membrane, a space within a space, a small cell within the larger cell of the room... where one becomes two.

For somatic practitioner Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, whose teaching is Body Mind Centering, the bladder is the organ that stores both that which is being eliminated and the instinctive essence of our creativity... the creativity that Australian philosopher Elizabeth Grosz (2008) refers to in *Chaos, Territory and Art* as the *excess* of our being.

With their new found flexible focal capacity, the audience are asked to put an X in one dot and an O in the other, and then allow them to merge into one. They are given a lolly bag with sweets to eat and a balloon for them to blow and fill and hold. A short time later they are led, one by one, holding their balloon, up some stairs where, exhibited in a dim light, they briefly see the curved back of a nude reclining on fur. She is looking out of her frame at them in the small mirror she holds.

I conjecture that in a later museum... perhaps **relic #11**, there will be a flickering film of the reclining woman's body, framed, revealed from behind the curtain.
I imagine that this may be at the beginning. Just her, as large as life.

She looks back at you as you read her contours, her curves a country you remember visiting.
Perhaps you can go behind the curtain and it will be as though you are seeing yourself.
As though from the inside. Or as though you see the world through her eyes.
It is possible. Even that her gaze detaches itself from her body and floats around the room.
It is possible, with special cameras and things.... to confound the point of view.

Or perhaps, with every other part dimmed, rather than revealing her back, your eyes will be drawn to see only her navel, there at the centre of things. Again this is after Rembrandt, who as Berger (2001) observes, made Bathsheba's '*nubile stomach and navel the focus of the entire painting… and painted them with love and pity as if they were a face.*'

Fifth Memory
Back to *relic #4* and the woman up the stairs... I almost forgot that she had a rope around her ankle. Downstairs, the rope later becomes its own moving exhibit... in a tightly focused circle of light, with the audience gathered close, the rope circles on itself, tangles, twists... and writhes.... in undulating rhythm, snaking white on the dark floor , it scribes graphic lines....

In my conjecture I focally cross 2 of the exhibits … the empty fur skin standing in for Rembrandt's eviscerated corpse, and the writhing rope for a bond or tether / turned intestine.

In this way I take my place as curator and put the animal back together.

Our bodies speak back to art and nature, art and nature also observes us.

In this work ... desire and curiosity draw open the curtain onto the thinking interior. The animal (with attendant ropes and sticks) offers a doorway into '*the immense limitless life hidden behind restricted life*'. Inside the work I wait for the animal to speak back to the woman.... For us one animal can stand for all the other animals of that species... one single bear, ox, deer, donkey …can hold the unwritten history of its kind… a history folded in complex pleats into the fabric of human history… our history obsessed with objects and their taxonomy. I assemble a small and exhausted array of objects that resonate with the flesh, with a type of music, with the animal, the feminine and speechlessness… in search, in a clumsy way, for those relics to find a voice through their appearance in an abject museum of the sublime.

Note

All photographs by Heidrun Lohr, taken from a showing of material developed during a Critical Path Research Residency in Io Myers Studio, University of New South Wales, August 2010.

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Biography

Nikki Heywood is a Sydney based performance maker who is currently doing practice-based Doctoral research at the University of Wollongong. Her devised work is informed by the visual arts, Body Weather, a long improvisation practice and other somatic, perceptual approaches including Body Mind Centering.

Idle fancies, lucid dreams, startling memories: Remembering as a form of active spectatorship

Katja Hilevaara
Queen Mary University of London

The claim

I would like to begin with a claim that contemporary theatre is a vehicle for extending perception. Theatre is a cultural practice that enables the spectator to enter a dream-like state in which unexpected, unforeseen memories circulate and come together; mixing and amalgamating; bouncing and ricocheting off each other, generating indeterminate new connections and tangents, expanding what is perceived.

The spectator is invited to engage in a creative act of interpretation, to play a game of dots where the dots shift perpetually and the completed image is unexpected. The play between the theatre maker's prompts and the spectator's reactions generates perceptual material that extends beyond the anticipated, known responses. By striving for unpredictability, deliberately complicating perception, theatre makers are tapping into radical innovation that genuinely creates responses that cannot be known in advance. By creating conditions for imagining and conscious dreaming in which perception is prolonged, theatre makers invite indisputably new thinking.

A few signposts

In this paper I will exercise an idea about remembering as a form of active spectatorship. Remembering in this context is intrinsically linked to perception, the thing that the spectator *does.* First, using Ivana Müller's performance *Playing Ensemble Again and Again* (2008)[29] as an example, I will examine the strategy of temporal interference in contemporary performance and how it produces a delay in the spectator's perception. I will argue next, perching on the shoulders of Henri Bergson that this delay extends perception, because it allows an increased multitude of interposed and unpredictable memories to come to the surface to interpret the perceived materials. These startling memories, referred to in the title, produce undeterminable, unforeseen and genuinely new responses for the spectator. I will conclude the paper by proposing some implications that the idea of theatre as a vehicle for extended perception might provoke.

So, let me first say a few words about time and performance in general before examining it as a strategy of temporal interference in Müller's *Playing Ensemble Again and Again.*

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[29] Müller, Ivana. *Playing Ensemble Again and Again.* 2008. Concept, choreography and direction: Ivana Müller; Performers: Daniel Almgren-Recén, Katja Dreyer, Pedro Inês, Karen Røise Kielland, Bojana Mladenović and Rodrigo Sobarzo; Text: Ivana Müller, Bill Aitchison and the performers; Lighting design: Martin Kaffarnik; Sound design: Viljam Nybacka; Artistic advise: Bill Aitchison. The references here are made to two performances I "attended"; a live performance at the Lilian Baylis Studio at Sadlers Wells, London, 21 January 2010 and a DVD recording made at Hau 2, Berlin, October 2009, courtesy of the artist; viewed November 2011-March 2012.

Time in performance

In *The Nick of Time* Elizabeth Grosz writes that "[w]e can think [of time] only in passing moments, through ruptures, nicks, cuts, in instances of dislocation, though it contains no moments or ruptures and has no being or presence, functioning only as continuous becoming." (Grosz, 2004:5) Theatre performance is an opportunity for us to stand back from time and explore its 'nicks', discontinuities and disruptions. Although partaking in an act of watching/experiencing/perceiving in real time - in time that envelops us, moves on, passes by, and becomes - the layers of temporality that performance makes tangible provide us a glimpse into the ruptures Grosz refers to. The abstract quality of time which ordinarily remains beyond our grasp due to our complete immersion in it, is made more concrete within a performance that engages in play with time. Repetition, slow motion and velocity in performance draw our attention to disrupted time and how these temporal peculiarities influence our experience. We question the repeated sequences, look for concealed meaning in the slowed down gestures, and see situations anew in light of the rhythms generated by speeded up actions or text. Narration that travels from the end to the beginning, flashbacks from the present to the past or the future, and allusions to rewinding and fastforwarding that leap across the present time equally contribute to the distorted experience of time. Following a story made up of fragments belonging to different time frames heightens our perceiving faculties and the temporal leaps force us to adjust and process the unfolding stories again and again. Theatre as a form of storytelling makes use of a variety of strategies that manipulate our concept of time. Not only is the narrative spoken, sung, whispered, recited and so on, but the layers of different theatrical signs – bodies, objects, sounds, lights and the intricate shifts of focus highlighting or obscuring any combination of these elements – are able to narrate simultaneous and overlapping time structures. By using a combination of visual, aural, textual and illusory and all manner of perceptible sensory stimuli, theatre performance cuts into the fabric of time an opening, through which time stops momentarily and then starts again.

I argue that in theatre performance that deliberately manipulates time, Grosz's ruptures are commonplace, and their effects manifest as delays in perception. These delays in turn enable the circulation of an increased number of memory images which as a result enhance the meaning-making process. In other words, the temporal interference strategies at theatre-makers' disposal enable a perception of time as a postponement, a delay, a break, which is then filled with unexpected memory connections that produce new meanings.

Time and *Playing Ensemble Again and Again*

Let me next briefly describe the performance of *Playing Ensemble Again and Again*. It was conceived in 2008 by the theatre company of Ivana Müller who is a Paris- and Amsterdam-based choreographer, artist and writer.[30] I saw the performance in January 2010 at the Lilian Baylis Studio at Sadlers Wells.

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[30] Further biographical information of Ivana Müller, a short video excerpt of *Playing Ensemble Again and Again* and details of other works available on http://www.ivanamuller.com/ [accessed 13 April 2012].

Condensing a theatrical convention to its core, *Playing Ensemble Again and Again* revolves around the final bow, the curtain call. The piece opens with an empty stage, and pre-recorded applause. After a while, the performers slowly arrive to the stage through the back curtain. Gradually the spectator adjusts to the physical language of slow motion. The final curtain call has been decelerated, slowed right down, and this slow motion mode is maintained throughout the performance. The performers arrive, or apparently return, take a couple of bows, exit to the wings, come back the second time, exit again to arrive for the third and final time, and then leave for the real ending of the show – all this in slow motion. The economy of movement is paired with the six performers' speech – all text also revolving around the act of bowing. Thoughts are voiced out loud about standing there and then, in front of the spectator; thoughts are spoken about the experience of tonight's show, albeit imaginary; and thoughts are projected about self and others in relation to the show, the company and the audience.

The convention of a bow is put on a pedestal in the performance, its status is raised from an appendix to the focal point, and its role as the no-man's land between the performance and the bar is flipped backwards to become the main event. There is no performance other than the bow. And conversely, it is in the distillation of this gesture that a multiplicity of possibilities is opened up. When nothing happens, the smallest things become epic. In slowing the action down, by choosing the physical register of slow motion, *Playing Ensemble Again and Again* further invites the spectator in. Once the spectator realises that the slow formation of the row of performers smiling directly at the audience, reaching for each others' hands, stooping and rising again, walking backwards and forwards and to the wings will be the only action on show, they begin to take notice of the smallest details. The amplification of gesture possible through the paring down of action foregrounds the imagination.

Time extended

Let us then think about slow motion in terms of a delay, or a series of ruptures that not only allow us a glimpse of time itself, but extend our capacity to perceive. Slow motion obscures and 'makes strange' an ordinary gesture. In *Playing Ensemble Again and Again*, the bow, slowed right down, becomes a site for extended perception. Because the gesture is so slow, not only does it highlight the minute details of the bodies but in doing so, expands the potential material that we perceive. The time it takes for the body to perform its task leaves the spectator's mind idling. Because it does not quickly have to process information in order to move on, it can take its time. And in its idleness, it entertains itself by trying to make what it sees interesting, paying attention to the minutiae, playing with thoughts that come, associations that arrive. This space for remembering thickens the perception process, and potentially acts as a trigger for slightly longer delays in which the perceiving faculties process more memories, and more unexpected connections and responses emerge. In a paradoxical way, to enable the mind to be more active, it ought to be idle. This idle state of mind that does not have to 'act,' verges on Bergson's 'plane of dreams'. Bergson describes the relationship between perception and remembering as an electric circuit in which concentric circles contain the memory-images of the past.

In his diagram, the object of perception holds the circuit in mutual tension by continuous movement. The present object of perception is in the middle (O), right behind an afterimage of it (A), and then ever widening circles (B, C, D) that contain contracting and expanding details of past memories. The outer circle contains the exact detail of our experience but only ever by chance, or in dreams, will those recollections be remembered exactly, most of the time they lend just a part of themselves to perception.
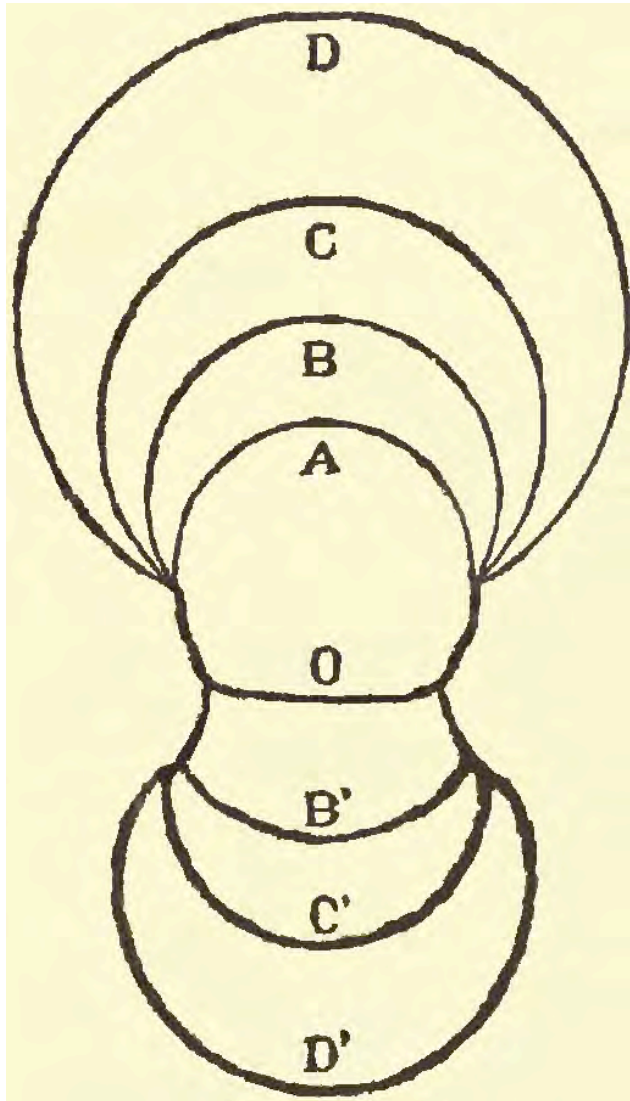
Fig. 1

(Bergson 1988, p105)[31]

Closer to action the memory gets, less like the original memory it is. It is only revealing a fragmentary detail that is "thinned and sharpened" (Bergson, 1988:106) and follows the body's necessity for action. As Bergson states, "there comes a moment when the recollection thus brought down is capable of blending so well with the present perception that we cannot say where the perception ends and where memory begins." (Bergson, 1988:106)

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[31] This image of the diagram of Bergson's electric circuit is published in Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p105.

We call upon; from the whole of our memory, the useful memory-images that best blend in with perception, that best serve the demands of the future we continuously tend towards. However, for Bergson memory is elastic, it can exist in more or less contracted or dilated state. Each circuit contains the whole of our memory in varying intensity, as the concentric circles become increasingly open the further away from the object of perception and action they are.

The most contracted memories merge with perception and are illuminated only partially, and serve only to shed light to the present for the facilitation of the future. The most dilated memories, on the other hand, cannot be accessed in their entirety anywhere but dreams. For Bergson, "[p]ast images, reproduced exactly as they were, with all their details and even with their affective colouring, are the images of idle fancy or of dream." (Bergson, 1988:106) In sleep, the constraints imposed on perception by impending action are completely relaxed.[32] The detachment from action enables a free movement of exact, precise memory images. Therefore a dream has the potential to *reproduce* memories. In this sense lucid dreaming like imagining or daydreaming also bring us closer to the concrete past images. Disconnecting from the demands of action enables a stream of memory images to enter consciousness. And because there is no action to fulfil, no instant response to produce, lucid dreaming extends the delay which is filled with an "incalculable multitude of remembered elements." (Bergson, 1988:150) Therefore, the more the reaction to the stimulus is prolonged, the more indeterminate the response. The more the action-driven present is relaxed and the tension between the stimulus and response eased, the more extensively the startling memories and their unpredictable connections emerge.

Back to performance

As I have discussed in relation to *Playing Ensemble Again and Again*, theatre can fabricate a space for lucid dreaming by manipulating time. Returning to the idea that temporal interference in theatre produces a delay in the spectator's perception, it can be argued that spectatorship can resemble daydreaming. The spectator's use of imagination, her willingness to think laterally and her openness to a playful interaction with the performance undoubtedly extends perception time and hence the delay is flooded with unanticipated memories. And it is this delay in perception that can be seen to facilitate creativity. Trying to understand what one sees triggers a process of adjustment, of leaping back and forth between past memories and what is presented on stage. The more elusive the object of perception - as it is in the case of deliberately meaning-shy performance - the more elastic the remembering, and the more undeterminable the responses.

The implications

The critical practice of examining the work of memory in the spectatorship of contemporary theatre highlights several valuable implications within performance

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[32] I am indebted to Elizabeth Grosz's reading of Bergson's theory of memory and her detailed analysis of delay in perception, see Grosz, Elizabeth. *Time Travels: Feminism, Nature, Power*. Durham and London: Duke UP. 2005, especially pp93-111; and Grosz explicates the disconnection between action and sleep p101.

studies. Memory could challenge at least one particularly persistent notion about performance, the primacy of *liveness.* If the present indeed has one foot in the past whilst tending towards the future, the idea that performance's only life is in the present is immediately complicated, if not impossible. Not only would doing away with liveness activate a surge of new standpoints in terms of definitions and categorisations of performance, and in particular its documentation, but the tendency to write mournfully of performance, positing the writer in an inferior, unworthy relationship describing that which no longer exists and self-pityingly apologising for the inadequacies of description could become a thing of the past.

Overall, though, memory democratises theatre. For one, the relationship between the makers and the perceivers stand on an equal footing when the performance that exists between them has a life beyond the present. In addition, as theatre makers relinquish the meaning-making to the spectators, the transformation of the performance continues *ad infinitum*, in the quotidian yet extraordinary and unique memories of those who were there. As each spectator has their own version of what they have seen, there are a multitude of transformations in motion.

Significantly, these quotidian 'lay' responses might offer us a more accurate understanding of theatre's potential as opposed to relying on the privileged few who professionally respond to what they have seen. As Helen Freshwater has pointed out, scholars shy away from asking what the 'ordinary' theatre-goer makes of the performance.[33] In this sense, the kinds of master narratives and canons that emerge from those whose stories and memories are deemed valuable would be diluted and a greater breadth of theatre experiences might be mapped out.

More specifically, in thinking about the delay in perception this paper has attempted to identify instances in performance that, instead of producing anticipated and predictable responses rather create emergent, unforeseen and new reactions. I have suggested that these instances are triggered by the manipulation of time, fabricated temporal disjointedness which sets Bergson's perceptual faculties in motion – extending, delaying, and deferring the connections the mind makes.

If theatre then has a potential for generating new thinking, what are the consequences? Are spectators 'allowed' to misinterpret, misunderstand, and mis-read what they are presented? Creative perception no doubt produces inaccuracies, 'red herrings' and, in 'wrong hands' potentially harmful responses, but which version of the performance is the right one, the maker's or the spectator's? Or indeed, does it matter? Unleashing our unpredictable memories onto the fabric of a performance indubitably produces indeterminable connections. But the question does not have to be about right and wrong, about objectivity and subjectivity or about original and recorded. What about thinking about theatre as an opportunity to create, whether as a maker or a spectator? What if the evaluation of theatre lies in its ability to produce the most imaginative responses in its audience? Shouldn't we then anticipate theatre that is able to exercise our imaginations, take us closer to our minds able to lucidly

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[33] See further discussion of prejudicing the spectator in Freshwater, Helen. *Theatre and Audience.* Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2009. p4.

dream? Isn't there value in attending to our own creative thoughts, prompted by a set of theatrical stimuli? I will leave you with these questions.

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Biography

Katja Hilevaara is an artist, a teacher and a researcher. She is currently a recipient of a Queen Mary University of London scholarship for her PhD research on performance and memory. She is an Associate Tutor at Goldsmiths University of London and further information and images of her artwork can be found at ww.katjahilevaara.com.

Acting on behalf of thought: thinking on how performative expression acts, in rehearsal, performance, and non-theatrical contexts

Rebecca Hillman
University of Reading

Introduction

This paper considers how performance can be understood as a way of thinking in its own right, producing valuable and indigenous knowledge and experiences in and of itself, as well as existing as a medium for the application or illustration of pre-existing thoughts and experiences. One way of considering how performance thinks is to ask, in relation to a specific performative event: 'if this event hadn't involved processes of theatrical performance and performance-making, what couldn't it have achieved, and what would it have achieved differently?' By choosing a few examples it should be possible to offer some analysis of what elements of performance practice create specific outcomes, and how.

So, as well as contemplating in general terms what is distinctive about performance and how it 'thinks', this paper makes reference to a two month rehearsal process that formed part of my on-going practice as research Ph.D., in an attempt to demonstrate how these qualities are significant for processes of performance practice that seek to facilitate critical political debates and praxis among local people. It considers how qualities of performance that developed in the project's devising and 'open' rehearsal process can be understood as having thought 'through' and 'with' participants and audience members, and to what effect. The paper closes by asking how performance can be understood as a mode of expression operating beyond theatrical contexts, and considers how recognising 'how performance thinks' could qualify modes of expression that fall outside prevailing and authenticated conventions of the communication of thought. Reflexively, it asks what the broader socio-political events that circulated the project might mean for theatre practitioners and scholars interested in politically empowering communities by means of live performance practice, and/or allowing concerns, identities and expressions of communities to shape their work. In particular, it looks back to the 2011 England Riots that happened to coincide with the first day of the project's rehearsals to provoke thought (performative or otherwise) on to what extent recent and emergent social-political communities have been evolved/repressed, and what relationship to performance or other discursive modes these positions bear.

The Pact

My practice as research Ph.D.asks what modes and combinations of theatrical response can be effective for engaging people around specific economic and political circumstances impacting their communities and environments, and how devising processes and 'open rehearsals' can facilitate engagement with syndicalist objectives and methodologies, and critical political debates among local people. It also asks how these engagements may depend of the cultural significance of the site in which they take place, and how processes of performance making could appropriate particular community organising methodologies. The Organiser Model,

for example, usually associated with trade unionism and community activism more broadly, fosters activity through listening to what matters to a collective and motivates an individual, and builds participation and buy-in through delegation of tasks which gradually require more responsibility and skill to work towards an achievable goal. This was one model of practice that the project attempted to adapt and apply to a theatrical context. (See Saul D. Alinsky 1969 and 'The Organiser Model'.)

Anne Bogart asserts that theatre audiences and practitioners 'crave the feelings engendered in the experience of the theatre.' She describes our 'attraction' to theatre as caused by 'the sweep of feeling, of emotion, of adrenaline [as] surges of dopamine and serotonin, and new neural pathways forged in the brain [are] extended throughout the entire body.' (Bogart in Hurley 2010: xiv). Theatre practice is one of the methodologies through which I explore these questions, and this practical process included two-months of rehearsals, leading to four public events including an hour long performance called *The Pact*. The rehearsals, performances and their after events all took place in a disused pub in Reading town centre called The Coopers Arms.

Because one of the objectives of my project was to facilitate engagement of many local community members, including those who may not constitute 'theatre audiences' or 'practitioners', and because it sought to engage people with what it understands as political *processes* of theatre making, as well as the political *content* of the material that comprised the scenes, it was important to locate and advertise the project in such a way that it could appeal to as broad a social group as possible. One important factor in establishing these conditions of engagement was to draw much of the script's verbatim material from the words of local people I had interviewed in the summer. How performance thinks is partly defined by who imagines and animates it into being, and the generation and deployment of verbatim material was a crucial element for socially rooting the project, during pre-production process, as well as in performance.

Another important factor was the site-specificity of the venue. The Coopers Arms is situated in Reading's town centre and close to the train station and a consistent traffic of shoppers and commuters pass its front doors throughout the day and late into the evening. The pub also has a somewhat controversial political history and had been closed down for more than a year when we began rehearsing there. In this way, the spatial, social and political identities of the venue instigated curiosity and accessibility. Responses from local people throughout the rehearsal process and after the performances indicated that the venue had engendered in them familiarity and even feelings of belonging and ownership, especially although not exclusively from those who had spent time there when the pub had been open. Also, The Coopers Arms, whose large windows stretched much of the length of the front of the building, provided porosity to the venue. A moving cyclorama of central Reading provided a thematic backdrop for those rehearsing inside, while the aspect of their rehearsing provided a curious spectacle for those on the outside, passing by. People would often stop to watch through the window, occasionally noticing and very occasionally complying with the signs stuck onto the windows themselves, inviting

them in, interested in the unusual phenomenon and display of theatrical rehearsal in the town centre.

In an attempt to kindle latent desires for Bogart's 'sweep of feeling...' in our prospective audience members, and not classify the production as high-brow or overtly 'political', our promotional posters consisted of few words and a bold comic-strip, whose panels depicted dark, expressive, images. Each image was constructed to captivate interest and hint at a dramatic narrative, whilst giving no precise content of the events it advertised. I chose performance as a medium through which to facilitate creative, critical and accessible spaces for political discussion among local people for a number of reasons. If framed in the 'right way', I anticipated that qualities that fundamentally constitute theatrical (live or mediated) performance would work, almost automatically, to attract people in the first place. Imitation, or mimesis, defined in Aristotle's *Poetic*s as a primary and universal human pleasure, would seduce people, promising the psychic transportation of the spectator to another place, or an impression of another world for spectators to admire, invest in and perhaps even to some extent, believe in. Such attractions, lacking in other forums for the facilitation of community debate and activism, might facilitate interesting and diverse engagements.

Rehearsal Processes

The escapism or 'other world' quality that performance can provide can arguably also come about through processes of artistic production. 'What the spectator, […] enjoys about art', claimed Brecht, 'is the making of art, the active creative element.' (Brecht quoted in Robert Baker-White 1999: 55). For Bogart: 'the process of rehearsal as well as performance is life heated up, intensified, and put under a microscope.' (Bogart in Hurley 2010: xiv) Timberlake Wertenbaker, speaking at the University of Reading recently (SCUDD Conference, 30th-31st March 2012) referred to the extent to which, through involving herself in processes of performance production, she has experienced its own intimate and specific dimensions. She described re-entering a theatre in which she had been involved in the development of one of her plays, after the set has been struck, to experience 'a loss after some sort of paradise.' The production team 'have been in a world together,' she explained; 'we have lived together'.

In terms of my research practice project, I was interested in the divergent possibilities for community engagement that allowing public access to rehearsal spaces might engender. The cast and I held 'open rehearsals' in the Coopers Arms, whereby members of the public would be invited to come inside and engage with the production process. On the one hand, a rehearsal space could provide an entertaining, non-demanding, inclusive and experimental environment, existing for members of the community to dip in and out of at their leisure. On the other hand, the performance for which the rehearsals were a preparation could be devised in such a way as to benefit and rely on a range of inputs and skills, meaning that the rehearsal space could also exist as an appropriate forum to foster participation and mutual responsibility among constituents of diverse backgrounds. Susan Letzer Cole remarks that: 'Rehearsal is behind-the-scene work: it is also behind-the-seen work […] the kind of seeing the interrupted rhythms of rehearsal make possible is not

transferable to any viewing of performance'(Cole in Baker-White 1999: 56).As well as promoting the performance project and developing a model that could accommodate and benefit from the practical involvement of community members, there are other ways that rehearsals, in and of themselves can be understood as having potential to engage people 'politically'. What political ramifications are there in processes that demonstrate that there is a level at which experiencing or witnessing something is in itself not a passive act, but a creative one, and that foreground modes of 'seeing', 'thinking' and 'doing', and the slippage between reality and representation, construction and deconstruction?

I was interested to explore dynamics of the rehearsal space as a micro-society, run according to specific rules, intentions and constraints, wherein reality (and its representation) is produced through practice, debate and intervention, where hierarchical, democratic, collaborative and/or autonomous power structures can be placed in the foreground, and become tested and contested.

Through open rehearsals specifically, I was interested in reconstructing relationships between spectators and performers and foregrounding this in discussion during the rehearsals. For Nicholas Ridout, in his 2007 hypotheses on actual relations of labour and consumption that occur in the fictionalised context of the theatrical event, these relations inherently create disquieting moments of intersubjectivity. For a performance whose 'content' consisted of critiques of social, economic and political power relations, and whose processes explicitly sought to revise traditional relations of performance and spectatorship, this hypothesis was thematically and literally pertinent.

I was also interested to expose processes of performative thought and action in order to foreground and explore relationships between spectators and performers in order to facilitate and extend the kind of 'political' engagements advocated by practitioners like Augusto Boal (1979), John McGrath (2002) and Bertolt Brecht (in Willet 1994).Robert Baker-White explores rehearsals in relation to Brecht's methodological approaches for activating audiences critically, around political issues. Of course it is the critical nature of engagement, as well as the subject matter engaged with, that contributes to the politics of Brechtian theatre practice. 'In effect' writes Baker-White, 'Brecht calls for audiences to function as theatre artists, to behave as if they were in the rehearsal themselves.' (Baker-White 1999: 49)

Rehearsing actors, as well as animating narrative, explicitly and by definition demonstrate the construction of that narrative and animation through processes of repetition; they think through performance and can demonstrate, in rehearsal, how performance thinks. In rehearsal, 'the various aspects of production are *expected* to influence the development of others.' (Ibid: 51) Baker-White points out that 'rehearsal is always a site of the Barthesian distance between signifier and signified, because it is a site of the becoming of relations, a process where things and their referents are not yet firmly attached'. So, introducing spectators into the rehearsal space facilitated their encountering art that not only expressed reality but also signified it. In other words, by attempting to provide the 'open-ended ethos of rehearsal' (Ibid: 51) that Brecht called for to dominate performance, I intended to build participation and knowledge up among a broader group of people than those working consistently on

the project. I wanted to explore whether 'open rehearsals' could be one effective way of achieving Brecht's 'theatre full of experts' and creating the possibility of the spectator/participant at the rehearsal to actually, 'by means of a certain interchangability of circumstances and occurrences, [be] given the possibility (and duty) of assembling, experimenting and abstracting.'(Ibid: 50-51).The intention was that spectators/participants would debate and develop authentic and relevant subject matter, as Boal put it, to encounter simultaneously the 'Truth' of the performance itself. By participating, claimed Boal, 'the Spect-Actor is not fictional [but] exists in the scene and outside of it, in a dual reality. By taking possession of the stage in theatre he acts: not just in the fiction but also in his social reality.' (Boal 1979: xx-xxi)Rehearsal as a collective and creative activity, read my hypothesis, would maximise engagement with, McGrath's'basic emotional imperative of solidarity': 'that what happens to other people matters.' As he pointed out, 'these things theatre can actually embody: in its content, and in its processes.' (McGrath in Holdsworth 2004: 178)

Community and Performer Engagement

Pooling ideas and stories through processes of devising collectively offer sone model for creating performance that reflects experiences and appeals to people of different backgrounds and sensibilities. But what does that process mean for its actors, and other regular practitioners? For practitioners involved in my practical project with some background in theatre, and who had given specific commitment to the rehearsal process, conventions of rehearsal and performance were integral to the way the space was conceived, the way in which we conducted ourselves, and how we managed our expectations and intentions. We also felt that there were processes of explanation and demonstration to go through in order to initiate those members of the cast and crew who had not worked on a theatrical production before.

There was a script under construction, but in committing to the project, people understood that one of the objectives was to collectively devise material relating to what they understood as their social, political and economic conditions. Everyone brought material forward, but initially of course, only those with experiences of rehearsing and devising understood that theatrical performance attends to, seeks to find meaning in, and creates poetic and subjective experience and expression. It was these people, therefore, that were able to communicate that material in ways that would be unconventional in another setting.

Personal stories, some of which were quite traumatic, were offered to the production by cast-members. In speaking to those cast-members about their decision to revisit difficult times in their lives, they suggested that regurgitating such material for performance somehow 'made use of it' and qualified it. They even implied that sharing their experiences in this way somehow exorcised the experience, giving it new life. Estranged from the person whose story it was, transformed and shared through gesture and intonation of performance, these experiences became textured and re-contextualised. Sharing material through the exposing dynamics of rehearsal and performance facilitated the possibility of not only understanding the conditions under which material was brought into being, but also understanding its relationship with ourselves and one another, as we witnessed, and were witnessed. Meanwhile,

storytelling in a narrative sense was only one avenue through which to express ones perspectives through performance. Eventually, the script included two scenes written by different cast members, while one of those scenes was directed by another cast member, whose rhythmic, mechanical and monotonous choreography articulated her experience of and attitude towards a particular kind of workplace. Thought was now performing, and thinking aloud for people. Through processes of rehearsal and performance, thought was embodied and cadenced and performance was sharing what had begun to knock around unhelpfully against the inside of our individual heads.

I am interested in returning to theatre and mimesis, and the suggestions in Wertenbaker's description of the way that people involved with processes of making and watching performance encounter reality, to ask what ramifications does the fact of having *real* emotional responses to fictionalised situations have for participants in the creation of theatrical performance? Conventionally, dramatic performance is understood as a representation of reality, or as reality at one remove. Performance can offer a break from reality and an intimacy with alternative realities, free from the constraints imposed on our daily or 'real' lives, regardless of the extent to which the performance may deal with 'real life' issues. However, *because of this*, performance is also a form that offers practitioners and audience the opportunity to connect profoundly with reality. Faith can be placed playfully, experimentally and without risk in a process and form that exists only fleetingly, and which, although it might gesture towards the real, is defined by its difference from it. What harm can come of an act which only intends to perform, and vanish again, as though it never was? And because of this representational status, to what extent can audiences and participants let habitual inhibitions go, to invest uniquely and whole-heartedly in the act of performing, or otherwise engaging with performance?

It is precisely because this sort of performance (usually) *does not* explicitly claim to intervene directly with real existence that it can perform outlandish, controversial and fantastic events, apparently (safely) contained in the realm of mimesis and make-believe. Herein lies its attraction, and duplicitous nature. To what extent is the idea that performance is somehow separate from reality reliant on how one thinks about performance? What is more of a pretence: to build a set or to strike it; brushing away all evidence that it ever happened?

Erin Hurley quotes Poll Pelletier in her book *Theatre & Feeling* in relation to this liminal nature of performance, and the exposure that takes place in potentially risky rehearsal processes. Pelletier speaks of the 'emotional forces that can be released through the really, truly brutal relationship between actors within the fictional circumstances of theatrical production.' (Hurley 2010: 7)The 'experimental' rehearsal space seemed to equate to a 'safe' space during the first couple of rehearsals of the practical project, in which people brought forward dramatic, emotionally charged and autobiographical material in improvisation exercises. The flexibility of the devising process and the range of possibilities available for staging any moment of the production meant that any story brought forward could be performed in such a way that the storyteller could choose to remain at what he or she considered a 'safe' distance from it (when re-performing it themselves, for example, even in a fictional context, might be too difficult). However, these parameters were established through

trial and error. Expectations associated with the rehearsal and performance, as well as leading to positive or creative circumstances, unleashed unguarded presentations of personal and generally private material, leading to some emotionally painful moments for some cast members. We had to convene on this matter to redraw parameters, for ourselves and one another, as to what we should be wary of exorcising via processes of rehearsal and performance, which had taken us by surprise, in their ability to act as a powerful medium between our performative and private selves.

According to Stanton B. Garner JR, 'our vocabulary fails to capture the experiential weight of this 'as if' response to theatrical (or other) phenomena, this mutuality of the real and unreal at the heart of what we call "actuality."' He says 'the theatrical *mode* of this presence, or givenness – transgresses while 'never fully erasing the boundaries between "is" and "as if"', and thus, the performing body occupies a paradoxical role 'as both the activating agent of such dualities as presentation/representation, sign/reference, reality/illusion and that, which most dramatically threatens to collapse them.' (Garner 1994: 42-44) Politically motivated practitioners have historically challenged parameters that appear to separate performance from reality, highlighting instead how performance alters reality despite sometimes giving the appearance it is not doing so, and making performance that tests out and foregrounds this idea. Encountering and foregrounding this mutuality of the real and the unreal in performance produces different engagements that can be both risky, and productive.

Performative Community Action

I want to end this paper by asking a few questions about 'performances' that encircled and shaped the practical project. Although the performative action I will refer is different to the performance processes focused on above, I am still concerned with questions of performance and duality: how performance can appear because it is only temporary; because it is not real, yet at the same time how it happens, unequivocally. I want to consider how and why it makes an impact, and how it finds itself able to think and act, (similarly to some of the experiences outlined above that I have argued were engendered through processes of performance and rehearsal), in terms of permission, and collectivity.

On August 6[th](during our first rehearsal), 60 miles away in Tottenham, a demonstration in response to the fatal police shooting of Mark Duggan sparked an unprecedented chain of events that caught and spread through 14 London boroughs, and then to towns and cities across the country. On Sunday 7[th]sites surged with fears and with anger; the hailing of friends and relatives in affected areas, or the hurling of abuses, soon to be echoed by the prime minister, deputy prime minister and many other upstanding figures. Extensive looting simultaneously used and abused consumerist conventions, as many protagonists of that week's media spectacle provoked significant material consequences for themselves and their local communities and economies. The riots and looting began in financially deprived areas where effects of recent government policy were especially overt. 34 people were unemployed for every job vacancy in Tottenham at the time. (Slovo 2011: 54) Nationally, unemployment had risen by 48,000 at the beginning of 2011 as prospects

declined, particularly for young people. Youth centres closed after 75% service cuts, unemployment hit a fresh 17-year high as the number of unemployed young people climbed steadily to reach over one million by November.(*The Guardian* 2012) Meanwhile, even our conservative newspapers bulged with reports of banker's and CEOs pocketing the most enormous profits yet.

The attitudes and actions of those involved in the England riots have been often understood as retributive towards the state and its apparatuses of power, but only fragments of political utterance from rioters appeared in a sea of discourse that explained the events as 'mindless', knocking off-course the potential discursive or powerful interjection of intentional, motivated or knowing action. Despite the spontaneity, scale, and glaringly problematic economic contexts of events, the vandalism and the looting struggled to become qualified as 'political'. I wondered at the time: 'what is "mindless" behaviour, action or performance?' Does performance always think? Do destructive actions described as 'mindless' lack thought, as such? Does mindless action constitute action that cannot/will not consider consequence – action without empathy/instinctual action, or selfish/selfless action? Or is it is performance that prefers to act despite the consequence or action that decides to act towards a consequence or derived from a cause others cannot/will not rationalize or observe? Performance may not explain itself, leaving itself open to interpretation. But it might also leave traces that can be understood.

The nature of the riots and what of them was captured and represented, predominantly demonstrated *physical* articulations of frustration and desire. In general, other means of articulation appear to have been either unavailable or inadequate for rioters, while the rupturing of social conditions suggested inbuilt mechanisms for altering those conditions to be equivalently unavailable or inadequate. The packaging and re-presenting of physical actions back to communities by media and communication experts then raises questions about how certain communities can(not) express themselves, sustainably impact their social and material conditions, or construct their own sustainable identities through dominant/endorsed modes of communication. It also raises questions about cultural means of production; the privileging and perfecting of certain modes of discourse, relative to certain others, whereby expertise and the development of any mode of discourse is in many ways liberating and progressive for those who (can) nurture it, but potentially prohibitive for others who do not/cannot. With an eye on performance and the physical, how can other communicative modes transcend cultural and linguistic boundaries, and boundaries that are economically induced? How and to what extent have recent emerging social-political communities been evolved/repressed, and what relationship to performance or other discursive modes do these positions bear?

When communities perform en masse, or spectacularly, the impact of these performances/actions/interventions become palpable. Performance acts on behalf of thought, whether it derives from an invisible thought process or it thinks/produces thought through its emergence. Performance thinks through application and response, cerebrally and corporeally. Performance is the animated, thinking body: the limbs, movements and impacts of thought in action. It is the moment in which thought is declared or recognized. It is often said that performance is inherently

political, and I have argued for its political aptitude in relation to my performance project above. Is it also considered inherently political because it thinks through practice? When performance thinks, it never does so to itself, and never does so without consequence, however insignificantly, progressively, problematically, or revolutionarily, for its environment. I am interested in how, by working on how performance thinks, it is possible to validate, nurture and make sense of performative action in a variety of contexts that can otherwise go missing, become suppressed, or fail to appear in the first place. Rehearsal spaces however temporary, can allow a community to think performatively, or act on behalf of thought.

Acknowledgements

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Biography

Rebecca Hillman is an AHRC funded, practice-based Ph.D. student in the Department of Film, Theatre & Television at the University of Reading. She is also a playwright and director, and founded Reading-based theatre collective *In Good Company* in 2011. Her work explores what modes and combinations of theatrical response are effective in addressing political issues for contemporary audiences, taking into account preproduction and postproduction processes and site-specificity. She presents her work in disused buildings and at festivals and international

conferences, teaches undergraduate and postgraduate students, and leads a discussion group on practice as research for postgraduates and staff at the University of Reading.

Watching the(m) play

Stefanie Husel
Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt / Main

This paper refers to two questions raised by the call for papers of the conference *How Performance Thinks*: Can performance be understood as a kind of thinking? And if so, how does performance produce knowledge in itself? Even if the first of these questions could be considered as a theoretical, or even philosophical concern, and the second one as a methodological question, they are, in my opinion, deeply interwoven. To approach both questions, I want to suggest two shifts in the view on performance: Firstly, to focus on audiences rather than on the activity of performers. And secondly, to take a close look at the rehearsing process of performances. (Picture 1: *Bloody Mess* characters looking at the audience.)

These views seem to contradict one another at the first glance: One is concerned with the very situation of the performance, whilst the other is directed towards the production-process of the piece. I want to argue, however, that both ways of questioning can be activated to actually support each other in explaining how performances *raise questions, explore new fields and reflect presuppositions*. To put it briefly: I think, that these approaches could help to explain, in a very practical way, how performance thinks. Given the small frame of this paper, I will address both questions mostly via some anecdotes from my ongoing research. My method could be considered ethno-*graphic* (in a literal sense), since I developed a routine of sketching during my research process; this is why I would like to include some of my drawings also.

The gorilla for instance (Picture 2) is a portrait of a character from Forced Entertainment's piece *Bloody Mess*. I often used this picture to illustrate what I do myself, running back and forward between theory and praxis, carrying stuff (like anecdotes, perceptions, concepts... Fooling along in praxis and theory, sometimes making a fool of myself).
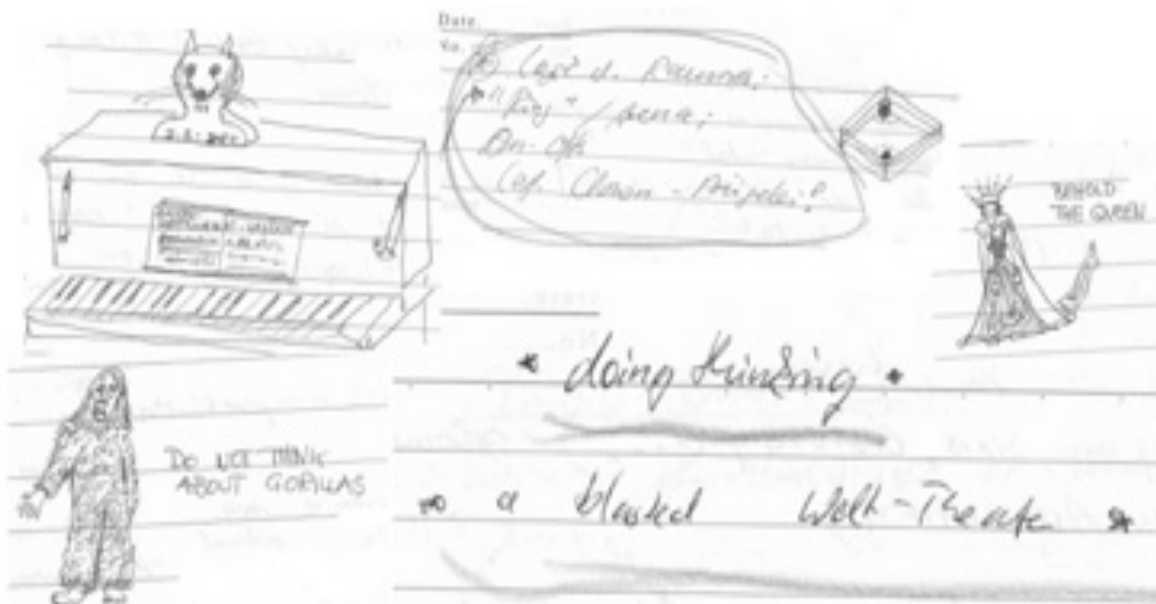
Picture 1: *Bloody Mess*
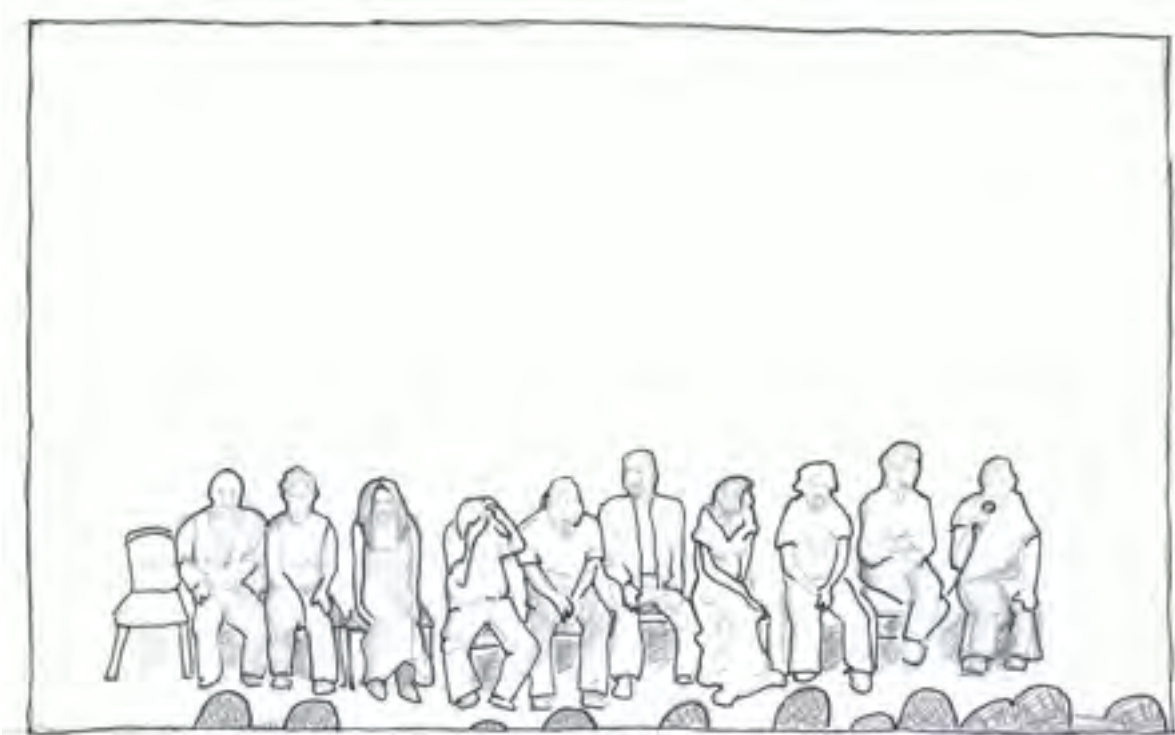
Picture 2: Gorilla, *Bloody Mess*

In fact, the first time I came across the idea that performance could be described as a "thinking process" was when I got to know the Sheffield-based theatre company Forced Entertainment; I saw their piece *First Night* in 2001. In this show, eight entertainer-characters present a vaudeville show, full of laughter and glamour, stunts and skits.[34] And everything goes awfully, desperately, wrong. Playing out this very ironic scenario of failure, showing the frame of theatre almost breaking down over two hours playtime, this show taught me a great deal about performance as such. It made me feel very involved with the piece and with its figures. What struck me was that *First Night* directed the attention of its spectators towards the very situation of the performance. In doing so, it presented me/us with a "thinking about the here-and-now" that was actually happening in the "here and now".[35] Since then I have been searching for the trick behind this magic, behind this closeness of reflection and involvement. In 2003, I got the opportunity to assist for ten days in rehearsals of Forced Entertainment's *Bloody Mess*, shortly before the piece was shown as a work in progress at Munich's SpielArt Festival. Picture 3 shows examples from what I wrote and doodled in my diary during those rehearsals.

Picture 3: Diary Rehearsal Doodle

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[34] See: For *First Night* http://www.forcedentertainment.com/page/144/First-Night/92, for *Bloody Mess* http://www.forcedentertainment.com/page/144/Bloody-Mess/85

[35] In the same moment, theatre performances like *First Night* do not communicate pre-existing ideas to their audiences; that is to say, they do not present mere mise-en-scènes of dramatic texts or other scripts. This is why Hans-Thies Lehmann calls them "post-dramatic". See Lehmann 2006.

One of the first concepts that came into my mind, as I tried to write down what I saw then, had to do with the question of how performance thinks: "Doing Thinking, Blasted Welttheater" I wrote down on my second day in the rehearsing room. But why did I feel like I had witnessed a "blasted Welttheater"? Well, I have to confess, that during the first days of my visit, I did not understand a thing! Forced Entertainment's routine of rehearsing was sometimes fun and it made me laugh, but mostly it was frustrating to watch from the outside, since I just could not make sense of what I saw. What I did understand was this: that Forced Entertainment's rehearsing process consists of a series, alternating between improvised games and discussions. The improvising was watched by Forced Entertainment's co-founder Tim Etchells, me, several other guests and a video camera; for the discussions, everybody gathered on the floor, we were watching the taped improvisations, discussing them, and so on, again and again, playing and watching, then discussing, etc. What I did not understand was what the games were all about. I knew well enough that Forced Entertainment was not working with any pre-produced script; still, I guess I was waiting, or searching, for a structure that the playing – these games – was referring to. I really felt lost, lost in an ongoing translation process, neither knowing the starting point nor the final aim. Maybe the following anecdote about one of my many misunderstandings illustrates the depth of my disorientation in those first days: I heard them talk again and again about some "bark". "Bark?" I asked myself, and I searched for something like a "wooff, wooff". After many hours of wondering where the dog was in the performance I found out, that the company was searching for a good spot for a piece of music, an excerpt of a Johann Sebastian Bach violin concerto. That was when I doodled "Johann Sebastian Bark" (see the left upper corner in Picture 3). After a week, though, I began to understand the particular rehearsing language of the group. Slowly I understood what they were searching for when they played the same games over and over, and watched them again and again. And slowly, I also got familiar with the short names, the group used to refer to resulting bits and pieces of rehearsed material. During the last two days of my visit, the rehearsing routine changed profoundly. The practised games were now condensed down, and the resulting scenes were put into fixed sequence. A clear, but still beautifully complex, structure arose in the end. The piece was now ready to be shown to public. I hardly believed what I saw so very quickly developing before my eyes. All of a sudden there was a play, absolutely coherent, ready to be watched and enjoyed – by me and any audience to follow. And like *First Night*, also Forced Entertainment's *Bloody Mess* seemed to convey a sense of a very involving "thinking performance".

It was during this short assistance period that I learned that *watching itself* was a practice that could succeed or fail in making sense.[36] However, I could not use this new knowledge by then. It was still implicit, sublime, more like an intuition. It did not reveal itself as absolutely crucial. After many further visits to Forced Entertainment shows and rehearsals, I started writing a Ph.D thesis. I chose to scrutinise two works by the company, *Bloody Mess* and *The World in Pictures*, as these were the ones I was able to collect the most information and experience about. From the very beginning, I was interested in the performances as live thinking processes, that is: I

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[36] One should note that „making sense" does not refer to the „production" of anything, as Jean-Luc Nancy pointed out in his same-titled article; Nancy compares the „making" in „making sense" (FR: *faire sense*) with the one in „making love" (*faire l'amour*). See: Nancy 2011: 215

was asking, how the performances made sense as life encounters. Not only trained in theatre studies, but also in cultural sociology, I began to use Erving Goffman's frame analysis to describe the performance situations of both pieces.[37] This means that I searched for all the activities on stage that helped me, as a spectator, to make sense of the performance-situation (for instance by "bracketing" its space and its time span, or by building its characters). Goffman's vocabulary helped me to explain convincingly how time, space and characters were produced by *practices of the performers* during the performance-situations. Still, I was not happy with my results. I felt that to become "thick descriptions", my results still lacked something.[38] And everything I had been able to describe clearly pointed towards the audience: I felt that there was a strong need to understand which part of this "game" was played by the spectators. What work did they do in making sense of the performances? Or, to use a concept from ethnomethodology:[39] What does the audience do in "doing being the audience"?[40] All those questions seemed quite urgent to me.

But how do I scrutinise audiences? Given the quite traditional performing situation of *Bloody Mess* and *The World in Pictures*, with the spectators sitting in the dark, this task provided me with several severe problems: Filming audience members turned out to be impossible, not only because of reasons of privacy, but also because of the lighting requirements during the performances. Questioning audience members seemed also an awkward process in several aspects. Firstly, Forced Entertainment felt uncomfortable with the idea; thinking about its works as practical research themselves, another researcher's voice bothering spectators seemed to intervene rudely in their artworks. Secondly, my search aimed towards a practical knowledge of the audience. This is why I did not trust much in things that could be explicitly told by spectators – I doubted, that they themselves could possibly be aware of their sublime practices in "doing being the audience". So, I also set the idea of questioning aside for a while. This is why I resulted in doing an audio-audience research in 2008: I placed a recording device with a 360-degree microphone up over the heads of a *Bloody Mess* audience in Leeds. This device recorded the sound that the audience made, fully and spatially.[41] In the meantime, I filmed the performance from behind the auditorium. I was very excited when I came to listening to the recorded tape; but I have to confess, that my first impression of what I heard was: "Oh my God! This is terribly boring!" The tape only seemed to prove what I already knew before, from my own experience as an audience member: That the performance *Bloody Mess* "functioned" very, very well. Not a single moment of crisis occurred, that could have told me anything about the hidden "rules of the game" in the performance, that is, about the parameters that kept the relation between piece and audience alive. The audience's sound was awfully perfect! I'd like to show a transcript and a waveform which both were derived from the tape; the sequence they describe happened after around twenty minutes into the performance time. The context of the moment is this: Character "Cathy" is playing a dead person during the last scene, lying on the floor

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[37] See Goffman 1974

[38] The concept of "thick description" was developed by Clifford Geertz; see Geertz 1973.

[39] A broad overview over ethnomethodology is presented in Coulter 1990.

[40] Harold Garfinkel used this phrase; he tried to describe what people do in "being normal". See Garfinkel in Coulter 1990, pp 187–238.

[41] The French professor of theatre studies Madeleine Mervant-Roux points out the possibilities of acoustic audience research, see Mervant-Roux 2010.

whilst a strange kind of rock-gig/theatre/sports-event is going on around her, accompanied by the rock song "Born To Be Wild" played at a very high volume. Then, just as the song ends (this is where my analyses starts) "Cathy" jumps up and shouts out that everything is all wrong; she argues with her colleagues over their bad choice of music, and finally tells them to "put something else on". If the audience utterances during this sequence are fitted between the lines of "Cathy's" text, in order to show the exact moment when they occurred, it looks like shown in Picture 4 (below).

Picture 4: Cathy's Text

The transcription turns visible that the audience laughs, mostly very shortly, in moments when "Cathy" comes up with something new and "funny"; that is, when she says things, that are a little absurd, but still intelligible. It also becomes clear, that not only the actress takes care of being understandable, for instance by waiting for loud laughter to die down, but that also the spectators do listen carefully and seem to hush themselves down, as soon as "Cathy" starts to speak anew. Record and transcription present an attentive and committed audience, who seems to act very orderly.

They highly ordered and also communicative character of laughter in everyday conversations was described by linguist Gail Jefferson in her article *An Exercise in the Transcription and Analysis of Laughter*.[42] Jefferson shows how badly we underestimate the contribution of laughter in conversations. She does so by

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[42] See Jefferson 1998

transcribing carefully what she hears on recordings. One of Jefferson's examples is the chat of three friends. One is telling a story about an absent person, who grows orchids in his spare time, or as the speaker puts it: he is... "playing with his orchids". One of the listeners performs to mishear the speaker in favour of some filthy content ("...playing with his organ"). He manages to do so by throwing in the question "With iz what?" and by producing a suppressed laughter; a third contributor of the little conversation then explicates the naughty content; only she masks her explication by performing "bubbling" laughter ("Heh huh ,hh PLAXN(h)Wh)IZ O(h)R'N ya:h I thought the same.") Jefferson's example shows that laughter and the effects caused by it: "... may specifically require, rely upon, and refer its recipients to their own guilty knowledge in order to analyze out of the distorted utterance what is being said." Laughter, as Jefferson emphasises, does not function like an "all natural" or "wild" utterance, but it expresses and enables a very fine social coordination: In their laughing, the contributors of everyday conversations not only become able to express rude words in a masked way, but they inform each other about their state of knowledge, about the "level" on which they operate in their collective attempt of making sense (eg. "this is ironic").

Taking this conception of laughter into account, the activity of the audience I taped seems much more interesting: When "Cathy" starts to "freak out", she is very clearly understandable; the audience produces its laughter almost orchestrated around the character's text (and vice versa). But, in the very end of the sequence, spectators become a little more vivid and "Cathy" needs to shout over their uproar, at several moments (see last line in the transcription). Whilst the spectators seem to monitor "Cathy's freaking out" in its first moments carefully, and maybe with a grain of doubt, they start to *perform* that they perfectly understand the irony, or playfulness, of the scene by laughing louder, "wilder" in the end of the sequence. This evolution of the audience's laughter even can be shown by using a very technical-looking artefact, the waveform of the record.

For picture 5 (below), I coloured those parts of the waveform grey, that originate in the sound of loud audience laughter; the peaks that were caused by sounds from stage remained black. The big black endings of the graphic result from the loud songs that were played in the beginning and in the end of the scene. I think that the graphic shows quite well how "orderly" the audience behaved during the scene and that it only grew a bit lauder in the end of it.

Picture 5: Audience Laughter

Only five minutes later, almost the same things are happening on stage. The next rock song (Hawkwind's "Silver Machine") is over, and "Cathy" starts to complain again; only now "the gorilla" – a character dressed in a plush-gorilla-suit (see Picture 2) – is stumbling dizzily over the stage. But look how very different the waveform of this scene appears! (Picture 6).

Picture 6: Audience Laughter

The big black peaks on the left-hand side show the ending of the song "Silver Machine"; the grey waves following show the – very loud – laughter of the spectators, which is dedicated to "the gorilla" (who looks very cute and funny in its stumbling); the sound is so intense that "Cathy's" shouting is no longer audible (or transcribable). The last bit of the graphic shows that the sound dies away: Now "the gorilla" takes its head off and character "Claire" starts to speak, still wearing the furry body-suit; something new is happening, and in an instance the audience grows silent and pays attention to what "Claire" has to say. Angry "Cathy", on the other hand, evidently did not interest the spectators any longer: the audience learned quickly that her shouting could be widely ignored.

To sum up what I learned from listening into the auditorium: Interestingly, the audience seemed to perform its utterances in a "detailed order" that reacted very sensitively to what happened on stage; spectators even seemed to learn quickly about the "rules of the game" in Forced Entertainment's *Bloody Mess*. The audience acted like a well coordinated jazz band – a very happy one, playing along with the performance! Now I understood that the magic I felt as an audience member of Forced Entertainment's performances resulted in the experience of a very intense collective "sense-making'.

One could stop here. But I still asked myself, how this sense making became possible in the first place. After several times of listening to the tape, it nearly gave me the impression as if the audience had been rehearsing the piece together with the performers. Looking back on my visit to Forced Entertainment's rehearsals in 2003, and the experience I had at that time, I subsequently realised that it was not to be taken for granted that watching would succeed so well. I remembered how I had learned that watching was a *practice* which could succeed or fail – and that, being a practice, watching could be, and sometimes needs to be *practised*. I, for instance, had needed several days of practising until I was able to make sense of the rehearsals in 2003, until I began to watch successfully. I also remembered what had happened when the piece went ready to be shown to public, that it then became very

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easy to watch and enjoy, even without having practised beforehand. After the rehearsing process, *Bloody Mess* was not a mess at all! From this point of view, I became able to describe performances as structures that can be watched by audiences who did not practise watching beforehand, since during the rehearsing process, the artists *practised for them.*

Luckily, at this moment, I got the opportunity to visit Forced Entertainment's rehearsals again; the group was preparing to show their new piece, *The Thrill of It All* in Essen, close to my hometown. This time, I carefully paid attention to the rehearsing practices as such. As a conclusion, I want to share some of my observations with you, again by using my drawings.

In the rehearsals, performers were playing scenes, this means, they were mostly improvising and playing games; they tried out and played around with material, with dances, with music and text fragments. In doing so, the performers were absorbed in what they did, highly committed in playing their games, involved with all their minds and bodies, no longer single persons, but a group. In the meantime, Tim Etchells, me, a choreographer-friend of the group and several cameras were watching, being an audience for the games of the performers. Whilst the cameras simply recorded, the spectators were engaged in noticing what they saw, already beginning to reflect their perceptions, taking notes, etc. (See Pictures 7 and 8)

Pictures 7 and 8: Rehearsal Drawings

Then all of them would watch what the cameras had recorded; the performers would tell their experiences, how it felt to perform this way or that way, while the watchers would tell how it looked "from outside", and how it felt to be in the auditorium and witness "this movement" or to hear "this story", etc. (See Pictures 9, 10 and 11)

Pictures 8, 9 and 11: Further Drawings

Then again, they would try out stuff, improvise, watch again; they would practise, till they had the impression that the rehearsed material was convenient to watch. In an ongoing collective process, that already resembled very much a performance, the group would flesh out the paths that the perception of the performance could possibly take. And in doing this over and over, again and again, they would multiply and iterate these paths, playing with them, and then consolidate them. In this regard, Forced Entertainment's rehearsing proved to be a process, in which knowledge was collected, practical knowledge about *the act and the experience of watching*. This is what I want to call "practising the gaze of the other, for the other".

In this respect, "the performance" here becomes a "third term", as described by Jacques Rancière: [43] something, not only the spectators need to find out about, but also the performers. Tim Etchells described this "third term" in an interview he gave to me as "the machine". He told me, that in the rehearsing process it is all about the question "What does the piece need?" He continued: "Of what we do, only some things are, let's say, felt to be essential to making this hour and a half, or two hours of time as a machine that unfolds (...) Why you decide some things are in and some things are out, is to do with trying to make that machine function very well – in public, of course. So that the articulation of a journey from A to B to C to D to E throughout the thing, kind of, let's say, works."[44] The resulting performance-situations provide multiple paths of possible perceptions; audiences can feel free to try out all the previously practised paths without stumbling over any sense-making problems (like I did, in the first rehearsals I visited). This is why spectators can feel like playing along in the game-like, playful performances Forced Entertainment produce – without having to learn the rules first.

To summarise my outlined ideas: Forced Entertainment, but also other makers of post-dramatic theatre, live art or devised theatre, produce their shows *entirely* during rehearsing practices. This entails, that the dramaturgy of such plays is embedded deeply into every practical moment of the performance. It is a dramaturgy of the "gaze of the other" that structures such plays, a dramaturgy that the artists

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[43] See Rancière 2004.

[44] A short video-documentary on the working practices of Forced Entertainment can be watched at YouTube; it is called "How We Work". See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jw2RbmuvuW0. My interviews with Tim Etchells will be published within my Ph.D., app. December 2012.

themselves do not know before they start rehearsing, something, they need to find themselves. In this way, the (deeply social) watching-situation of the performance becomes a "third term" to which both, artists and recipients, can refer (in an "emancipated" way of watching). Such embedded dramaturgies cause the effect that the performance's spectators get a very strong feeling of being implicated in the piece.[45]

This is why I do think that post-dramatic performances, like those of Forced Entertainment, can be described as thinking processes: In providing their audiences with experimental watching-situations, they raise questions, they explore new fields, and they reflect presuppositions. These performances let their audiences enjoy the experience of intense collective sense-making. In referring to our ways of watching, in letting us play with the paths of our perception, performances like those of *Bloody Mess* are putting our "aesthetical regimes" at stake, to quote a another concept of Rancière.[46] To understand how performances become able to do so, I want to suggest a rethink of rehearsing practices in order to consider them "practising the gaze of the other", and to scrutinise them profoundly.

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[45] Maaike Bleeker spoke in this regard of "implied spectators" and of "visual involvement". See Bleeker 2008.
[46] See Rancière 2004.

Biography

Stefanie Husel is a Ph.D. student, supervised by Prof Hans-Thies Lehmann (Theatre Studies, Goethe University, Frankfurt/Main) and Prof Stefan Hirschauer (Sociology, Gutenberg University, Mainz). In her doctoral thesis she analyses the (social) situations provided by post-dramatic performances; the subject of her investigation are Forced Entertainment's plays *Bloody Mess* and *The World in Pictures*. Stefanie has been assisting Forced Entertainment and has visited the group as a "participant observer" regularly since 2003. Besides her academic career, she worked in different theatre professions, including as a sound-and-light technician, as dramaturge and as festival producer, for instance at Hebbel am Ufer (HAU), Berlin.

Performing processes: thinking worlds into being

Rosanna Irvine
University of Northampton

Today I'd like to speak as an artist, as a choreographer trained in western contemporary dance and with an affiliation to visual art and live art practices. I'd like to speak in proximity to, or in relations with, certain philosophical questions, Deleuze's question, in particular: what is a thought without the image of a thought? [47]

My overarching interest as a maker and researcher is in the possibility of conditions that produce something that is not 'about' something else: conditions that might make possible ways of making and doing that are not housed in a pre-intent within a mimetics of representation; conditions that might forge something more-than the 'recognizing' that representation entails.

My research project is a Collaborative Doctoral Award with University of Northampton and Dance4 – the Nottingham based national dance agency, which produces the international dance festival Nottdance. The premise for the research includes articulating through practice an aspect of the legacy of Nottdance. It was through the programming in this festival that the so-called 'conceptual dance' was introduced to UK dance audiences in 2000. (The term 'conceptual dance' has not been agreed – but there seems to be no other agreed naming for this 'thinking' kind of dance - so I'll use 'conceptual' here.) According to dance scholar Andre Lepecki (2004) a central concern of artists associated with this movement is a mistrust of representation and an insistence on presence. My research investigates the working methods of particular artists associated with Nottdance who are probing or exposing through practice questions of representation and who are extending the potentials for practice into 'non-representational' modes - or perhaps better to say more-than-representational modes. I am also addressing non-representational or more-than-representational in my own making practice.

I'll talk about two projects today, 'towards a re-activation of Xavier Le Roy's Project' and my collaborative dialogue with Katrina Brown 'what remains and is to come'. I'll talk of the specific practical approaches in the two projects and I'll suggest how these practices, might be understood as ways of approaching thought without the image of a thought. I'll suggest that these practices force different capacities and different possibilities of and for thinking and not for recognizing – with a nod here to Isabel Stengers' 'tools for thinking' (Stengers, I. 2005). The philosophers among you may already be untangling the ontology and epistemology of this, which I won't attempt to do here. For now I'll speak as an artist and of artistic thinking that is not separate from a philosophical questioning – but which is a particular practice and one that does not name itself as philosophy.

I'll touch briefly on the cultivation of perception. Western dance and choreographic practices since Judson in the 1960s have adopted and been influenced by particular

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[47] I suggest that this question is implicit throughout the chapter 'The Image of Thought' in *Difference and Repetition* (2004

practices of non-western cultural origin, now commonly found in western dance trainings, e.g. aikido, tai'chi, yoga, which cultivate particular qualities of/in thinking. What might be understood as 'in common' in these divergent practices includes a concern with mind body unity, and an approach to training perceptual awareness that is grounded in a mutuality of 'being' and action. I want to suggest that these practices have the potential to train capacities towards engaging in/with the world 'beyond' the dualisms at the origin of Western philosophical thinking - a dualism which Peggy Phelan (1993) has suggested, gives rise to representation. I'll for now make a distinction between these mindbody practices and (what is called) somatic practices in contemporary dance training. I suggest (and will elaborate elsewhere) that some of the so-called 'somatic practices' privilege the 'inside.' I'm interested in those practices that might be understood, or perceived, as cultivating perception in ways that do not separate inside and outside. I'm not speaking of 'overcoming' dualism here. I'm speaking of practices that are not premised on separation of mind and body, of self and 'environment', of self and other, of inner and outer: practices that <u>cultivate,</u> and cultivate differently, ways of being and ways of knowing that are not premised on separation. Alva Noë suggests that perception is gained through thoughtful and physical acts of enquiry. Practices like yoga, tai'chi and aikido can be understood as particular trainings in perceptual awareness which hone and importantly bring to conscious awareness the sense of 'gaining' perception: a kind of knowing-in-sensing; a mutuality of sensing and sense-making. I'm speculating here that the prevalence of such trainings in the dance world produces an atmosphere of and in choreographic practice that has the potential to influence ways of making and doing choreography; that these influences are present in the projects I discuss; and that they forge different kinds of possibilities for what we might understand as thinking.

French choreographer Xavier Le Roy performed 'Project' as part of Nottdance Festival 2004. This piece grew out of extensive research over five years (through the project E.X.T.E.N.S.I.O.N.S.) addressed relationships between process and product and was concerned with a critique of conventional modes of production. It involved groups of dancers and choreographers in various European cities. 'Project' was developed through extended discussions and negotiations with his collaborators to develop rules for games that would be 'performed' in theatre situations, so addressing the co-existing of game rules and choreographic rules. Last week over four days I worked with seventeen participant collaborators on the research workshop called 'towards a re-activation of Xavier Le Roy's 'Project'' with public sharing on the fourth day. The intention was neither to re-create, nor to re-enact the work that Le Roy showed, but to re-activate (differently) processes that are invested in his 'General Rules Score'[48] (Le Roy, X. 2005). Le Roy has made available four performance scores that are part of 'Project'. The 'General Rules Score' is a set of indicators for a process to construct new games and new rules for a performance event. This is different from the other scores, which are orientated more towards particular procedures for use. In working with the 'General Rules Score' a particular set of conditions are forced including:

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[48] The General Rules Score is available at www.everybodystoolbox.net/?q=node/190

- the social context of working-with others and in which there is no distinct choreographer / author
- the need for continual negotiating and decision making in this working-with others
- negotiation and decision-making through language discourses
- the orientation towards making 'something' that, later in the performance event, requires particular and specific physical acts of decision-making for that 'something' to come into being
- the performance event itself constituted through relations with others (you can play a game on your own – but that is not what this score invites)

The four days were initial research – a beginning. What follows is a description and some thoughts. As they event is so recent these thoughts are not yet honed through the reflective lens of time … I'll describe the processes:

Day 1: We meet for the first time – eighteen people - a handful of people know up to three others. The participants have all responded to an open call[49], are interested in the terrain of the project. Most are from different backgrounds within dance and choreography and some are visual artists working in performance. All have been selected by me. I have mapped out some games - adaptations of theatre games and perceptual sensing activities, games to warm up, to sense each other, to get to know each other, to start making decisions. Already activated here is the honing of an environment for working together – a particular kind of 'producing' of conditions. I suggest this kind of approach, the practice of group perceptual sensing, is almost de rigueur in contemporary choreographic practices, to the extent that it is virtually unnoticed – and is a small example of what I touched on earlier in relation to the prevalence of 'the cultivation of perception.'

We walk through each other maintaining an equidistance from each other, maintaining a particular speed, incrementally increasing speed, stretching and contracting the spaces between, as small as possible without touching. If you touch you freeze. If someone freezes all freeze. Someone will begin again. Walk again

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[49] Xavier Le Roy performed 'Project' as part of Nottdance Festival 2004, a work which, typical of Le Roy's approach, is concerned with posing specific problems. Addressing the relations between production, process and product, Le Roy worked with groups of performers to develop rules for games that would be 'performed' in theatre situations. The problem he probed in 'Project' was around the co-existence of 'choreographic rules' with 'the application of rules' that are made for games (Le Roy). In situating the subsequent 'games' as choreography the project raises questions around representation, authorship and spectatorship. For more about 'Project' see www.insituproductions.net/_eng/frameset Click on 'Productions' then on 'Project 2003.'
Le Roy has made available a 'General Rules Score' for 'Project.' In the research workshop we will work with this to begin to construct (new) games and new rules for a performance event. This will involve working together while talking, moving, playing, negotiating, agreeing, disagreeing and more. It may also involve microphones, pre-recorded music and live video. We will perform these (new) games as a choreographic event with a public at the end of the four days, followed by open dialogue/discussion. If you would like to participate please contact rosanna.irvine@gmail.com with a paragraph about yourself, your background and experiences and why you are interested in the project. Dance artists and performers with an interest in conceptually orientated, physical, and improvisational approaches to performance making may be particularly interested – but those who are less familiar with these (choreographic) approaches and open to the indicated territory in performance practices are also invited to get in touch.

when 'someone' starts. Go in the quality of that person. Then a game to force a decision about who begins: eg 'if you can speak more than two languages', 'if you are wearing socks.' Then I pass this out to the group and hear, 'if you had a cup of tea when you got up this morning' and later 'if you were late this morning.' Laughter. Getting to know about each other. Getting a sense of each other. We talk a little about rules and games, form into four groups and begin to make small group games. People talk, try out, make decision. The groups play these games with others watching and we talk a lot.

Day 2: Agreement to do shared warm up yoga based each day. People were invited to do own warm up, gather in small groups or if they preferred to join with me in yoga. All chose to do the latter. Another person in the group was more experienced than me so happily she mostly led this. There is a common 'sense', not 'common sense' more a feeling sense in common that through focusing together in this way a certain energy is created in the group. This is perhaps obvious to us as performance practitioners, and there is perhaps something to be unpicked here in relation to the development of group perceptual sensing and how this prepares a field for collective decision making …

Big discussion: what is a rule? What is a task? Does a game need an aim? We each individually or in small groups – all choose to do individually – write what we consider to be rules and based on the indicators in Le Roy's score. We paste these on the wall. Then in two groups of nine we begin to make a game based on some of these rules or their adaptation. We work together, talking, trying out, talking, refining rules, talking, imposing logic?? Keeping on agreeing and disagreeing, negotiating, complexifying, showing to other group, attending, talking, selecting …

Day 3: Yoga and continuing the processes from day two with the big games. We revisit small games and modify these through the emerging 'sense' of how rules can function. The negotiations and discussion seem to be producing some kind of 'logic' or sense of a logic that is particular in the approach to game making and which is different in each particular game.

Day 4 Yoga together. We select from the games we have made, continue negotiating, refining, and deciding what we will show later that day. The long negotiations we engage in (over the four days) involve discussions about rules, about games. They produce questions that are discussed but not fully answered. We clarify questions – and the question how does the rule function? - moves the process towards a kind of logic. Or logics. These logics are in part derived from our understanding of games and include notions of consequences, fairness, imposition of penalties, questions of strategies and a non-arbitrariness. There is an emerging sense of a particular-to-each-game/situation logic of rules. And there are different kinds of logics - different needs – in each game, particularly in terms of duration, which may be understood as the workings of choreographic rules. And there is a kind of randomness – in terms of how the game begins. Can we call this a non-

arbitrary randomness, since it has a function (to generate a situation within which the rules are played? (This question remained unanswered.)[50]

'[W]hat remains and is to come' is a 'collaborative dialogue' with Katrina Brown. [For more on this project and images see our blog[51]] I've spoken earlier of my overarching interest in the possibility of conditions that produce something that is not 'about' something else. Working with another choreographer and in dialogue – with each bringing her own interests and neither bringing a particular theme or specific intent around the 'things' that might be produced – is an attempt to push further the potential for such conditions. We've been working on 'what remains and is to come' for just over a year, over short and dispersed supported residency periods. We work with paper, charcoal, body, breath, and digital technology agreeing that we prefer not to make work about something, and that we will make something. There is a growing sense of being-with each other, of being-with the materials, and a growing sense of the properties and capacities of/in the different materials. Distinct and particular processes continue to emerge.

In the performance event we create seven layers of charcoal markings one on top of the other. The images 'show' the step-by-step logic that gradually emerged [for a sense of these images see here www.whatremains2.wordpress.com/images] – an activation of materials in relations, a progression of sorts, a logic in working-with materials, a logic which became a particular and systematic enquiry into the properties and capacities of and in the materials. Our practices concur perhaps with scientist and philosopher Karen Barad who proposes a relational ontology, which 'gives matter its due as an active participant in the worlds becoming.' She proposes an understanding of capacities that inheres not in things but in relations: a world coming into being not through interaction of pre-existing boundaried objects – but through the inseparability of agentially intra-acting 'components' (Barad, K. 2003: 814). The last layer is a charcoal covered black layer. The body lies on the black layer. The body rises and leaves an imprint - an inversion of the earlier mark making. Erasure of this image, the wiping of the charcoal, becomes a 'necessity' in the work, initially as an occurrence in the laying out of a systematic 'progression'. And there is a kind of progression, though the modality of the practice does not favour the goal of the Better or Progress. Rather this progression is an ongoing incremental step in a systematic accumulating, an accumulating that might lead eventually to a kind of exhaustion or depletion as the paper and charcoal can no longer retain the imprint and the body can hold no more charcoal. There is another 'necessity' for erasure – which I will pick up on later.

Early this year we were in residency at Het Veem in Amsterdam. We choose in this work period not to work with video technology and to bring greater attention to the materiality of body and breath. Breath as yet eludes a systematising, a progression or accumulation. We attempt to work with/though the ungraspability of breath. We sense breath occupying space, opening the space of the event… We 'perform'

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[50] See this blog post for more on these processes www.dance4.co.uk/profile/rosanna-irvine/blog/2012-04/moving-and-thinking-towards-reactivation-xavier-le-roys-project
[51] www.whatremains2.wordpress.com

breath – we call this 'performed breath' – a deliberate sounding of specific and extreme breath patterns that requires extreme mindbody attention for its occurring. Breath invisibly comes into a kind of 'presence' that in its intra-active appearance volumizes (perhaps) the sense of spatial event in performance time.

We work with sound – digitally recording and processing the sounds of making the initial charcoal layers. This occurs not in the live event but prior to audience entry though in the same place. The captured sounds are of this particular environment. When this sound is later released into the event, which is after the sounds have occurred in the space during the making of the layers, a kind of uncertainty is provoked. Since the sound 'belongs' in the space it's not evident for a while, that it is recorded. It provokes perhaps, a visceral memory in the spectator, an evocation of a past time, a history, producing an augmentation of what is past that is still with us, an affective suspension … an opening out of spacetime …

This pre-recorded sound is introduced at the moment when all the papers are black. The other 'necessity' I spoke of earlier relates to a particular problem of spectating that presents itself here. Capture is a material capacity of the event of the black layer and the body meeting. There is a logic in this capture occurring. It follows the systematic unfolding of material capacities. And it opens a different kind of 'order' in the systematic approach: the inevitability of visual representation - the figurative, the human subject, the female nude in western art. There is a risk of loss of the processual unfolding, of the potential of the black sheet - this material textured blackness that was a kind of completion-in-potentiality. A particular critical concern arises with the consequence of the material's capacities at this point of the black sheet and the inevitably of figurative appearance. We choose to continue: to address the problem – to go on in the systematic enquiry. To acknowledge the 'problems' as part of what is now in the situation – to work with it as part of the material.

How we are dealing with this now: the 'object' lying on the black paper (above) looks out and gazes at the audience - then rises and erases the image – wiping it away as a continuation of the incremental progression of the system. We continue developing the system – identifying the logic of movement out of each image (or figurative appearance) a logical progression from figure, to figure and movement, to only movement.

Conclusion

So what's coming through here in these different projects?
How do these practices approach 'a thought without an image of a thought'? Something of the importance still of language and discursive thinking, of different 'logics' – but logic! Something about decision making engendered in a perceptual sensing that is not a separating of mind and body, of self and other, of self and 'environment' (or the places and situations we are part of). Something about decisions experienced as actions, honed through sensing, constituted in relations. Something about the importance of the activation of sensing processes. Something about this producing an event of leakage or emergence – and so producing some thing. Something about a singular-to-each-situation process of sensing and of sense making producing 'worlds' we do not already know.

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Biography

Rosanna Irvine is an artist working in performance, digital media and writing practices www.rosanna-irvine.co.uk. She is currently recipient of an AHRC funded Collaborative Doctoral Award with University of Northampton and Dance4, researching conditions for a 'non-representational poetics of choreography' through her own practice and in relations with Nottdance archive.

Impossible Ccollaboration: Performance's Thinking Inbetween

Professor Simon Jones
University of Bristol

> "In every event there are many heterogeneous, always simultaneous components, since each of them is a meanwhile, all within the meanwhile that makes them communicate through zones of indiscernibility, of undecidability: they are variations, modulations, intermezzi, singularities of a new infinite order." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994: 158)

> "Art preserves, and it is the only thing that is preserved." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994: 163)

> "What is preserved – the thing or work of art – is *a bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and affects*. … The work of art is a being of sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994: 164)

> "Flesh is only the developer that disappears in what it develops: the compound of sensation." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994: 183)

This paper will use Deleuze and Guattari's description of art as realizing sensation to explore how collaborations across media in recent performance demonstrate a *thinking inbetween*; and it is this meanwhile that is performance's contribution to philosophy. Returning to Heidegger's definition of the artwork, by way of both Levinas' encountering the Other and Lyotard's differend, the paper will consider three works, each with a specific collaboration across visual media.

When I experienced Imitating the Dog's cine-theatre piece *Kellerman* (2008), the eponymous hero of which was committed to an old-style asylum, I felt I did not know what I saw, so deftly did the narrative sequeway from so-called 'live' performers on stage to video representations of those very same characters on screen. The more I became aware of the slippages between the two media – flesh and screen, the more the imaginary world of the protagonist's mental collapse, constructed by cinematic devices – close-ups, tracking shots, dissolves, superimpositions, captions, seemed to be conjured in this inbetween, that is, *in its staging*. Indeed, *Kellerman* [visit: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYGwvJ_kh7o] depended on the audience's desire to solve the mystery by tying up the loose ends and filling in the gaps: making reality whole. Usually such conventions encourage us to believe in an ordered, comprehensible world: here the continuous narrative attempted to cover over the gaps in the *means* of storytelling, that is, the fundamental discontinuity of theatre. In this classically elusive tale of insanity, diagetically searching for the distinction between the real and the fictional, *Kellerman* achieved its affect through the mood produced inbetween the 'live' and the 'mediated'. The closer the interweaving of media, the more the fleshy attempted to perform the cinematic, with stage machinery aping tracking shots and overhead angles, the narrow platforms, stacked one upon the other, flattening any stage depth and producing a vertical montage of 'live' action; the more the video created a dizzying theatrical space between two screens, one upstage of the acting platform, the other downstage, between which the

performances, both 'live' and 'mediated', took their places. Indeed, enclosing the 'live' within this doubled imagery obliged it to perform to the 'recorded' video track. In expressing the (inhuman) technological, the (human) performers were forced to stage the impossible: to make the gap between these media of living and non-living appear seamless. And in attempting to close up this difference, putting their humanity in bondage to this image-machine, their agony and terror as performers, not to slip up, not to go out of sync, opened up that inbetween all the more profoundly. As this inbetween concretized as the event's compound of sensations, *Kellerman* became about the impossible labour of performing the technological, a task Heidegger would have understood as essentially poetic.

> "Technology is therefore no mere means. Technology is a way of revealing.
> … *Techne* belongs to bringing forth, to *poiesis*; it is something poetic."
> (Heidegger, 1978 [1953]: 318)

My attention gestalt-switched from seeing performers enact actions and speak dialogue in front of me, to mediated representations of the same actors, in extreme close-up, listening to voice-over of their thoughts, falling through an imaginary space inside Kellerman's head. This required oscillating between two entirely different ways of looking: projected sight into the three-dimensional space of the actual; and staring at the projected two-dimensional screen image – resulting not in confusing the two, nor mixing them together, but a sensation of *both* expressing compossibly alongside each other a mood of being inbetween.

If Imitating the Dog attempted the impossible in trying to close up this discontinuity at the heart of all performance, then Forced Entertainment took the opposite strategy with *Void Story* (2010) [visit: http://www.forcedentertainment.com/page/144/Void-Story/70]. Here I was similarly positioned by a technological breach somewhere inbetween hearing and seeing, this time by way of graphic novel and radio play. However, here was a child-like, irresponsible pleasure in bursting open the seams between media and their versions of reality. Imitating the Dog's anxiety in those gaps appearing was replaced by delight in technologies' capacities to produce disorientating gulfs between the live and mediated, motive and effect, concept and affect. *Void Story*'s story and its machinery were governed by hyperbole: to imagine twists as absurd as possible in the narrative of the two hapless protagonists; to layer frequency modulations and effects as ridiculous as possible on the so-say 'live' voices. The fact that the performers were ostensibly following a script added further to their blatant disregard for any originating or organizing force: everything was subject to a hyperbolic fugacity, a fleeing of the stable centre of a commonsense seamless reality. The aural and visual inbetween between performers on stage, images of different performers in the photo-story on screen, the text describing their characters' quest, was in a constant state of being fled, undermined and overwritten. Hence *Void Story*'s mood of absurdity and playfulness: theatre not enslaved to technology, but freed by and alongside it to range about this inbetween: to explore a new kind of agency – the cyborg techno-human.

> "*Esse* is *interesse*; essence is interest." (Levinas, 1998: 4)

For me, these two shows work with a quality fundamental to all theatre: namely, that when I am interested in something, I am being inbetween: *inter—esse*. I am not simply projected into the moment's concerns as a pure impulse towards awareness, so that I might survive those circumstances. Rather something of myself leaves my self and moves towards this other something without an immediate return: to dwell in the middle: *in media res*. Neither is this an out-of-body experience, nor a suspension of judgement or belief, since it does not involve losing myself in the other thing. It calls forth an agency just as vivid as that with which I navigate the everyday: indeed, it requires of my self significantly more, since it calls upon me to consider potentially anything.

> "In the being of the artist we encounter the most perspicuous and most familiar mode of will to power. Since it is a matter of illuminating the Being of beings, meditation on art has in this regard decisive priority." (Heidegger, 1981: 70)

Heidegger wrote of art as preserving: in following Wagner, then Nietzsche, and prefiguring Deleuze and Guattari, he thought of art (and here I think he meant predominantly painting) as an event, organized by the artist, to set forth a particular relation *between* material [paint] and viewer: art as a meanwhile of participation, as a relating of participants.

> "Preserving the work means standing within the openness of beings that happens in the work. This 'standing-within' of preservation, however, is a knowing. … He who truly knows beings knows what he wills to do in the midst of them. … [T]he essence of *Existenz* is out-standing standing-within the essential sunderance of the clearing of beings." (Heidegger, 1978 [1936]: 192)

The art object is only such for as long as the event of relating is sustained between material and viewer. It is inaugurated by the artist determining [willing – to use Heidegger's verb] in advance that essential relation. Although Heidegger still thought of it as between one artist, one kind of material, and one viewer, what is necessary about this set-up for art as preserving is the relation of interest: the being inbetween. From this, we can see that performance manifests this being inbetween in a particularly intense way, since it foregrounds not only its eventness, its happening in that time and in a certain place; but also the manner of its mixing of persons, their fleshes and histories, their desires and prospects. It does this through an intensification not of one particular relation between a material, expressed by means of a single object, and the solitary viewer; but by compounding the sensations of *the relation between relations*. One fundamental inbetween, that of different kinds of material, each with their own means and media, their own middles that meddle each in their own curious ways, is compounded furiously with another inbetween, that of the gathering of persons, each aware of the other others as persons each in their own right [I'm thinking here of Levinas' ethical prerogative].

> "This 'saying to the Other' – this relationship with the Other as interlocutor, this relation with an *existent* – precedes all ontology; it is the ultimate relation in Being." (Levinas, 1969: 48)

Indeed, in performance, in putting my self into the middle of the event *as event*, its being both out of and in time, as I generally know it and then as I am experiencing it now, *entre-temps* as Deleuze and Guattari would have it; and its being both there and not there, as I generally position my body in space and there being potentially anywhere other than there, I put myself forth in a doubled sense: *into the midst of various middles amongst others*.

Furthermore, if this being inbetween the inbetweens is particularly heightened in performance [Derrida did call theatre "the only art of life" in critiquing Artaud's attempt to put himself outside of discourse], then how do I think about this experience, this interest? How can I, if to attend to any specific discourse or practice would render the event's plenitude down to a single field or text? No, to speak in any one language, be it choreographic, musical, pictorial, verbal, would collapse the very specificity of the event's non-specificity, puncture the no-where of its now-here. I can only stalk its realness by way of metaphor, only approach it indirectly by way of such forcings of meaning. Performance's claim to our attention is not its resistance to commodification through either acts of continual disappearance or re-appearance, depending on one's politics, neither flight from, nor submission to modern technologies of information capture and transmission. Performance claims of us a special attention because of the affect of its being inbetween the inbetweens, namely a not being able to think what we have experienced with any adequacy, evidenced only by the compulsively repeated failure of the document after the fact, the undeniably partial account after the event, what Lyotard might have described as *the differend*.

> "The differend is the unstable state and instant of language wherein something which must be able to be put into phrases cannot yet be. … This state is signalled by what one ordinarily calls a feeling." (Lyotard, 1988: 13)

This affect is what remains of performance's thinking as sensation, since performance's being inbetween the inbetweens remains occluded even in its manifesting. It is impenetrable, that is, impossible to explain and thence have done with. It works away still, as if it were the unconscious, although it has summoned to the surface in its performing whatever could have lain beneath. Its impenetrability is a darkness from which light cannot escape, although unlike nature's black-holes it yields ceaselessly. Lyotard might have described this as the sublime function of art.

> "Pleasure in the beautiful occurs when the powers of imagination and understanding engage with each other, according to a suitable 'ratio', in a kind of play. A play because they compete with each other, one with forms, the other with concepts, in an effort to grasp the object. But it is also play because they are accomplices in *not* determining the object, that is, in not grasping it by form and concept as they do in objective knowledge." (Lyotard, 1994: 73)

Lyotard's 'ratio' is sensing performance's being inbetween inbetweens. Its thinking is felt by way of forcing transitionings from the dimensionality of relating to one material to the dimensionality of relating to another, moving through one discursive field then phasing into another, facing another self then turning to a third. And in each phase-

transition, the specific relation to the material is occasioned in its own way: it is disclosed as beautiful, since momentarily apparent, observable, recognizable, navigable. This transitioning is as a pulling focus from one plane to another, from foreground to background: a zone of interest becoming a place of concern. The work pulls focus from the blur of interest to the hard edge of a definable object of attention. So here, the material's vagueness, which is felt to haunt the work or exceed in potential what the work can possibly manifest, comes suddenly and always surprisingly into sharp relief. However, not as if one were experiencing the work through one lens alone, but as if suddenly recognizing the concreteness of one particular material rendered all others unintelligible. In his essay on theatre, Lyotard relates this to the fundamental nature of being as libido.

> "Theatre, put at the place where dis-placement becomes re-placement, where libidinal flux becomes representation, wavers between a semiotics and an economic science." (Lyotard, 1976: 106)

For him this leads to "an energetic theatre [that] would produce events that are effectively discontinuous" (109). This wavering between two mutually exclusive ways of knowing, a plastic, figurative sensuality and a totalizing, conceptual objectivity, is also the particular relating of each performance. I could say that, in performance, interest dematerializes to the extent that any particular material materializes; and it is only in sustaining the materializing of interest, in remaining inbetween the betweens of the work, literally un-wording it, utterly un-phrasing it, patently blurring it, that interest can be properly opened out as new and progressive couplings of thought-sensations. Properly, that is – by way of an indescribable and ultimately mysterious relation to the material earth and material world: since realizing the work as a phrase narrows its interest down to a concern, renders it effectively and affectively already done with, a closed book, to be read off against the actions and statements contained in the work. Blurring interest can only happen by way of forcing it into new relations with the material to hand and the persons attracted into the work: this forcing is the metaphoric will of the artist as Heidegger had described it.

For Bodies in Flight, the inbetween of performance has always been an essentially erotic entanglement, a pre-discursive (I might say – sub-human) projecting into the event by both artist and auditor-spectator, and mixing with the fleshes (thence the persons) amongst the event, which finds its expression on a number of discursive planes. In order better to work out this entanglement, we have developed a methodology, what we call in our private language – a principling, an organizing of the work's potentiality as *the being between collaborators*. This produces a characteristic or signature set of relatings for each work somewhere between concept and function, idea and material, embodied literally in each collaborator, who approaches these differently, each from their own point of view, technology, repertoire of knowledge and skills, their own homes, each within their own medium.

Picture 1: Poster, *Bodies in Flight*

In making *Model Love* (2008-11) with my collaborators in Bodies in Flight, I was interested in two aspects of the photograph: its indescribability, the impossibility of saying what I was seeing; and its timefulness, its re-presenting something that was irretrievably past. Like Imitating the Dog we crossed the gaps that technology opened up; but we were not slaves to the machine. Like Forced Entertainment we chronicled the multiple realities emerging willy-nilly from these inbetweens; but this did not make us happy. The relation between performer—photograph with its technologies staged the impossible-to-grasp plenitude of the inbetween between collaborators – performer, photographer, choreographer, musician, writer. We began by making three photo-books, whose images provided the conduit for this meanwhile to be progressively opened out: from commonplace self-portraiture on ready-to-hand mobile devices; through photo-stories of an illicit threesome; to multiple versions of a mythic account of voyeurism.

Pictures 2, 3 and 4: Photo Books

In each of these three scenes, a different relation between performer and photograph was explored by way of three different technologies: the digital of the mobile; the analogue of the video; the wetware of the eye. In the first, images were made as a series of frustrated attempts to express the performer's personality through portrait, set against a cut-up of verbatim postings from dating sites. In the second, inspired by the central scene of Antonioni's *Blow-Up*, the performer

interrogated a small book of images apparently recording a three-way tryst, to which he himself had been party. Here the forensic dynamic to expose a finality to truth ended in exhaustion, resulting in the third scene, where the performer showed the spectator loose images depicting a version of the iconic episode of scopophilia – Achtaeon coming up Diana bathing. The piece ended with him sewing these photographs into a new book. With *Model Love*, Bodies in Flight used collaborating across the space between image and description, between the performer's point of view and the spectator's, between the times of him saying and what they see depicted, as a means of accessing and working performance's inbetweeness.

Photo 5: New Book
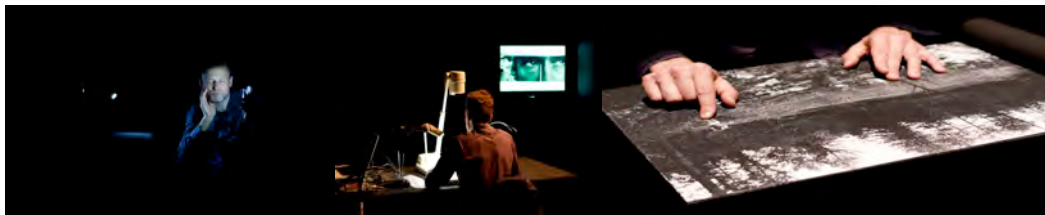
This paper has proposed that such working across media to disclose and realize inbetweeness as sensation is performance's unique contribution to thinking, occasioned by its setting forth a relation between performer and auditor-spectator outside of the everyday: indeed, in thus exploring inbetweeness, performance stands in for all betweens, including the technological; hence it is the art form *sine qua non – the* art form of all art forms.

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Biography

Simon Jones, Professor of Performance, University of Bristol, is a writer and scholar, founder and co-director of Bodies in Flight. He has been visiting scholar at Amsterdam University (2001), a visiting artist at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2002) and Banff Arts Centre (2008). He has published in Contemporary Theatre Review, Entropy Magazine, Liveartmagazine, *Shattered Anatomies*, *The Cambridge History of British Theatre*, Performance Research: *on Beckett*, co-edited *Practice as Research in Performance and Screen* (2009) and his work with Bodies in Flight features in Josephine Machon's *(Syn)aesthetics? Towards a Definition of Visceral Performance* (2009).

The Writing on the Wall: Performances of Thinking, Terminal and Interminable

Joe Kelleher
University of Roehampton

I.

The stage presents a picture, literally. Dominating the back wall of the theatre is a massive reproduction of Italian renaissance artist Antonello da Messina's painting *Christ Blessing* or *Salvator Mundi*. The picture, which can be seen in the original at the National Gallery in London, is here cropped to exclude the hands making the gesture of benediction and just show the face. It is one of those portraits that appear to look at us looking. It does this throughout the show. As if it sees what we the spectators see, sees us, sees everything. The expression, it has been said, is one of unspeakable gentleness.[52]

In front of the painting is a more conventional stage picture, a contemporary domestic scene, staged, we might say, naturalistically, amidst white leather and chrome furnishings, the actors muttering everyday exchanges, performing habitual household activities as if unseen by us. A bearded, white-haired, white dressing-gowned old man is taking a meal as he watches TV. A younger man, his son, wearing a suit and tie, is about to go out. He has things to do in the world, although it turns out he will never get back there, not in this life, not out of this picture. The older man is incontinent; he shits himself. We see it happen. We see the brown liquid leak around him. We smell it too, or imagine that we do, when a sour odour is piped into the auditorium later in the performance. The son fetches the towels (white), the bucket, the plastic gloves, and cleans his father up. The father apologises. The son cracks a joke. It is no big deal, he is his father's carer, they both know the routine, although this evening the routine is endless. Each time the father is cleaned by his son, he shits again. This goes on for twenty, thirty, maybe forty minutes, by which point both men are exasperated, weeping, exhausted.

I am unsure how long the action lasts, but then this is a play that deals with – that sets in juxtaposition – different structures, different experiences of time. There is the time it takes for things to happen on stage but there is also represented time. The ordinary time, for instance, of the young man and his father, the time of habits and routines, this day and every other. But also historical time, as referenced by the painting, and if you will cosmic time, the time of religious salvation and existential abandonment, as referenced by what the painting depicts. There are also details to notice along the way. I mention just one for now. At the side of the stage on a bedside table is a screw-top plastic container. It's a small thing, barely visible; it may not catch our attention. Later on, though, the actor playing the old man pours more brown liquid from the container, the colour of shit, lots of it, onto the bed, onto the stage. Now we see, we can think about this. We can interpret, we can say things. Might we say for instance that what the old man's body – the character's body as it were – cannot help doing, he also performs on purpose, as an actor, perhaps to

[52] Socìetas Raffaello Sanzio, *On the Concept of the Face, Regarding the Son of God*, dir. Romeo Castellucci, 2010. The phrase 'dolcezza indicibile' is Castellucci's. See, for example, Sabrina Cottone, 'Il viso di Cristo tra gli escrementi', *Il Giornale* (Milan), 19 January 2012.

keep his son from leaving? Or maybe another sort of agency is being proposed, a timely recognition on someone's part that there is no point anymore to actorly illusion: the fact has already outrun the fiction, we know this already, one may as well just distribute the signifiers. It is anyway a familiar enough device in the modern theatre, an estrangement or alienation device we might call it. It is a device certainly that Romeo Castellucci, the author of the piece, has used before, whether to draw attention to the theatre's own modes of magical thinking, or to provoke critical responses to these modes.[53] As such, we can make something of it. As Castellucci himself has said, speaking as a spectator of his own work: 'the plastic container [...] probably makes us think that he, the father, has projected his weakness, has projected the catastrophe, the silence. And everything becomes incomprehensible, everything is seen through a mirror that turns everything around.'[54] I want to think further about this, except now there is a noise outside, I can't ignore it, although I would rather do so. Accusations of blasphemy, of 'christianophobia'. There have been rumours of desecration of the Christ image, tales of shit being having been thrown at the face of the son of God. In Paris last year, although the work had already been touring Europe for some time without incident, the stage was invaded by demonstrators who unfurled a banner, linked arms and attempted to stop the show. In January this year, in advance of performances at the Teatro Franco Parenti in Milan, a widespread and vicious campaign on certain Catholic blogs – including threats against the theatre manager – again tried to stop the work being seen.[55] In Paris there was a campaign of public support for the theatre makers. In Milan the authorities, the mainstream media were largely silent, although the show did go ahead. Energetic, co-ordinated stuff. I want to say also opportunistic, thoughtless, self-serving stuff. Cut back to the theatre then, where the older actor, standing in his nappies, is still there, pouring brown liquid onto the stage furniture. The younger actor, in shirt sleeves by this point, approaches the Christ portrait at the back of the stage and puts up an arm against the mouth of the picture, as if to stop all speaking, at least for a moment, athough it is now that we hear a one-word speech broadcast into the theatre, an amplified voice whispering 'Jesus'.

There follows a sequence where the Christ portrait is torn to pieces from within and a viscous black liquid like the juice of the image, like the ink of all the scriptures, all the stories, all the interpretations oozes over its breaking surface. In some performances, when logistics allow, before this sequence, a group of young boys enter and lob hand-grenades at the portrait, as attention-seeking, I suppose, as the protests in Paris and Milan and elsewhere. There are anyway booming noises but no explosions, and the picture remains undisturbed. The show ends, after the tearing and leaking, with the eventual restoration of the implacable image as a video projection, although what we also see now is the appearance of writing, a phrase in English that shines out in letters of light from the surface of the image's support. The phrase includes a single word – 'not' – that appears differently to the others, faded,

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[53] I am thinking of the use of a plastic bottle filled with blood-resembling red liquid in the Brussels episode of Tragedia Endogonidia. For a discussion see Ridout 2006.

[54] Unless otherwise stated all quotations are from private correspondence with (and translated from Italian by) the author. The correspondence is due to appear in a 2012 issue of *Alternatives Théâtrales*, Brussels. See http://www.alternativestheatrales.be/.

[55] It would appear that these people had not seen the work themselves. For some documents on the controversy see http://www.alternativestheatrales.be/ [last accessed 6 July 2012].

more intermittent, slightly less legible, intruding amongst the familiar words of the psalm 'you are (not) my shepherd'.

We may have seen something like this before. For those who know their Scripture, or their Rembrandt, or simply have access to the common word-hoard, this writing on the back wall of the theatre recalls the 'writing on the wall' at Belshazzar's feast. The latter is the *Mene Tekel Peres*, as recounted in the Book of Daniel, the mysterious appearance, inscribed by a ghostly hand, of supposedly familiar Aramaic words designating measurement, which interrupts the thoughtless pleasures of the King and his cronies, but which none of them are able to make sense of. Until, that is, Daniel is called, who reads, interprets and delivers the warning: you are weighed in the balance and found wanting, the days of your kingdom are numbered, your future is written, it is already finished. A couple of things to say about this story, at least where thinking is concerned: firstly, thinking has more than one face here, or at least it must turn its face between the stunned incomprehension of the feasting Babylonians and the fluency of Daniel the interpreter, who makes of what has been given what will happen next (the King will die that night and his kingdom be over-run). Except, maybe it is not interpretation that is at stake so much as acknowledgement.[56] What the message says – and shows – is something that the receivers of the message should, it is implied, already know, something manifest, something apparent to all, but not as it were taken in by all. It can be like that in the theatre too, where everything is visible, but not everything is noticed, or not all at once, the sort of place where what is not supposed to be seen – or heard, or smelt, or stepped in – comes obscenely into view, more relentless than our attempts to hide it away. The mechanics of theatrical representation for instance; or the unbearable understanding on the face of the son of God; or the physical collapse we will have to live with and suffer and care for, our own and others; or indeed thinking itself. And where, if there is a message, what it might have to say is: look to yourself, your kingdom is divided, remember what you are, you are comprehending flesh, this is how you go, this is how you smell, this is how it will end for you, and in this you are no more nor less than those you thought, as a thinking speaking being, to distinguish yourself from. In the ear of the King that can sound like a curse, although we don't have to hear like a king does. In the words of the theatre maker: 'The Mene Tekel Peres is what renders me human, it is what brings my soul close to the animal. It is everything that *reduces* me that renders me human and frees me.'

Whatever else is to be made of it, the intruder word 'not' strikes me as a renewal of intention in the received and repeated phrase. Like a voice in the writing, a still small voice amidst the noise and ignorance and confusion that is going on around it, a voice of doubt in the face of illusion, of insistence in the face of what is indifferent even to being addressed, of uncertainty and refusal in the face of the inefficacy or efficacy of our performed actions, and of perplexity in the face of all our sufferings. An articulate silence that is categorical enough, but which remains also with provisionality, with aporia. A negation, obviously (you are *not* my shepherd), but the sort of negation that stops to think, as if to register what the texts and images can't, or can no longer say; or else that halts along the way to bring wandering thought

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[56] I allude to the argument of Stanley Cavell's essay 'The Avoidance of Love: A Reading of *King Lear*'. See Cavell 2002.

back to where the performances, the texts, the images and everything else have stopped in front of us, and stop us in our places. Not unlike the way beauty might stop us. Or the writing on the wall might stop us. As such, the sort of thinking that belongs to the theatre.

II.

I speak about stopping, or at least stopping at the theatre. I should be careful, perhaps, to emphasise that I am speaking about theatre rather than performance more generally, but one thing we can take from theatrical performance – I think – is that it does stop, that it involves a time limit. And here I am including theatrical performances that seem to go beyond the limit, all sorts of limits (a great example that I experienced recently was Vegard Vinge's *John Gabriel Borkman* at the Volksbühne Prater in Berlin, a show that is sometimes twelve hours long, but not always, it just depends, although here too, I believe there was a negotiation early in the run among the several collaborators – the theatre management, the actors, unionised technicians and so on, let alone spectators – that there would be some limit to the performance, which may or may not coincide with the point where Vinge himself finishes smashing up the set of his own show along with the general decor of the theatre with a sledgehammer). Simply put, it is possible to arrive late at the theatre, even to be there early, anyway to be unpunctual. (In Berlin I happened to catch a four hour version of Vinge's sold-out show, about which, by the way, not in any of the publicity is there any indication that it will take any longer than it takes to deliver a performance of Ibsen's play, although when we were coming out at the end of the performance at 11.30pm there were disappointed punters coming the other way, arriving on time as they thought for a theatrical all-nighter, being told it was already all over). We can also, however, miss the show when for whatever reason we do not notice everything there is to notice on stage, or when – again for whatever reason – we fail to recognise or acknowledge or understand whatever it is we did see. This, I would say, is a basic condition of being spectators. The spectators are the only ones in positions to see the whole play, as Hannah Arendt says in a passage on spectatorship from a book about thinking; but even then, we would add, not all the spectators see all of it. Or, as Arendt flips the thought over, 'even if the spectacle were always the same and therefore tiresome, the audiences would change from generation to generation; nor would a fresh audience be likely to arrive at the conclusions handed down by tradition as to what an unchanging play has to tell it.' (Arendt 1978: 96) Either way, what is fixed about the play – in particular, what is fixed about it, so to speak, temporally – rubs up against our capability to think it through, all the way, and have done with it. Except... this fixedness would also appear to be one of the things the play is proposing that we think about. Take the performance we have been discussing: whatever Castellucci's show has to tell us, it has something to do with the terminal nature of the human condition, and is told in a form – borrowed from classical tragedy – that is itself terminally inclined: projected towards a point – as Arendt's predecessor Walter Benjamin reminded us, remembering in turn the thought of his predecessor Franz Rosenzweig – at which the heroes are brought to a final, thoughbeit recalcitrant, speechlessness. Whatever the 'inexhaustible topicality' (Benjamin 1985: 109) of such a story, renewed in each effective retelling, each performance is terminal, and terminally silent, as if somehow *its* thinking – the thinking of the performance – were calculated to resist the thinking

– including the sort of productive consumption I am attempting here – that feeds upon it for its speech. But this is not how it is supposed to be with thinking. Take Arendt again, who writes in *The Life of the Mind* of 'the relentlessness inherent in *sheer thinking*, whose need can never be assuaged', but who will have things to say also about thinking's self-destructiveness, and, as she traces the course of what she calls 'common sense reasoning' (by which she means post-enlightenment scientific reasoning) through trials of illusion and disillusion, something to say also about an attendant 'illusion of a never-ending process – the *process* of progress'. (Arendt 1978: 55) This idea of progress is not what Arendt understands by thinking and its historical function, which, for her, has a much more ambivalent relation to the 'world of appearances'.

Or consider how such issues are discussed in the places where many of us here – scholars of performance, and also performers – do a lot of our thinking, indeed are trained to think, are professionalised as thinkers, in seminar rooms and lecture halls and exam halls and rehearsal rooms and committee rooms and conference venues, wherever we are inaugurated into the thinking factories we call universities. Where, we might add, no less in these days of paperless meetings and virtual learning environments, so much of the writing still appears on the screen or on the wall. And where, not to stretch the metaphor one iota, more and more we are subjected to the shining external hand of audit, of measurement.

There is a certain shape that the argument about all this sometimes takes, where it will be pointed out that the terms of the argument have already been established – often around the measurable usefulness or uselessness of thinking – and that these terms are to be resisted, not so much in the name of thinking 'for its own sake', but a re-valuing of thinking as a limitless or interminable performance. So, for instance, here in the UK, most popularly and most recently, we have Stefan Collini's polemic on how 'the drive towards understanding can never accept an arbitrary stopping-point', and how 'human understanding, when not chained to a particular instrumental task, is restless, always pushing onwards', and how the mark of an academic discipline is not how 'useful' or 'useless' it may be, but rather 'whether enquiry into that subject is being undertaken under the sign of limitlessness.' (Collini 2012: 55) Or consider an earlier, more transatlantic, more explicitly 'postmodern' take on the same issues, focused, as it happens, less on academic research and more on the addressive, inter-relational practices of thinking that are performed in the classroom. As we get closer to the university the language does take a more academic turn. Bill Readings, in his 1996 book *The University in Ruins*, writes of how the sort of thinking that goes on in 'the scene of teaching' can open another experience of time, another relation to time than the 'accountable time' by which our labours tend these days to be measured. (Readings 1996: 150-65) Readings would have us understand teaching as something other than the transmission of knowledge and 'the self-reproduction of an autonomous subject', i.e. an 'independent' person whose independence, or self-sufficiency, is measured by their no longer being obligated to others. The pedagogic relation, he insists, is interminable; and the task of thinking is an inexhaustible obligation from which 'no knowledge can save us'. Let us perform the scene of teaching, he argues, in such a way that we might instead 'listen to Thought', might listen to the thinking going on beside us, and participate thereby not in the measured time of the transmission of knowledge (and its commodification) but

an ongoing, ethical obligation to those around us, where even one's sense of justice – the sense of justice, let's say, that one brought to the scene in the first place, one's vocation we might call it – is overturned, extended. 'Doing justice to Thought,' he writes, 'listening to our interlocutors, means trying to hear that which cannot be said but that which tries to make itself heard. And this is a process incompatible with the production of (even relatively) stable and exchangeable knowledge'. (Readings 165) We register aporia in the teaching scene as we take account of the fact that we do not know in advance who we are talking with (which is not to say that it does not *matter* who we are talking with), and also as we attempt to answer, as best we can, the question as to what sort of content might be given – or found in – the 'empty name of thought' that drives our endeavours. Answers, Reading insists, that can only ever be political, at least in a minimal sense, given there is always a basic conflict involved; and, in a major sense for Readings, ethical, given that the relations of power and obligation in the pedagogic scene are likely to be unequal. It is for this reason, he says, that teaching is much more to do with justice than it is about truth. Thinking, then, is an interminable, or constantly-to-be-renewed process that throws us back on the ungroundedness of our positions, on our obligations to each other, and our accountability to the work of thinking, in a way that 'exceeds' the 'logic of accounting' that we are becoming ever more familiar with in institutions of higher learning. None of which is to say the work is not enterprising. The performance of thinking, or the 'event' of thinking, as Readings characterises it, is one in which we aim to make an audience 'happen', rather than assuming there is one there already. It is, for Readings, a rhetorical performance[57] that will take account of context, of institutional contexts that include not only teachers and students and administrators but also employers, representatives of industry, auditors and assessors, funding bodies, taxpayers and the like. And a performance that takes account of contexts of space and place and mode of address and so on, as well as the different interests and experiences ('ages, classes, genders, sexualities, ethnicities and so on', as Readings puts it) that will be represented in that audience to come. It is not, though, a rhetoric with an agenda of terminal persuasion. 'Neither convincing students nor fusing with them,' Readings says, 'teaching, like psychoanalysis, is an interminable process.' (Readings 159)

III.

I have a sense, though, that a different sort of thinking – a different sort of accounting, and a different conception of justice – is at work in the theatre, at least the theatre we have been discussing. Maybe it is something in the rhetoric. I don't find any attempt to persuade me or fuse with me in the theatre either, but nor do I find any particular consideration of the ages, classes, genders, sexualities, ethnicities and so on that are agglomerated in its audience. I do, still, find something terminal going on. Let's try to follow it. Let's read the appearances. The father is ashamed. So is the son perhaps, but let's stick with the father. Evidently he is ashamed. He weeps, he apologises. What is he ashamed of? Of what is shown? Of what can be seen? Seen by whom? There is only himself, his son, and perhaps Jesus there. Is this already too much? Or is it perhaps the too much as such he is

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[57] Shannon Jackson has developed these ideas in the specific context of Performance Studies. See Jackson 2009.

ashamed of? Feeling out of measure, ashamed of being out of proportion with one's space in the world, producing too much shit for one's loved ones to deal with, being too slight to merit the care, not worth the attention, being in the way, being too much in view all the time. Ashamed too of exceeding the merely visual (that smell everywhere), ashamed of obscuring one's human function (whatever that might be) with too much affect, with too much claim, with too much imposition, of loading the present with too much future (this will go on and on) and loading the future with too much past (those family ties, those obligations and dependencies that must weigh on the son as they weigh on the father). Or is it the shame of not being capable, of not being able to be just so, for example to be as he was at the start of the play, the dignified white-haired and bearded old man, self-absorbed, eating his meal, listening to his TV, wishing his son well with his affairs in the world, concerned only with what concerns him? Is this what he is ashamed of, his inability, due to circumstances beyond his control, to sustain this particular appearance? Except, we recall, there will be that plastic screw-top container, which belongs not to this world but the world of theatrical representation, and which he will use. As if making, or projecting, the image of what shames him, and which binds the other to his shame: as if the image as it stands is not enough, or, again, too much. Out of measure anyway, but out of measure with what? How does his shame tally with that?

One thing we can take the prop container to indicate is that the actors are not fools. I am thinking of Hannah Arendt's discussion of thinking as a sort of withdrawal from active life and the world of appearances, something like the withdrawal into solitude of the spectator at the theatre, so as to cultivate understanding of such appearances and the spectacle that is revealed there. A spectacle which, according to a sentence that Arendt cites from Kant 'may be moving for a while; but the curtain must eventually descend. For in the long run it becomes a farce. And even if the actors do not tire of it – *for they are fools* – the spectator does, for any single action will be enough for him if he can reasonably conclude from it that the never-ending play will be of eternal sameness.' (Arendt 1978: 95) To which Arendt adds the proposal that if we share the notion of the course of humanity being a natural *progress*, then maybe the spectacle may as well be performed by fools.

To which we ourselves add the comment that when the old man pours the liquid from the container he knows what he is doing. He is immolating himself perhaps, but he is also taking care of the action. And it's not just the characters that do this, who take care of what will happen, the actors do so too, as do the stage technicians and everyone else involved in the production, director, producers, theatre management. They take care in each moment of the future of the work, so that things will be illuminated and amplified, so that they will stay within budget, so that they will start and finish on time, and be repeatable. Because, if the theatre is terminal in the sense I have been pursuing – if it is a representational means of bringing the interminable 'to term' (a phrase that implies, of course, a birth as well as an ending) – then it also very often has to repeat, either to put itself on again in the same place, or drag itself around to other places, so that more people can see it and attach their thinking and their interests to it, as well as making the production economically viable. And this situation of care, of caring for the production and the business of representation is shown, repeated, doubled up, in what is depicted on stage in this play, in the son's role as his father's carer, caring for the other's appearance as he cares for his own,

cleaning up what needs cleaning, simply preparing the scene, making ready to make himself absent from the scene and return to the world of affairs – although he never does that.

The father is ashamed. He also suffers. I am thinking of philosopher Adi Ophir's account of suffering, in which the sufferer becomes 'a living communicative act'. (Ophir 2005: 261) What the sufferer suffers is intensity, and an unrelieved duration, something affecting the body that 'goes on', that seems interminable, from which he or she – the sufferer – is unable to disengage. As suffering continues, something is transmitted by the sufferer, not the suffering itself – nobody can share another's suffering – but a representation of the fact that something is going on from which the sufferer is unable to disengage. A transmission of sorts, a verbal appeal, or a wordless cry, or the self-withdrawal of one who suffers in silence, but anyway something that goes out, consciously or unconsciously, to someone else, the receiver, the destiny of that appeal, the witness, real or imagined, of 'a craving to disengage'. It is not a request for compassion.[58] If there is a demand made upon others it is not a demand to do so much as a demand to stop doing, to disengage, to not be there, or be there in some other way. As if the theatre were capable of saying to us 'Don't look'.[59] In this structure, I suggest, the thinking spectator and foolish actor opposition is turned around somewhat. Or say at least an image is put into play between us, which on our side, the spectators' side, suffers our engagement with it, our aporetic engagement, our indecision as to whether we do project our compassion or cover our eyes or look away. What we see if we don't look away is the character, the actor, the figure – or whatever we want to call him – involved in the conscious projection of that image, a thinking image, I want to say, of his own – and our – catastrophe, our inexhaustibly terminal condition.

And the writing on the wall? Well, maybe we can understand this after all as a gesture of disengagement, or an attempt at such a gesture, encapsulated in a message, a return transmission to those out there – on the stage or in the audience – who suffer the spectacle of thoughtless living, an antiphrastic gesture, cruel to be kind. You are not my shepherd. You have been measured and found wanting. I, we abandon you to what you are, your creaturely being. Or else... You are not my shepherd, nor am I yours. I am abandoned. I, we abandon ourselves in your thoughtless sight. Something of that sort; nothing too demanding. Short enough for a graffito, or a tweet, or to be written on a piece of paper and stuffed in a bottle, or else broadcast from the rooftops and back alleys in a peculiar code known only to some, semaphore perhaps, or prayer, or weeping, or barking. Or the sort of crying that sounds like barking; the sort of barking that sounds like a cry.

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[58] I am grateful to Giulia Palladini for a correspondence over some of these ideas in relation to Castellucci's show.
[59] Castellucci has used this particular estranging device before, in the Rome episode of *Tragedia Endogonidia*.

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Biography

Joe Kelleher is Professor of Theatre and Performance at the University of
Roehampton where he is also Head of Department for Drama. He is the author of
Theatre and Politics (Palgrave Macmillan 2009), and co-author with Romeo and
Claudia Castellucci, Chiara Guidi and Nicholas Ridout of *The Theatre of Socìetas
Raffaello Sanzio*, as well as numerous essays. He is currently working on a book
provisionally titled *The Illuminated Theatre*, and engaged in various collaborations,
including a series of performances on *How to...* with Eirini Kartsaki.

An Actor Never Thinks with Elements Smaller Than a World

Esa Kirkkopelto
Theatre Academy Helsinski

How does performance think? How does performer think? In this presentation, I will argue that the answer we give to the former question is highly dependent on our understanding concerning the latter. I would like to share with you an actor pedagogical model according to which in contemporary performance practice a performer can think 1) during creative processes; 2) during performance itself.

The model is based on a long term research project on actor training that I have run at the Theatre Academy Helsinki since 2008, named "Actor´s Art in Modern Times". The project would deserve its own presentation. Here I will only concentrate in its most theoretical and *potential* outcome.

I will proceed in two parts. First, I will first outline the ethical, pedagogical and artistic challenges we have faced in our project and to which our model tends to offer one possible answer. Then I enter the model itself.

1.

Theoretical knowledge is most powerful knowledge. Following Aristotle, its generality implies its potentiality. This potentiality is directly related to its capacity to get articulated. It is not "tacit". It can be turned into a command – a *mot d´ordre* – based on rational argumentation, i.e. the most elaborated and convincing form of rhetoric. In collective creative processes, there is always some distribution of work. Some people direct, lead, animate, supervise, facilitate, command; others follow, execute, perform, obey. Even though a creative process is never directly based on rational reasoning, a performance, each performance, insofar it constitutes a certain whole, a totality with a certain economy, assumes its own rationality, a certain mode of thinking. Thinking is a rational activity which is *based on* or *in search for* a certain logic, a certain set or network of rules concerning its mode of construction. Likewise, thinking in performance concerns the mode of construction of performance itself, its *composition*. To ask who thinks in performance is equal to the question "Who composes"? And the one who composes has the power. Since power cannot be escaped, not even in artistic contexts, composing is hence a matter of distributing, using of *sharing,* power. Any performance can be watched and assessed as a display of this power play, which most concretely takes place between directors and actors, choreographers and dancers.

As artists and as spectators, we have during last decades become increasingly sensible to these kind of issues and there are also lots of tendencies for redistributing responsibility in artistic processes, for creating new kind of collective working models, like devising in its various forms. Yet, these tendencies, even if they manage to unravel traditional hierarchies of work, run soon out of their inspiration if they are not simultaneously able to put into question *the principles of composing* itself. Otherwise they only accomplish together the same business that formerly was reserved to individual masters, directors or choreographers.

Concerning those principles: in contemporary performance contexts we usually think on the one hand that all the elements of a scenic composition are equal and deserve their liberty. On the other hand, performers themselves want to break out of their traditional role as mere "interpreters" and claim for more artistic liberty and respect. We are tempted to think and work as if these two modes of emancipation were one and the same. However this is not the case. Instead, we face here a dilemma that resides between *artistic agency* and *artistic element*, the dilemma I would like to consider now with you: what happens to human body when it is considered as just another scenic element among others? And, to put it other way around, what happens to our general understanding of what a compositional or dramaturgical element is, and how it is, if a human being, namely a speaking, acting and plural body, can be considered as one of them?

I would like draw attention to the usual way of speaking about compositional elements as "material". For instance in devising processes, as we have as our starting point some "material": persons, stories, pictures or concrete objects, for instance. As I would argue, to think in terms of materials returns us easily to a *productive* model of creation, where the power and the responsibility of the productive process remains in the hands of an exterior agent, producer, author, the one who directs the process towards its presumed goal and who, in this way, accomplishes his or her idea or vision. In this model, the material falls into the role of the "raw material", of plastic and formless entity ready-at-hand, susceptible to receive its form and meaning from outside of itself. As performing artists talk about "materials" they are not necessarily thinking like this. By stating, especially at the beginning of process, that everything is "just material" artists rather want to sustain the idea that all the elements of the creative process are of *equal* importance and value; that every element in performance situation should be taken into account; and finally: that every participant of the process has a liberty and a responsibility of her own. The final result, what will be done and how, depends on common agreement between the elements, whether they be human or not. Yet, this kind of reasoning falls easily back to the productive model, if it does not take into account a simple fact: namely that equality between elements can never constitute a starting point for any process; it does not suffice that we simply suppose it; but it is in itself already a constructed state of affair, a matter of composition, of using force. In general, I would sustain an idea of composition (of dramaturgy) as a process of establishing, creating an equality between its components, not of any kind but of certain kind, namely *artistic* kind, which least of all implies a harmony. *Composition is always based on some kind equalisation.* But how does it take place? In the case of performer the problem is the following: how to become a component, a lesser being, a minor being, without loosing one´s liberty and dignity? How to be able to get *connected* without becoming *dependent*? "How to connect freely?" is the basic question of every scenic composition. This time, however, it is presented from the point of view of the compositional element itself. The question is worth asking since finally, as *I* think, a scenic composition is not stronger, i.e. no more powerful, than its weakest points or links, which in performing arts and without exception are its human components or lie between them.

2.

According to the model we have come up with, actor´s work is divided in two domains that in performance are intertwined and that support each other:

       1) actor´s technique
       2) actor´s dramaturgy

The relation between the two is left open. Constructing that relation is precisely a matter of invention, creative task of a performer.

It is normally here, between these two levels, that director takes the lead and does her intervention. She defines the manner how these two domains are linked in case of each actor and how there are linked to the whole performance.

If an actor builds this relation from the very start by herself, then we can state with good reason that an actor directs herself.

Our model is meant to give actors means for this. We are not necessarily suggesting that we should get rid of directors but, perhaps, from now on we could work with them differently.

       A. About actor´s technique.

Our model is not a method:

       1) It is meant to be a tool for an actor to study her work, to become conscious of her already existing techniques and possibly change them.
       2) It helps her to work more independently in different kind of creative processes, in different kind of work situations. It does not necessarily create an aesthetic of its own, even though it can also be used as a creative medium.
       3) It helps us to build a continuity between pedagogical and creative processes, rehearsing and performing. To analyse, understand and regulate their relation.
       4) Finally, it gives performers a vocabulary, simple technical terms according to which they can communicate and negotiate about their technique and technical solutions with each other and with director in rehearsal situation.

The basic element of actor´s technique, as we have understood it, is an *exercise*. Reahearsing = exercising = making exercises.

Exercise consists always of three successive parts or phases:

       attuning > in-between > state of being

i) Attuning is physical or mental, extensive or intensive movement that attunes a person who performs it: it raises her level of energy and focuses her experience in a specific way. It removes her away from her supposedly "normal" or everyday state of

mind or attitude and fills her experience with a specific contents that she has called forth by herself. The attuning movement creates a specific sensory feeling or affect, opens a *sensory field*. Everyone who has done the same attuning feels approximately the same. The attuned performers are moving on and share a same type of sensory field. There are no pre-given or canonized set of attunings, but attuning is already a creative process. Performers are encouraged to invent attunings by themselves and share them with each other. There are no warm-ups, but rehearsing is creative from the very start. The attunings are designed and agreed according to the needs of the performance rehearsed as well as to the personal needs of performers. Technically, attuning is not so much a matter of stimulating oneself than *learning to get affected*, to open and call forth different kind of sensory fields. This can happen extensively or intensively: what it essential is that it really happens and that an attuning carries a performer along.

ii) Attuning leads a rehearsing body somewhere, in an intermediary state, a state of in-between (in Finnish: "välinen"). It is an attuned state, exceptional and literally *ecstatic* state dominated by some specific sensory feeling without any determinate contents. That is also why it is intermediary. It is a state of ignorance, an undecided state. Since you do not know exactly where you are, you cannot stay "there"; you can only linger there for a short while. You have to move on, and it is now even easy to do it, since that is what our mind tends to do in such situations: it tends to give a meaning, an interpretation to the states it finds itself within. The transition to a new state happens almost spontaneously.

iii) This state where the exercise ends, we have decided to call a "state of being" (in Finnish: "olotila", the space of lingering, staying, hanging around, living). Whatever we call it, we can nevertheless agree what we aim by it: a state of being is a smallest meaningful unit of acting, a tiny world, a "monad" with a specific personal contents. It can combine various bodily elements: mental or sensory images (invented or rememorized), emotions, voice, breathing, physical reactions, words – of some these or all of them together. What is important is that a state of being is discovered by performer herself: that it is meaningful and interesting to her and that she can maintain its coherence and totality, "live" with or within it and finally expose it to others.

In sum: an exercise leads always to some interpreted states, to states of being. Out of one in-between state a performer can create so many different states of being as she wills. Even though everyone would have done the same attuning and entered the same kind of intermediary state, after that paths normally depart and each performer enters her own state of being, gives to her attuned state a more definite meaning. The different states of being can encounter anew and start to negotiate with each other, to collide with each other, to fusion, to reinforce or destabilize each other. What is essential is nevertheless that the scenic encounter, or a "scene", takes place now with different states of being carried and sustained by performers, not between themselves or their supposed state characters.

This situation leads us to the question of actor´s dramaturgy. As I already mentioned in passing, a state of being can be considered as the smallest unit of acting, a unit of scenic composition or dramaturgy. Despite its meaningfulness and virtual

endlessness, it does not mean much yet, not at least scenically. A state of being can become a meaningful compositional element, but only when it is confronted and juxtaposed with another state and then with still another and so on, i.e. when between different states of being there happens *transitions.* A transition is *simultaneously a bodily and intellectual movement*, that takes place between two states of beings. It can be spatial, temporal or both at once. It can take place between successive states of being of one performer or between different states of being carried by several performers. *Acting* in its most general and schematic sense means hence: creating states of being, maintaining them and effectuating transitions between them, i.e. creating a bodily composition. If a performer creates both the elements of her acting, i.e. states of being, and then connects them in a specific way by effectuating transitions between them, we can state that she takes the fullest possible responsibility of her creative process: she directs herself.

The way actor moves from one state to another needs its special technique that I cannot explain here. I only notice that the transition from one state to another cannot take place immediately, a performer cannot "jump" from one state of being to another, but the previous state of being has to be *unravelled* in order to give way to a new one. Between successive states of being, performer´s body has to return to or fall back in-between state and attune itself again. Anyway, and that is important, a state of being is always built or rebuilt on some sensory and bodily basis. The dramaturgical line of acting, its score, is at every moment supported by corresponding technique.

To conclude, I want to stress three things:

1) A performer does not expose herself only in her states of being but also in transitions, while coming out of the previous state and entering a new one and while lingering between them. Mimetically, that is often the most attractive and literally most "interesting" phase (inter-esse). It is also a moment when performer´s body becomes manifested in a particular way. The question remains to which extent a performer is ready or allowed to show herself in this state. As I suggested earlier, the question is related to the archi-ethics of performance. Whether a scenic composition is conceived as a before hand designed intellectual figure, or whether it is understood more actively, according to its taking place and as a mode of being together.

2) If we ask ourselves the simple question what keeps the components of a composition together, which connects one state of being with another, the answer is obvious: nothing but the free creative will of the performer, *her scenic thinking.* The transition, as I already mentioned, is simultaneously physical and intellectual, not psychological. As I have state in my title, an actor never deals with elements smaller than a world. Her way of thinking is essentially *compositional.* A state of being, as it is here defined, means: a relative totality or a "provisory absolute". An actor states: these things or experiences are interrelated in this and this ways. Even if those connections were strictly personal, in scenic exposition they become shared as a model for a possible experience or order of things. Rest depends on the originality and skilfulness of performer herself as well as on the receptiveness of the spectator.

Their mutual agreement or disagreement is once again a matter of thinking, since they are not considering here different things.

3) Each state of being, insofar it is considered as a compositional element, can be replaced metaphorically with some other element: a single gesture, a sound, a pause, a sign, an object, a different modality of being exposed. Yet, as we suggest, a state of being gives a measure or a rule for all these metaphorical replacements. The elements are *equalized* according to some common feature and it may be that only performer herself knows it or deliberately ignores it. What is essential is that the metaphorical replacement is done and decided by performer herself, which means that it has to have its starting point in her, in some of her states of being. This guarantees that each element is considered as a compositional and artistic one, as a *component*: i.e. as a world of its own, and not as "just material" or as an instrument for something else.

As a performer shows here relation to a world, by her way of entering it and leaving it, she manifests her and our liberty in relation to that world and, by the same token, to any world whatsoever.

Biography

Esa Kirkkopelto (Born in 1965) is a Professor of Artistic Research and Vice-Rector, at the Theatre Academy Helsinki (2007-2012). Previous and other positions include: 2012-2015 Responsible leader of the "Doctoral Programme of Artistic Research" (Theatre Academy Helsinki, Academy of Fine Arts, Sibelius Academy, Aalto University); 2011-2014 Responsible leader of the "Asian Art and Performance Consortium" (Theatre Academy Helsinki & Academy of Fine Arts); 2009-2011 Responsible leader of the "Actor´s Art in Modern Times" research group (Theatre Academy Helsinki, University of Helsinki); 2007-2011 Member of the Steering committee of the "Doctoral School of Music, Theatre and Dance" (Sibelius Academy, University of Helsinki, University of Tampere, Theatre Academy Helsinki); 2009-2012 Member of the "Figures of Touch" research group (Aalto University, Helsinki University, Theatre Academy Helsinki); 2004-2007 Post doctoral position at the department of aesthetics, University of Helsinki. He compelted a PhD at Université Marc Bloch (Strasbourg) in 2002. He is a former theatre director and playwright, and has been convenor of "Other Spaces" – live art collective (2004–). He is author of « Le théâtre de l´expérience. Contributions à la théorie de la scène » (Presses de l´Univerisité Paris-Sorbonne 2008).

Secrecy vs. Revelation. Reflections on the Dramatics of the Hidden

Alice Lagaay
Universität Bremen

What I'm presenting is a tentative enquiry, a preliminary and still quite sketchy attempt to identify a line of investigation the main work of which lies ahead. Work in progress in other words. A quick word about the context: The ideas I'm toying with here are the result of two main branches of research which have defined my work in recent years. My talk is an attempt to connect them.

The first theme has to do with the very fundamental relationship between theatre and philosophy. It has to do with the question of how to describe, how to grasp, to become aware of and explain the multiple dimensions and the transformatory dynamics of this relationship. One initial impulse – by no means uncontroversial, I'm sure – is to say that theatre and philosophy share a relation to *theoria*, to contemplation, that is, or to the act by which *something is brought to light*, or revealed in its truth by being looked at or studied, by spectatorship, in other words, or in the act of being witnessed. So the first very general question that I would like to put to you is this: Is it true – or nothing more than trivial – to say that theatre or drama or performance REVEAL? Is it a relevant characteristic of the theatrical that it brings something to light? For if so, this would imply that that which is revealed is otherwise not quite so visible, but concealed or hidden or simply unnoticed in the world: a sort of secret in other words. *To what extent does theatre bring to light the otherwise invisible, to what extent does it reveal a secret?* And how can this act or event of revelation, implying a certain tension between two epistemological states (being in on the secret so to speak as opposed to not being so) be described within immanence, i.e. without necessarily evoking a two-world metaphysical structure whereby a sort of hidden or divine truth is conceived as lying *behind* the surface of appearance? What various dimensions of secrecy vs. revelation may be relevant here? For instance, it might be one thing to recognise that – on a pragmatic, narrative level – secrecy and the process of revelation of secrets have long (perhaps even always) been an essential and familiar motor or strategy shaping the plots in traditional staged drama. No doubt very many different dimensions and functions of secrecy have been identified in this context – in fact I wouldn't be surprised if on the level of the narrative, the revelation of something kept secret or unknown is precisely the place where the theatrical meets the philosophical: just think of the play between ignorance and knowledge in Oedipus for instance.

But what about in the world of (to take a short cut) "postdramatic" theatre?[60] To what extent does a certain tension or oscillation between secrecy and revelation apply not just to the narrative level but also to the very materiality of a performance? What kind of knowledge is concealed, for instance, in the body of the performer? And, how may that knowledge at times be consciously withheld, and at other times either intentionally or involuntarily secreted?

The same or similar questions can be put to philosophy: is philosophy the art (or an

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[60] Cf. Hans-Thiel Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, trans. Karen Jürs-Munby, Routledge 2006.

art) of bringing to perception, of *aistheticising*, the otherwise concealed or intangible? As for example in Martin Heidegger's *Der Satz vom Grund* – translated disappointingly I find as *The Principle of Reason* (Heidegger 1957/1996). In this series of lectures – and there is certainly something dramatic about them – Heidegger gradually brings to light what he describes as the forgotten – or secret – meaning of Leibniz's phrase *nihil est sine ratione* (*nichts ist ohne Grund*: nothing is without reason). When we hear this phrase, he begins by explaining, we immediately understand it as intuitively meaningful. But a hidden meaning, or rather different layers of secret meaning are revealed in the process of Heidegger's gradual and dramatic – I think one could fairly call deconstructive – discursive procedure. Indeed, it is Heidegger's voice and philosophic discourse that gradually guide the reader towards *hearing* the phrase differently, until ultimately it no longer simply says that things have reasons (nothing is without reason), but a shift of emphasis occurs and it begins to speak the very *ground* (or *groundlessness* or *residue*) of being (nothing IS without REASON). Not only that: the phrase contains the *leap* from the ground needed to recognise the ground and residue of being (the word 'Satz' in German means sentence, but it also means leap. It means sentence and leap but it also means residue or leftover as in coffee or tea residue). And not only that: it also evokes the musical material sounding nature of the voice – or movement – of being that speaks the very *Satz vom Grund* ("Satz" means sentence and leap and residue, but it also means musical movement). All these meanings are thus gradually revealed as having been there all along although unheard – like a kind of open secret, like Edgar Allen Poe's purloined letter – on the semantic surface of the sentence.

So this issue of the intricate and complex relationship between theatre – or the dramatic – and philosophy is one context from which my questioning arises. The second thematic cluster is a little more difficult to name (but no less problematically ambitious and hard to get a clear grasp on because of its ubiquity). It has to do with the task I've been pursuing of drawing a sort of landscape or map of what might be called 'negative performance'.[61] Amongst the many points on this imaginary map is the topic I want to focus on today: the question of the dramatic logic of SECRECY. Stated very bluntly, I'm interested in secrecy and in the place or role of secrecy vs. transparency and/or revelation in contemporary culture – and how it (or perhaps the absence thereof) is reflected in the arts. My hunch is that in secrecy the two or indeed many sides of the performative coin come together: the active and the passive, the positive and the negative, the productive or world/reality-constituting, knowledge-creating machine, on the one hand, and the dramatic or staged/embodied human practice on the other.

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[61] The background or original context of this interest in negative performance goes back to my time at the Collaborative Research Centre "Performing Cultures" at Freie Universität Berlin where to begin with there was a strong emphasis on performativity understood in terms of the embodied, exposed, i.e. aisthetic, material eventness of human actions and rituals, a strong attentiveness to concepts of materiality, constructivity and mediality – all somehow 'positive' terms. My angle became to home in on the other side as it were: to investigate the power not of speech acts but of silence and the taciturn, to focus not only on vocality and action but on *in-action* and passivity, to reflect on a certain economy of restraint, of withdrawal or withholding, as well as on the destructive aspects of performativity…). Cf. e.g. Barbara Gronau and Alice Lagaay (eds.). *Performanzen des Nichttuns* (Vienna, Passagen Verlag, 2008) and *Ökonomien der Zurückhaltung*, (Bielefeld: transcript 2010).

But what exactly do I mean here by secrecy? Unfortunately it's not that simple. There are in fact many different angles or perspectives from which to approach secrecy. I can name at least four that are different yet also interrelated:[62]

> i) From an epistemological perspective: secrecy as the great – albeit constantly shifting realm of the unknown. *Arcana mundi*: the secrets of the world, the realm of that which, despite the progress of science, remains intangible. Here there need not be a strategic agent withholding this knowledge on purpose, but a kind of natural boundary would seem to define the limit of the humanly knowable: secrets of the soul and of the body, of love, of death, time, ultimate secrets of the cosmos, of the origin and end of the universe, not to mention all the forgotten, untraceable mysteries of the world. This realm of secrecy cannot – by definition – be revealed, and yet something of it is suggested in that which *can* be disclosed and it is dramatically relevant, no doubt to theatre and philosophy alike, in that it drives the curiosity of human beings to explore the unknown. The drive, for instance, to find out what happened in a plot and thereby to push back the boundary of the un/known.[63]

> ii) Then there are the mysteries of religion, *arcana dei*, by which a connection is drawn between the secret and the sacred: the secret that protects the sacred, the play of concealment and revelation that defines the paradoxical logic of both: for the sacred must in a sense remain secret to be sacred, but it must also reveal itself – at least occasionally. As Paul Christopher Johnson once aptly put it: "Secrets are to religion what lingerie is to the body; they enhance what is imagined to be present" (Johnson 2001, 4).

> iii) There are then the secrets of the state, *arcana imperii*: The important function of strategies of concealment in politics and war – and the ambivalent status thereof in modern democracies. Not to mention the right of citizens to hold secrets from the state by which the complex problem of data protection in digital information societies may be glimpsed.[64]

> iv) And fourthly, *arcana cordis*, perhaps the most personal dimension of all: the secrets of the heart. The subjectively significant ones that each of us carries with us and is inclined not to disclose all too easily. These secrets tend to play an important role in human relationships: Jacques Derrida speaks of the seductive – and exciting character of secrets. In a chapter on "knowing not to know" in the *Gift of Death*, he says:

A secret always makes you *tremble*. Not simply quiver or shiver, which also happens sometimes, but tremble. A quiver can of course manifest fear, anguish, apprehension of death; as when one quivers in advance, in anticipation of what is to

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[62] Cf. Groundwork on the cultural dimensions of secrecy in Aleida Assmann and Jan Assmann. *Schleier und Schwelle*, especially Vol. 1 (*Geheimnis und Öffentlichkeit*), (Munich 1997).
[63] It is often curiosity that determines what is considered secret. This point is explored in Aleida Assmann and Jan Assmann (eds.). *Schleier und Schwelle*. Vol. 3 (*Geheimnis und Neugierde*). Munich: Fink 1998, 7 ff.
[64] For more on this see the fascinating study by Eva Horn 2011.

come. But it can be slight, on the surface of the skin, like a quiver that announces the arrival of pleasure. It is a moment in passing, the suspended time of seduction. A quiver is not always very serious, it is sometimes discreet, barely discernible, somewhat epiphenomenal. It prepares for, rather than follows the event. One could say that water quivers before it boils, that is the idea I was referring to as seduction: a superficial pre-boil, a preliminary and visible agitation (Derrida 1996, 53).

The opposite in other words to indifference: secrets of the heart cause one to tremble. It may be interesting to note the transformation that has occurred historically with regard to the places and/or people that one takes one's secrets to. The therapist's couch has to a large extent replaced the priest's confessional. But the productive creativity spawned by secrecy no doubt remains; creative strategies of concealment, disguise, masking and veiling, silencing and denying, the dynamics of human relationships bound by shared or broken by betrayed secrecy – and the constant play between secretiveness and gossip (not just in the British media).

Secrecy as such is neither necessarily positive nor necessarily negative. A particular secret may acquire destructive potency – just think of the devastating personal consequences of many a family secret. But when motivated by shame or maintained by discretion such secrets can also be a source of some of the finest and most intimate of human behaviours and experience. I am thinking here of the strong bind and the positive quality of trust and discretion that a shared secret may establish between friends. Yet personal secrets and particularly secrets of the heart rarely remain with the people they most concern. For it seems to belong to the very logic of secrecy that a secret be shared with someone, and thereby disclosed to be perhaps later on betrayed. And even secrets that are not shared tend to find their way out eventually, either as a result of the intentional research of a curious seeker or unconsciously through trans-generational communication.[65]

These four named realms of secrecy (and I don't of course claim they are the only ones, the secret of embodied knowledge might, for instance, be yet another category) are different and yet interlinked: whilst the mysteries of religion may touch the boundaries of the knowable, secrets of the heart will almost always reflect a person's beliefs or religious practices and personal secrets are shaped by the structures of society, by the *Zeitgeist* of a generation which together define what can be said or is considered taboo. What the various dimensions share moreover is a common structure – and it is this structure that I propose to explore a little now – first with recourse to the sociology of Georg Simmel (who some have referred to as being postmodern *avant la lettre*) and then with reference again to Jacques Derrida.[66]

One thing to note is that the ability to withhold information conditions in a sense the very possibility of individuality and thus can be shown to have played an important role in the formation of the modern (although not necessarily postmodern) concept of human subjectivity and personhood: in the early 20th century the German philosopher and sociologist Georg Simmel described secrecy as "one of the greatest

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[65] Cf. Anne Ancellin Schützenberger. *The Ancestor Syndrome: Transgenerational Psychotherapy and the Hidden Links in the Family Tree.* London/ New York, Routledge, 1998.
[66] "Simmel as bricoleur is a practitioner of a demystified savage mind, a post-structuralist before the advent of structuralism", Deena Weinstein and Michael A. Weinstein. "Georg Simmel. Sociological Flaneur/Bricoleur", in: *Theory, Culture and Society* Vol. 8, book 3, 1991, 151-168, 162.

accomplishments of humanity" (Simmel 1906, 462). Hyperbolic as it is, this statement is worth pondering for a moment. Simmel considered the ability to withhold information as constituting an essential dimension of all interpersonal relationships as well as allowing for groups within a larger society to emerge and distinguish themselves: secret societies, in other words, bound together by implicit or sometimes explicit regulations regarding the exclusiveness of certain types of shared information.

His analysis of secrecy emphasises the sociological productivity of concealed information as well as the dynamic process active wherever secrecy is at work. Simmel was interested in the triadic tension that occurs when two parties share a secret. A segregation occurs when A and B share something that C is excluded from. Whilst strategies of what he calls "aggressive defense" may be deployed to keep the secret (lying, denying, hiding, masking, talking in order to say nothing etc.), he also notes the paradoxical power that a person holding a secret acquires, a power which somehow – in an analogous way to jewellery, he says – makes that person stand out. "Secrecy magnifies reality" is how he puts it. Moreover, to quote from Stefan Zweig's "Burning Secret":

> "Nothing whets the intelligence more than a passionate suspicion, nothing develops all the faculties of an immature mind more than a trail running away into the dark." (Zweig 2008)

Once C, who is left out of the secret, 'smells a rat' or realises his/her exclusion, s/he will tend to enter into a mode of "aggressive offensive" to find out that s/he is being left out of. The triadic structure is thus vulnerable on all sides: there is the danger that it will be found out, but also the temptation – on the part of those who share in the secret – to divulge it, a danger which Simmel interestingly equates with the ecstasy of the moment in which money is spent: once spent, the money is gone. Once betrayed, the power of the secret is lost.

I cannot elaborate here much further. Except perhaps to underscore that Simmel's analyses of the sociological power of secrecy are of course historically situated and bound to the concept and experience of individuality that was emerging at the time (i.e. in the early 20th century). Thus Simmel's emphasis of the power of secrecy is connected to the sociological recognition that the modern subject is not just one persona but that it consists of a collection of roles (you are one person at home with your family but a different person at work, one person in the country, another in the city etc.). These different personae open a realm of dramatic possibilities – fruitful not only but also within the realm of theatre. One might think for instance of Oscar Wilde's *Importance of Being Earnest*, a comedy of the same period that plays with the psychological complexity required to maintain multiple 'Bunburys' in one body – different faces of a person kept separate by various dimensions of withheld, unshared, secret knowledge.

Simmel's concept of secrecy has thus been associated with a *quantitative* aspect of individualisation: more than one person contained within a subject (represented by a cake with many pieces or an orange with many segments – see Nedelmann 1994). But it can also be related to a different model of individuality which sociologists have

called qualitative (see idem): represented by a series of concentric circles with the ego at the heart. On this model, a person's relationships are defined by the distance they maintain to his/her inner ego. Managing one's different relationships requires the skill of demarcation, the ability to recognise and to draw limits, and skill in the art of discretion by which to maintain and change these limits through sociological movement, as well as by which to recognise and respect those boundaries in others.

In the little time I have left, I will jump to the one who might best be described as the Sherlock Holmes of philosophy; one who not only wrote at length about the nature of secrets and professed to being obsessed by secrecy and the art of decryption and decoding, but who also, upon being asked towards the end of his life what he would still like to know, stated (and it remains unclear how serious he was) that what he would really like to know is about the sex lives of philosophers.

Jacques Derrida's thoughts on secrecy would appear – at least initially – to reside on a whole different plane to those of Georg Simmel. They are not primarily motivated by an attempt to define human relationships, the dynamics of individuality, or sociological movement. They are situated rather on the fundamental level of the structure or the experience of the structure of language itself. He is interested in the possibility of a secret or of a dimension of secrecy that resides both *in*, and in a certain sense *before* any word is uttered or withheld. He is thus not only interested in revealing secrets (like the ultimate secret that there is no secret *behind* the word, no ultimately fixed or tangible *signifié*), but his writings often express a strong belief in the necessary existence of a constant secret: gestured towards as that which one can only ever speak about but never really manage to say.

> "Fundamentally, everything I attempt to do, think, teach and write has its raison d'être, spur, calling and appeal in this secret, which interminably disqualifies any effort one can make to determine it." (Derrida 2001, 58).

Thus Derrida's work can be seen as the attempt to bring these two seemingly contradictory figures of thought together: the recognition on the one hand that there is no secret (nothing hidden behind the surface structure), and on the other hand the belief in the necessity of the secret, a recognition of its meaningful effect and significant productivity. But perhaps there is in fact no contradiction here.

For what appears to be a contradiction is perhaps in fact nothing but the inherent paradox of the secret which can be best described with reference to the etymology of the term. The term secret or secrecy owes its meaning to the Latin *secretum*: to that which is separated and set apart. Secret information is thus information that is separated from the rest of the openly accessible non-secret information. One might add with Simmel that it is not just the secret that is separated from the rest, but also the people who hold or share a secret who are separated from those who don't. But precisely this separatedness defines the paradox. For one might wonder: doesn't something remain truly secret so long as it is *not* separated, and therefore not visible? Isn't the secret really only secret as long as it is assimilated with the rest, mixed up with the whole? As soon as it is separated, secreted from the whole, a piece of Gold dust picked out from the sand, only then does it cease to be a secret! The true enigma of the secret thus consists in the fact that structurally speaking a

secret is constituted in the very moment that it disappears, and disappears in the moment that it is constituted.[67]

Recognition of this paradox drives Derrida to seek a concept of the secret that can no longer in principle be revealed, a secret that remains unreadable, undeciferable even although it is neither hidden nor coded. "There is something secret. But it does not conceal itself" (Derrida 1992, 21).

The secret according to Derrida shares the structure of death in that each stands for something that cannot be said – although (and in fact *because*) we can only ever speak of it. Perhaps it can be said however that this something that is barely communicable because it withdraws itself points towards an ethical dimension, one that begins with both a necessary and impossible responsibility. For it becomes a question of responding to that which cannot be said, of sharing what cannot be shared, that is commun-icated, and thus of doing justice to the mutual recognition that on a fundamentally human level we have little or nothing in common.[68] And so I close my talk with the famous line by Walter Benjamin taken from *The Origin of German Tragic Drama,*

> "Truth is not a matter of exposure which destroys the secret, but a revelation which does justice to it." (Benjamin 2009, 25)

Could this, I wonder, be an apt description of the way performance might think?

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[67] For more on this see Louis Marin 1984, 60 ff.
[68] But how can I explain, how can I explain to you?
You will understand less after I have explained it.
All that I can hope to make you understand
Is only events: not what has happened.
And people to whom nothing has ever happened
Cannot understand the unimportance of events."
T.S.Eliot. *The Family Reunion*, 1939.

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Biography

Alice Lagaay, Dr. phil., is a researcher and lecturer at Bremen University. From 2002 to 2011 she was employed at the Collaborative Research Centre "Performing Cultures" at Freie Universität Berlin where she completed her doctoral thesis with a study on the Philosophy of Voice. Since then her work has focused on the performativity of silence, secrets and *not*-doing as well as on the relationship between performance and philosophy. Recent publications in English include: "Passivity at Work. A Conversation on an Element in the Philosophy of Giorgio Agamben" (with J. Schiffers), in: *Law and Critique* 20.3 (2009), "Towards a (Negative) Philosophy of Voice", in: Lynne Kendrick and David Roesner (eds.), *Theater Noise. The Sound of Performance*, Newcastle 2011, and *Destruction in the Performative* (ed. with M. Lorber), Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2012.

Choreographieoper? Dispersing Operatic Performance

David J. Levin
University of Chicago

Let me begin with a sheepish admission. I am becoming a bit bored with *Regieoper* (director's opera). Not for the predictable reasons – it is not that I am dispositionally opposed to inventive or even "deconstructive" readings. On the contrary! The problem with *Regieoper,* as I see it, is a byproduct of the imperative of unpredictability: productions (in this, not unlike teenagers) that *have* to be unpredictable too often end up looking pretty much the same. Thus results what Hans-Thies Lehman has aptly termed *avant-garde conformism.*[69]

Of course, there are some notable exceptions, some productions that astonish and surprise despite the generic imperative to astonish and surprise.[70] In this paper, I won't be fishing out those individual exceptions (whether or not they prove the rule); instead, I want to draw our attention to a phenomenon that constitutes something of an alternative practice. (Note the hedge in that formulation: my argument is not that we are dealing with a fully fledged alternative, but one with potential.) I propose to consider a form of stage production that deserves more attention than it has received: it bears directly upon director's opera, and certainly shares many practices with it, so, at the risk of doing a disservice to its historical specificity, let's provisionally term it *choreographer's opera.*

Of course, I am not the first to think about the relationship of opera to dance. To cite but one recent example, Daniel Albright's essay "Golden Calves: The Role of Dance in Opera" offers a wonderfully informative and characteristically irreverent account of the myriad tensions that have animated the relationship between opera and dance.[71] Albright's orientation is historical and his primary focus is on compositions: thus, he traces Wagner's anxiety of balletic influence (which is also, inevitably, his anxiety of Meyerbeerian influence) through to a discussion of the over determined manner in

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[69] Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatisches Theater* (Frankfurt/M: Verlag der Autoren, 1999), 35. Sadly, the section on "Mainstream and Experiment" in which this argument appears and which forms one of the last secions in the Prologue to Lehmann's book was not translated into English for the (abridged!) English edition. See *Postdramatic Theatre*, trans. Karen Jürs-Munby (NY/London: Routledge, 2006).

[70] The Paris/Parma co-production of Rossini's *La Pietra del Paragone* directed and conceived by Giorgio Barberio Corsetti and Pierrick Sorin, conducted by Jean-Christophe Spinosi with the Ensemble Matheus, which was released on DVD in 2007 (and about which Emanuele Senici has written wonderfully) comes to mind –a production in which the singers occupy a more or less bare stage, while a set is superimposed upon their bodies via live audio-visual technologies, and the singers and the set into which they are interpolated are projected onto screens suspended above the stage to often hilarious effect. (See Emanuele Senici, "Porn Style?: Space and Time in Live Opera Videos" *The Opera Quarterly*, 26.1 (Winter 2010): 63-80.   Or, in a very different (which is to say, a more Teutonically *ernst* idiom*),* there is Martin Kušej's Zurich production of Strauss and Hofmannstahl's *Elektra*, released on DVD in 2006, which offered a confoundingly claustrophobic account of the piece, set in an interior that could be variously understood as the interior of an asylum or the interior of Elektra's mind.

[71] Daniel Albright, "Golden Calves: The Role of Dance in Opera," *Opera Quarterly* (Winter 2006) 22(1): 22-37. Albright subsequently republished the piece in *Music Speaks: On the Language of Opera, Dance, and Song* (Rochester, NY: U Rochester P, 2009).

which opera and opera composers have sought to respond to the perceived threat of dancing bodies. The focus of the project I am introducing here is related but distinct, involving an account of interpretive practices on stage rather than a given composer's proclivities. Put otherwise, rather than focusing upon the historical and generic tensions between opera and dance I am keen to consider how choreographers, dancers, and singers jointly shape and reshape opera in performance. The two are obviously related, but just as obviously not the same thing.

Let's begin with the weird status of choreographer's opera as a kind of exotic outpost in the culture of opera production. That outpost has to be easily recognized *as an outpost* in order to function as one.   And so, just as Virginia is for Lovers (at least, according to that state's tourism board), so too have *Dido and Aeneas* or *Orpheus and Euridice* (Gluck and Monteverdi) been for choreographers. And why is that? In part, surely, because these pieces have extended passages of dance music, which is to say, they rely upon dance as an interpolated and recurring expressive form. But also, these pieces have become familiar as the place where choreographers go when they come to opera (and, as a corollary to that point: it is where audiences have come to expect to find choreographers when they go to those operas). And familiarity, as Henry Ford reminds us, is the best form of branding. There are other explanations: when I posed this question to an audience last year, one colleague suggested that these are dramatically tedious works with lovely music, and as such, they benefit from lithe bodies to distract us from the long stretches in which, absent those bodies, very little would be happening. On this account, the lithe bodies don't just occupy a space otherwise marked by absence (in this case understood as the absence of action), but they tend to occupy the space otherwise marked by presence too (in this case, the presence of the singer's body). Putting singing bodies into a context of dancing bodies has the effect of resituating or even displacing the singing and the singer. Such a resituation can be productive by challenging a conventionalized sense of how and what opera signifies.

Of course, a lot depends on the particular dancers and the particular singers and the particular choreographer and the particular piece and the particular house commissioning the production. For our purposes today, I'd like to consider a few of the ways in which resituation (or what I'll call 'dispersal') is at stake in Pina Bausch's production of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, or indeed, *Orpheus und Eurydike*, which is how the piece was titled when it premiered in Wuppertal in 1975 and was remounted in Paris in 1993.[72] The German title has a bit to do with the piece's weird history, but it has more to do with the expressive provenance of the production: since Wuppertal is a regional opera house, it tended, in the 1970s, when the piece was first mounted (which is also to say: in an era prior to super-titles), to present foreign works in the vernacular. So: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, sung in German. And it was danced in what

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[72] Christoph W. Gluck, *Orpheus und Eurydike*, eine Tanz-Oper von Pina Bausch. Choreography and stage direction by Pina Bausch (1975), sets, constume, and lighting by Rolf Borzik. Orpheus danced by Yann Bridard, sung by Maria Riccarda Wesseling; Eurydike danced by Marie-Agnès Gillot, sung by Julia Kleiter; Amor danced by Miteki Kudo, sung by Sunhae Im. Ballet de l'Opéra national de Paris, with the Balthasar-Neumann Ensemble and chorus, conducted by Thomas Hengelbrock. Film by Vincent Bataillon, recorded at the Opéra national de Paris at the Palais Garnier in February 2008. Released on DVD by Belair Media, 2009.

linguists would term a *nascent dialect*, that is, in the expressive vocabulary of *Tanztheater*, or dance theater, a language that Bausch was introducing and refining in Wuppertal at the time. (She only assumed the directorship of the ballet in Wuppertal in 1973, two years prior to this production.) This is not the place to detail the expressive aspirations of *Tanztheater,* and its relationship to the norms of classical ballet.[73] I hope it will suffice to say that Bausch sought to present work that would engage viewers by invoking, among other things, German history, contemporary power relations, as well as the lived experiences and expressive proclivities of her dancers. Her practice, we might say, sought to displace the hegemony of an expressive form that she perceived to be unduly rarefied and aestheticized, replacing it with forms that were more direct because less ornamented, more compelling because less conventionalized. The analogy to Gluck's reform agenda, on this admittedly superficial account, should be clear. Bausch's practice intervenes in and *displaces* a prevailing discourse of opera production – not just on the level of character dramaturgy, but also formally, in terms of stagecraft. Much the same is true at the level of the camerawork of the production's appearance on DVD. Let's consider the camerawork. At a very basic level, the camerawork, for recordings of dance, tends to situate the viewer as a spectator, in relation to dancing bodies. Whereas in opera, the camera tends to situate the viewer as an auditor, in relation to voices. In choreographer's opera, the rhetoric of camera movement is confronted with a question: where to go and what to do. For those schooled in the rhetoric of opera recordings, the results are noteworthy. A corollary to the notion that in opera, the money is in the voices, is the sense that in operas on DVD, the money shot tends to center on the singer, and not just the singer, but the singer's face, the source of vocal production.[74]

In *Regie-theater*, of course, the singing voice tends to be programmatically displaced into a relationship with an environment, and not just any environment, but usually and most recognizably, a de-naturalized environment, one designed to surprise and, to use the Brechtian buzzword, to defamiliarize. Thus, to cite some familiar examples, we find Susanna and Figaro in a penthouse suite of Trump Towers or we find Don Giovanni and Leporello in Spanish Harlem (in the famous Peter Sellars productions from the 1980s), or we find the Rheinmaidens and Alberich slip-sliding on an industrial dam in Patrice Chereau's centennial Ring at Bayreuth in 1976. Choreographer's opera, in my experience, engages in a different kind of displacement – less topical and geographic than representational, where the singers, rather than being displaced in *diegetic* terms from, say, a mythic to a contemporary place, are literally displaced, from the center of signification to its margins. Related

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[73] Among the introductory works on Bausch, see "An Artistic and Contextual History," the first chapter in Royd Climenhaga, Pina Bausch (London & NY: Routledge, 2009), 1-38.

[74] The observation recalls Wayne Koestenbaum's comical account of "Looking Into the Voice Box" and his recollection of looking into Jessye Norman's mouth in "Mouth," both in his *The Queen's Throat: Opera, Homosexuality, and the Mystery of Desire* (NY: Poseidon Press, 1993), 159-61 and 163-4. The camera-work of the Met Opera hi-definition broadcasts—especially the track mounted and hyper-mobile mini-cams running along the base of the stage, just above the orchestra, has given a new provenance to the notion that the singer's voice is not just of paramount importance in opera, but that an audience in the cinema should first and foremost be given to see that vocal production. The stage production, on this account, assumes the status of background information, pixilated window-dressing for the digital age. The Met, we might say, has redrawn the proscenium of its hi-def stage to capture and display the singer's upper body.

to this displacement of the singers is a sense that the rhetoric by which the piece is rendered is displaced too. On the one hand, this is entirely predictable: after all, a danced opera signifies differently than an opera that is merely (merely?) staged. But this difference on the level of signification is noteworthy for anyone interested in exploring the full range of opera's signifying practices, and in particular, the ways in which it can be made (and understood) to signify differently.

An example may help to explain what I have in mind.

In a conventional history of opera, the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice occupies pride of place not just because the piece has tended to occupy the pole position when it comes to operatic history, but that privileged position, in turn, has produced a kind of go-to allegory, by which opera inaugurates itself by figuring its own claim: Orpheus, as the ur-crooner, is able to defy death and retrieve his lost love via the power of song. (Of course, his victory is short-lived indeed: he turns around, and in his recourse to an expression of visual desire, loses her forever.) But the point is clear enough: here, voice takes up a privileged position in the economy of mortality. Historically, this material hasn't just attracted opera composers, it has also famously attracted important choreographers, for reasons that merit an exploration that I won't undertake here: thus, in 1936 George Balanchine scandalized audiences at the Met with his production of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* (the production was withdrawn after only two performances[75]), and almost 40 years later, Pina Bausch staged Gluck's piece in Wuppertal; remounting it in 2008 for Paris; in 2000, the Robert Wilson production of Berlioz's edition of Gluck's *Orphee et Eurydice* which had premiered at the Chatelet in Paris a year earlier, was released on DVD. And although Wilson is not a *ballet* choreographer, the prototypcal stylization of his production locates it in the realm of choreography.

In her production, Pina Bausch stages many things: in one sense, (and in this, her heritage as a central figure in *Tanztheater*, is clear) she certainly stages the drama, although she does so via a series of dispersions that render the piece in multiplied and oblique form. Among these are forms that would strike a regular opera-goer as fundamentally unfamiliar, including scenes that render musical forms – groupings that figure rhythmic configurations, for instance, or the disposition of phrases. One important effect of this dispersion is a marginalization of the singer – which is also to say: the singer's body.

Let's take a look at a characteristic example. Here, Orpheus beseeches the furies to let him into the underworld, and the furies, true to their name, tell him to scram. You'll *hear* Maria Riccarda Wesseling singing Orpheus, and you'll *see* the role danced by Yann Bridard; for that matter, you'll hear the Balthasar-Neumann chorus, but you won't see them at all, since Bausch relegated them to the pit along with the orchestra. In their place, you'll see the ensemble of the Ballet de l'Opéra national de Paris. (The DVD was filmed by Vincent Bataillon, recorded at the Palais Garnier in February 2008, and released on DVD in 2009.) And a final tip regarding where to find Maria Riccarda Wesseling singing Orpheus in the following: you'll catch a

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[75] James Steichen, a graduate student in Musicology at Princeton, has recently undertaken extensive archival research on Balanchine's production, and describes Balanchine's production as "arguably the first instance of what critics will later dismiss as 'Eurotrash'."

glimpse of her towards the end of this clip, dressed all in black, beneath the oversized bar stools lining the right side of the stage.

<div style="text-align:center">

Screen the scene

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Mimesis is differently at stake here: the locus of meaning production is decentered in and by the production on DVD. It is decentered between genders (Orpheus, danced by a man, is sung by a woman); between languages (Gluck's piece is sung here in German with subtitles that translate it intermittently at best), and most interesting, between signifying modalities and genres, that is, between *Tanztheater* and the conventions of operatic stagecraft, between the singer's body as a primary source of sung expression and the dancer's body as a primary source of gestural expression. This is a different, interstitial form of signification, a signification through dispersal and multiplication rather than consolidation. As a result, there is a general sense that meaning-production takes place *elsewhere* and *otherwise* here, and the locus of expression here is not so much in a specific place as it is *on the move,* both literally and more figuratively, variously finding expression and moving through it.

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Biography

David Levin is Professor of Germanic Studies, Cinema and Media Studies, Theater and Performance Studies, at the University of Chicago.

Reassessing the Thinking Body in Soundpainting

Helen Julia Minors
Kingston University
Walter Thompson (interviewee)
Independant Artist

This presentation showed a videoed live performance of a Soundpainting performance in which I, Helen Julia Minors, performed, led by the creator of the Soundpainting language Walter Thompson. The discussion explored the definitions of Soundpainting, and utilised primary source evidence drawn from a recent filmed interview with Thompson and from a questionnaire I conducted with Thompson in 2011. Below I present selected questions and answers from this questionnaire in order to outline the issues that were explored in the video footage presented. I constructed the questionnaire in December 2010 with the intention of challenging the creator of the Soundpainting language, Walter Thompson, on the role of gesture in Soundpainting, in order to find out how Thompson conceived some of the gestures he use and their use across music and dance, to inform my own analysis of this music and dance dialogue.

Walter Thompson and Helen Julia Minors.
Screen Shot, Soundpainting Interview (25 July 2011)
Union des Musiciens de Jazz, Rue des Frigos, Paris.

In writing this questionnaire I make a claim that Soundpainting uses culturally based physical gestures to communicate and compose in real time, assuming a cross- or inter-disciplinary exchange between music and dance. This exchange relies to some extent on metaphor. Music is perceived both spatially and temporally, and likewise

so are dance and the other artistic components. If an exchange occurs, is it a dialogue? Does that dialogue rely solely or partially on meaning bearing gestures? The questionnaire had eight sections to it. Below I present four extract from four sections in order to define the language, set out the aims, and significantly to explore the intercession between improvisation and composition, before outlining the development fo the language. The full questionnaire will be made available at http://www.soundpainting.com

Questionnaire
It is necessary to define what Soundpainting is: how can we compose and choreograph in the moment, how does the language work?

1. Background – Creative Context

How would you define Soundpainting for a musician?

'Soundpainting is the multidisciplinary live composing sign language I created in 1974. Soundpainting comprises more than 1200 gestures that are signed by the live composer – known as the Soundpainter – indicating specific material and chance material to be performed. The Soundpainter, standing in front of the group (usually), signs a phrase to the group then composes with the responses. The imposing of phrase and composing with results is the basis for Soundpainting.'

What were the main factors which led you to create the Soundpainting gestural sign language?

'I moved to Woodstock, NY from Boston in 1974 and formed my first orchestra – comprising musicians and dancers – about 25 in total. I organized rehearsals and performances during the summer and composed, using traditional notation, several compositions incorporating sections of improvisation. The players, when improvising, were to relate their improvisation to my notation – thematic improvisation. During the first concert I became frustrated with how a soloist was improvising – their improvisation had nothing to do with my notation – so, instead of speaking loudly to the group, reminding them to develop their improvisation thematically, I decided (in the moment) to try and sign them instead. I signed several performers (musicians) to play a long tone – I pointed at a few people, made an iconic gesture for a long tone and signaled them to play it, and they did. A few minutes later I created a gesture for pointillism, tried it, and it work wonderfully. After the concert I went home and decided to continue developing this direction.'

2. Aims and Experiences

In using a gestural sign language to create music and dance in real time what do you

aim to achieve which goes beyond, or is different, to traditional genres and forms of creativity?

Note: From this point on Thompson uses the word Soundpainting to signify live composing with the language and Soundpainter instead of live composer. "Composing" refers also to choreographing, playwriting or any other discipline-specific form of creativity.

'One of the most important aspects of Soundpainting is to compose with what happens in the moment whether it is intended or not. When the group is fluent and can comfortably respond to the gestures many expected and unexpected results will occur – specificity and chance is at the root of Soundpainting.'

What freedom does Soundpainting offer the creative artist which other creative processes do not?

'The opportunity to work with what happens in the moment whether you are participating in a Soundpainting group as the Soundpainter or performer.

A very important part of Soundpainting language is the basic rule that there is no such thing as a mistake. No matter what happens, the performer must continue performing their material. For example: If the Soundpainter signs the group to perform a Long Tone and one musician or dancer accidently performs Pointillism, then they must continue with the Pointillism and not change to the Long Tone. The "no such thing as a mistake" concept opens up an environment where creativity is never stifled.'

What restrictions does the Soundpainter have to contend with which a conductor and composer would not?

'The Soundpainter when composing a multidisciplinary piece must, at all times, be aware of the forward motion of the composition. It is the Soundpainter's responsibility to realize the piece. Conductors and composer's collaborate to make the work – a road map is created by the composer's notation and the conductor follows it in order to realize the piece. On the contrary, the Soundpainter does the same but in the moment. I wouldn't define the difference between the two as a restriction but as another point of clarification on how the two forms of composition, Soundpainting and traditional composing are related and how they differ.'

3. Composition or Improvisation…?

In thinking a performance, and creating in the moment, there is a cross over between these two dimensions. As a performer there are various similarities between the two

but how have these dimensions affected this creative language?

What were the main problems you encountered when directing a jazz band?

'Jazz is rich in improvisation and jazz musicians spend a great deal of time perfecting their ability to perform a solo improvisation as well as collective improvisation. When I teach Soundpainting to a Jazz group, sometimes I meet a little resistance from a few players who do not like being signed. The resistance usually last only a few minutes - I have never had anyone get up and leave the room.'

Soundpainting could be said to utilize the individual choices of the performers, as such is it appropriate to refer to Soundpainting as a form of improvisation?

'You could say Soundpainting is a form of improvising but then I would add that any form of composition, be it traditional or not, is a form of improvising and improvising a form of composition. However the Soundpainter composes with material offered by the group; it is not free improvisation.'

Drawing an analogy with a conductor, the Soundpainter is a silent gestural role, guiding the interpretation of the piece. As such, to what extent is the Soundpainter guiding improvisation? And to what extent is the Soundpainter constructing and leading a creative act?

'The Soundpainting language can be used in multiple ways. It can be used to guide material or it can be used in a way where the Soundpainter is hands-on with every aspect of the piece.

The fluent Soundpainter has a very large vocabulary of gestures that can both guide the development of material and/or ask for very specific material such as a C major 7 chord from a pianist or signing a dancer to jump around the stage on their right foot. The Soundpainter may also use gestures to indicate less specific material and/or chance responses from the performers. The Soundpainter is responsible for every aspect of the creation of the piece. It is their choice as to how active they are with the gestures and the frequency, simplicity, and complexity of the phrases they choose to sign the group.'

As a Soundpainter, in what way would you say you act as a composer? In other words, to what extent are you creating the sounds you hear from the ensemble and managing the sounds across the piece?

'The Soundpainter uses very specific hand and body gestures (each gesture incorporating specific performance parameters) in order to compose the piece, whereas the traditional composer uses standard and/or non-standard notation to compose their work. The Soundpainter, like the traditional composer, makes all the

choices as to how their composition progresses. I don't see any real difference between the two worlds of composing except certain editing possibilities and ease of composing certain structures depending on whether you are Soundpainting or composing traditionally.'

As Soundpainting utilizes the responses of the performers, offering therefore some level of personal choice, and arguably improvisation, what is the fundamental difference expected from the "improvise" gesture?

'The Improvise gesture means to perform a solo. It is the only gesture in Soundpainting that indicates the performer has the liberty to do what they desire. Certain other gestures incorporate varying degrees of choice regarding their material though nowhere near the same level as the Improvise gesture.'

Does this "Improvise" gesture invite the ensemble member(s) to take over from the Soundpainter by taking over control of the creative process, or is it predicated on the expectation in jazz?

'No. The Soundpainter is the composer of the piece at all times and it is their choice as to how to work with the Improvise gesture. Some Soundpainter's will modify the performance of the improvising player whereas others may wish the performer completes their solo improvisation at their own rate. Either way, it is the Soundpainter who decides and indicates where and how the Improvise gesture is incorporated into piece.'

4. The Development of the 'Language'

Your syntax offers a consistent approach for all Soundpainters, and therefore is predicated on an understanding that all language has grammar. How did you develop your syntax?

'The Soundpainting Syntax existed early on though I was not fully aware I was using it. It wasn't until 1997 during a Soundpainting residence in Woodstock, NY that I and Soundpainter Sarah Weaver formalized the syntax.'

Sculpting gestures: this object, visually dependant term connotes shaping of an object. How do you use these gestures?

'**Sculpting** gestures indicate **What** content to perform and **How** to perform it. For example: Whole Group (Who), Long Tone (What), Volume Fader (pianissimo) (How), Play (When). All the gestures are positioned in the phrase according to their syntax function. There are hundreds of Sculpting gestures. All content and modification of material is generated using Sculpting gestures.'

Function gestures: suggestive of a culturally determined visual direction, order or illustrative or an action, such as a point or wave. How do you use functional gestures?

'**Function** gestures indicate **Who** is going to perform and **When** to begin performing. Whole Group, Woodwinds, Dancers, Group 1, Group 2, etc. these are Function gestures indicating who is to perform and gestures such as Play, Off, Enter/Exit Slowly, Organic Development, are Function gestures indicating When to perform.'

To what extent are sculpting and functional gestures independent from one another? Or do they always have to be co-dependant?

'They are always co-dependent. They need each other in order to create a complete phrase. It is not possible to sign two Function gestures and receive a response from the group and the same can be said of signing two Sculpting gestures. For example: Whole Group (Function), Play (Function) doesn't elicit a response from the group though, it would seem to make sense but the word Play in Soundpainting does not indicate content is to be performed. Play is a Go gesture and only states when to enter the composition.'

Why are there no mistakes in Soundpainting?

'It is much more interesting and challenging to Soundpaint with the so-called mistake than to acknowledge one has been made. My experience has been that composing with the mistake is quite often a more interesting direction to take the composition than any I could think of. Picasso, Miles Davis, Anthony Braxton, among many other composer's acknowledge the so-called "mistake" as an opportunity to discover new material and not as a road block. I share this belief and have made it an important part of the basic philosophy of Soundpainting.'

Some Conclusions
The language, and/or creative process, is based on a premise that both musicians and dancers, and both choreographers and composers, share a gestural understanding, and therefore they are able to share the Soundpainting language. In asking where they meet and how they communicate I am essentially enquiring how this language functions and how it meaningfully cross the audio-visual divide with an assumption that thought occurs and is projected through, in and during performance. How we perceive, process and respond to the gestures, such as Relate to demonstrates our reliance on metaphor and analogy.

I questioned Thompson on his experience as regards how performer's respond to his 'dance' in Shapeline – body as graphic score, thinking body to be read. We established that musicians usually respond in a way in which is complementary (reading height with pitch and space with volume, movement speeds with tempi). It became clear that although the Soundpainting language is multidisciplinary, intended to be read by any art form, the artists' disciplines effect their responses, as actors

were much more likely to offer a dissonant response, musicians a complementary response, and dancers a variety of responses. Dancers and actors were more likely to offer a response which contradicts those of the Soundpainter – though a significant relationship exists all the same.

Leman and Godøy, in their recent volume analyzing music and gesture, note that: 'gesture can be defined as a pattern through which we structure our environment from the viewpoint of action... [it] is both a mental and a corporeal phenomenon.'[76] This definition bears close affinity to the somatic (in its broadest sense) philosophy of Soundpainting, which though dictating some material and requesting others, relies on performer's own responses, own interpretations situated within their realm of experience and understanding.

Notes
Thanks are due to Walter Thompson for allowing me to interview him both in this written questionnaire and on film. The full recording and written questionnaire willb e made available via his website.

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Biography

Helen Julia Minors is Senior Lecturer in Music and Associate Director of the Practice Research Unit at Kingston University, UK.

Walter Thompson is an international creative artist, the creator of Soundpainting and director of the Walter Thompson Soundpainting Orchestra.

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[76] Jensenius et al, 'Musical Gestures', 12–35.

~~Life~~ in Bytom: neoliberal contamination, mess and performance

Tero Nauha
Theatre Academy in Helsinki

Powiedz mi, jakie masz urządzenia? Do czego ty je wykorzystujesz?

A specific location for my practice-based work is a Silesian mining town, Bytom, in South-Poland. In past twenty years this area has been transformed from industrialism to neoliberal capitalism. As a one result six out of eight mines are now closed. Nevertheless the mining channels are still having a tremendous effect on the city. Even whole blockhouses are collapsing due to the fact, that these abandoned underground tunnels are not filled, but left as they are. Buildings and factory compartments are left unhabited, since there is no money or will to renovate them, but owners of the buildings rather wait for them to collapse, in order to build new constructions. Pawn shops, second hand stores and 24-hour shops with licence are frequent; the signs of debt and despair. The curator of Kronika Contemporary Art Centre in Bytom, Stanisław Ruksza calls Bytom the "Detroit" of Poland. In this context, what can a performance do?

In this project which I have just started in Bytom I will be preparing workshops and collaboration with a group of people size from 5 to 15, whom are invited by Kronika. They are people from different backgrounds, ages and social classes living in Bytom. There will be four workshops before the opening of the project in the mid November 2012. In between the workshops participants are given a notebook, with instructions to document their daily life in relation to machines, devices, common and groups. This material is treated anonymously to produce exhibition and performances. Initial idea is that the performance will be a solo, where the workshop material and notes are reflected on the work. They will substantially effect what form the performance and the exhibition will take.

Each historical period produces certain devices in relation to labor, production and life. As such, these devices require certain performances from the users, as well. Bytom is a interesting place in this respect, since it has gone through three major transformations which have effected the city heavily: first it was a german/jewish town, then heavily industrialized soviet city surrounded by other Katowice area cities and recently neoliberal transformation. In my argument contamination and mess are exercised by neoliberal capitalism with a wide diversity of devices. Aside from these devices there are always dominant refrains taking place, as well. Janell Watson describes the idea of refrain by Félix Guattari:

> "refrain is a repeated semiotic element which functions as a component of passage among behavioural and other assemblages. The refrain can be verbal, melodic, or gestural, and is made familiar through repetition; it ritualizes and normalizes basic temporal refrains. […] The refrain can also mark territories […]refrain can serve as a sort of safety net for dealing with sudden deterritorializations. […] Like catalysts or enzymes, refrains may orient an interaction or behavioural assemblage without participating in it directly." (Watson 2009, 79)

The task of my proposal is to work with dominant and minor refrains, in order to probe into the potentiality, which may be passive, obstructed or latent in repetition of everyday life. These refrains may by songs, narratives, stories, beliefs, images, dreams, antagonisms, affects, embodied refrains, illnesses, excitement, etc. My intention is to produce agency and even transformation for the participants of this process.

Schizoanalysis

Almost instantly, when talking with people in Bytom, I am faced with a kind of fog and confusion, a mess. In my argument a mess is a device in neoliberal, post-industrial capitalism. Such a mess is the question of political, without a direct solution, ideology or roadmap. It is a mess of collapsing buildings, infrastructures and life itself, without a sense of the duration. It is in the precariousness of this mess, where my endeavour takes place.

For approaching this mess produced by transformation period in Poland and the new devices I am using methods of schizoanalysis and metamodelization. What is the potentiality, which is unseen, yet, present? What kind of refrains can be produced emerging from the constraining mess? Constraints and agency present themselves side by side in a mess. Schizoanalysis does not aim to search for ontological 'truths' but on the contrary asks what kind of strategies, tactics and models are used to manage life in specific, temporal and social context.

Schizoanalysis and metamodelization as developed by Guattari approaches not only the signifying semiotics (language) or symbolic (gestures, rituals, games, songs), but more importantly the emphasis is on the asignifying semiotics, which for Guattari is the realm of art, music and science. This is the affective aspect of art practices, towards the *new,* where this particular new is conjoined with the incorporeal and virtual intensities. New is not articulated by symbolic or signifying, but a-signified semiotics. This particular new is not commercialized repetition, but rather unknown and thus potential. (O'Sullivan 2008)

Another approach that I am using in the process in Bytom, is to use Guattari's four domains of unconsciousness. 1) The existential territory of subjectivity is not the Real, but a realm of dominant and minor refrains: "life as it seems". 2) Second quadrate is the realm of material fluxes and intensities, of play, joy, sadness and semiotics. Both of these realms are reterritorializing. Last two have a deterritorializing nature. 3) The third is a phylum of abstract machines, blueprints, plans, rules and regulations. 4) The last and fourth is the realm of incorporeal universes, virtual content, unformed matter and the realm of a-signified potentiality. As such, the question of non-discursive matter is essential, aside from the discursive signification. Artistic processes, which deal with semiotic signification, deal with power and language, but for Guattari this cannot produce anything but more signification. It ought to use both the symbolic and the a-signified aside from the signification, in order to produce transformation.

In my particular case, schizoanalysis explores the particular mess of neoliberal

capitalism in Poland. Life is not restored in this process, but it nevertheless produces "more mutations, more lines of flight, and more alternative temporalities" as Simon O'Sullivan describes schizoanalysis in his article "Academy: 'The Production of Subjectivity'". (O'Sullivan 2007, 5)

This particular affective production in the "~~Life~~ in Bytom" project gives support and produces unknown encounters. It is not a recombination of discourses, but a production of new, i.e. support for minor refrains of subjectivities and probing of the potential. (O'Sullivan 2007, 5)

On the contrary to "major" politics, my practice proposes a production of minor refrains of the political. If neoliberal capitalism functions on the level of signification and representation, yet probing the potential of a-signified, then artistic practice of a type of schizoanalysis functions on the affective and virtual level, transforming the existential territory.

Schizoanalysis, contamination and mess of capitalism

Contamination or contagion are terms, which are already used by Freud (1921) and Gustave Le Bon (1895) to describe the affective nature of a mass or multitude. Contamination is easy to detect, but not easy to explain, and being affective and following my argument, it is a-signified matter. Contamination is considered negative or corrupting process, which transforms the subjectivity, without necessarily changing the attributes. As such it is not colonization, repression or suppression. Contagious affect is sticky and a-signified. It produces transformation and events, without being cognized. However, a-signified contamination takes it's form in symbolic and signified, for instance in narratives from Bytom. It is not so, that pawnshops or 24-hour stores are a direct indicator of collapsing social environment, but how these are interpreted as contaminating or signs of decay. Contamination as such is a desire. However, I must have caution for interpreting or "understanding" narratives as coherent systems or produce the end-result of an exhibition as a representation of a problem.

In neoliberal capitalism affective relationships are produced between subjectivities, devices and machines. Contaminative as such, they are a-signified refrains, which function on the existential territory, for instance producing a desire for nostalgia, order, change, utopia, etc. Such economic device as neo-liberalism builds dominant and affective refrains to produce, maintain and regulate. (O'Sullivan 2008, 91-96) On the signifying level, it is presented as pragmatic, sensible and effective, but on the affective a-signified side, these refrains produce a mess. The result is confusion and inability to approach other potentials, the minor refrains in the 'existential' realm**.** What seems to be in equilibrium or homeostasis in the dominant refrain, may only seem so. Neoliberal capitalism in Bytom and elsewhere presents life as a complex, but organized and regulated system, whereas proposed schizoanalytic approach is far from equilibrium. Dominant refrain is presented as controlled homeostasis, whereas minor refrains are deterritorializing to the potential new.

Signs of depression or disinterestedness may be only part of homeostasis, because of the way they are presented or signified, as indicators in a closed system. This

representation of controlled system is one intention of my practice, but only to move from the dominant to the singular, minor refrains of the open and more precarious systems. Minor refrains lie beyond a map, thus it will be a question how to approach this matter, in order it to keep its a-signified nature in the process?

In the neoliberal control society a liminal is the norm, where a potential seems impossibility. It is what partially produces the confusion, which was clearly articulated in my meetings in Bytom, as well: a sense of undisclosed continuity of economic, social and environmental transformations. Undisclosed continuity of a liminal is the existential territory in neo-liberalism. As such this "pseudo-liminality" is the realm for artistic practices.

In this mess, I find a practice based research of performance a device to produce probing into the potentiality and production of new. Such a device is not only functioning in the signifying realm, but is in contact with the matter of a-signified. Needles to say, that such a probing has problems in the discursive signification. As such, it is a blind war-machine or black hole, which may function as disempowering, inhibited and destructive or induce creativity, emerging potentiality or catalysing. (Watson 2009, 94-96)

My intention is to map out the real, signified, symbolic and a-signified territory of a life in Bytom. My probing with this affective matter in collaboration intents to consider signifying, symbolic and a-signifying levels.

Artistic practice is "a particle accelerator capable of producing and actualizing new energized particles which had previously only been theorized." (Watson 2009, 96) These particles Guattari is finding in the writing process of Proust. Yet, it leaves my particular approach still partially incapable of approaching a life in Bytom. I would say, that in a performance practice different abstract machines are at work, than in writing. Site-specific performance practice has particular possibilities of catalyzing affects, which have a link with the intensity of the Real in a different way than writing, but often lacking a signification. What combines both, to my understanding, is the concept of refrain.

In my particular case in "Life in Bytom" project, the a-signified level of matter aims to function not only in the embodied realm, but trying to locate other minor refrains. The assumption is, that such probing is able to produce agency, nevertheless, that these refrains do not take representative or signified forms.

Conclusion

The artistic practice of schizoanalysis is a type, which does not produce clearing (aletheia). It dwells on the mess, probing the potentiality and producing leaking deterritorializations. In Bytom, it appears not as a tool of producing truth, but as a sensibility to minor refrains within a mess of dominant ones, and producing a 'expressive support' for such refrains, and their relation with fluxes, rules, and unformed potentialities. Such an a-structural logic is the logic of a mess and affective contamination, as well. As such both mess and the artistic articulations are material and real; they both produce refrains and contagions. For me this is a fundamental

issue in artistic production, since the matter of the real is never fully signified in language, but it nevertheless does not escape into meaninglessness, being a-signified matter. It is only that the representative apparatus is not able to approach this matter, yet in my argument artistic practices can, since they are not only representative or symbolic.

However, the process of probing must not take place only aiming towards the a-signified matter, but towards symbolic games, gestures, grunts and representative signification of language, as well — to produce new refrains instead of representative recombinations. In my argument, these realms are coexistent, where artistic practice is a tool for the probing and production of mutation, as O´Sullivan puts it. All refrains of signification, symbolic and a-signification work alongside each other. (Watson, 2009, 75) The process in Bytom aims to articulate something 'new' and potential, and produce agency among participants and people living in Bytom. In this way, it is the micropolitical task resisting the present hegemony of neoliberal capitalism.

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Biography

Tero Nauha, b. 1970. Performance and visual artist. He is an Artistic Research Student in the Theatre Academy in Helsinki, in the department of Performance Art and Theory. His research interests are subjectivity and performance in the context of cognitive capitalism. Websites: www.teronauha.com/life-in-bytom www.mollecular.org www.thisisperformancematters.co.uk

The state of images

Theron Schmidt
King's College London

Note: This text is written to be performed on an otherwise empty stage. A soundtrack accompanies the reading of the text as indicated. Part 1 is delivered from far downstage. Part 2 is delivered from far upstage. Part 3 is delivered from the centre of the stage.

1.

Let us start at the beginning, if it is still possible to imagine such a thing.

A man comes before us. He is one of us, an ordinary man, but in this act he is unlike us, because, this time around, he is speaking and we are listening.

He has a job.

He may claim to have another job. He may claim to be a watchman.A shepherd. A yeoman. A farmer. He may spread his hands before you to show you that they have laboured. He may show you his brow, how it has grown furrowed with his cares. He may claim to wish he was somewhere else, in another time, in the company of some others for whom he cares more, a job he would rather be doing.

But this is not his job. His job is to make something appear. His job is to make something appear which will not appear before you, but which you will swear you will have seen. You will swear you have seen it because it made you tremble, or look down at your hands, or hold your breath, and sometime later you will still feel some echo of that trembling.

But for now, we are waiting. Somewhere beyond this room, something is beginning. A small spark in dry wood; the smell of petrol in the air; a murmured rumour on the spring breeze. Or maybe something is ending. A city wall collapses; a tyrant concedes his throne; an ocean runs through the streets.

But not here. Smell the air; it hasn't changed.

Listen for a moment.

[…]

Nothing but the sound of the room, buzzing.

[music: Unwound, 'We Invent You']

We are all antennae. We are all at attention. We quiver in anticipation.

We are safe, here. We are comfortable. We are not afraid to be this close to each other. And somewhere out there, a line of sight is joined together. A signal passes from hilltop to hilltop. We wait for it to reach us here.

The real world, just in the room next door. Just outside the building. Just in another country. Just in another place whose revolutionary moment is slipping by between its fingers, or is yet to come, on the tip of the tongue. This space is saturated with the past, permeated by stray thoughts, radio waves, lines of power, invisible transactions from the outside.

How can we make it so that it can be seen, here, where we are? What form will it take in this closed-off world? *The house itself, could it take voice, might speak aloud and plain.* I open my mouth so that you can see.

I draw a world in the dust, and figures spring forth fully armed from the soil. I draw blood, gently, with my tongue: a lazy alexandrine that takes its time, slowly building a metaphor until it can walk all on its own. A soldier returns from war. A brother and sister recognise each other by their description. Justice takes shape, is given a rhythm, a metre, a sensibility. You know that story. This is a scene you recognise.

I speak to those who understand. This is a fire which started before we were born, and our bodies are the fuel.

2.

[music: James Blackshaw, 'Running to the Ghost'. Crossfade with sound of buzzing at end of text]

A large, attractively furnished drawing room, decorated in dark colours. In the back, a wide doorway with curtains drawn back. The doorway opens into a smaller room in the same style as the drawing room. In the right-hand wall of the front room, a folding door that leads to the hall. In the opposite wall, a glass door, with curtains similarly drawn back. Through the panes can be seen part of an overhanging veranda and trees in autumn colours. In the foreground is an oval table with tablecloth and chairs around it. […]

Morning light. The sun shines in through the glass door.

Where does the light come from? What is it that illuminates this scene?

It has no depth. It is only surface; description; words hanging between us; dots of colour on a screen; scratchings on a temporary canvas; *the self-vanishing, luminous trace of [a] firework.*

By the wall on the right, a wide, dark porcelain stove, a high-backed armchair, a cushioned footstool, and two taborets. In the right-hand corner, a settee with a small round table in front. Nearer, on the left and slightly out from the wall, a piano. On either side of the doorway in back, étagères with terra-cotta and majolica ornaments. Against the back wall of the inner room, a sofa, a table, and one or two chairs.

What can you see? What is it that lets you see?

Here, a dressing table, a hairbrush, a single golden strand of hair caught in the morning light. Further away, something shadowy, the quality of its presence such that it is there but it cannot be seen clearly – maybe a chair, or a coatstand, or a dressing gown.

What are these shadows? Where is the obstruction that keeps you from seeing clearly? What shape does your imagination give to darkness?

Over the sofa hangs a portrait of a handsome elderly man in a general's uniform. Over the table, a hanging lamp with an opalescent glass shade. A number of bouquets of flowers are arranged about the drawing room in vases and glasses. Others lie on the tables. The floors in both rooms are covered with thick carpets.

The image makes seen that which is visible but not present, and also that which is invisible but present. The room is empty, but no human bodies need to present themselves for it to be alive. This hat is alive. This bouquet. This opalescent glass shade. This table. This chair is alive. This floor. This drawing room.

Can you see it?

This dust in the morning light. This thought that has just eluded you. This memory. This buzzing in your ear.

3.

[music: Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers, 'American Girl', first few seconds looped endlessly]

In the background, an early spring day. An empty field, sloping downhill toward a pond. Insects in the tall grass. The pond catches the sunlight and glimmers in the distance.

In the middle of the image, a dark shadow looms. Something passes between the earth and the sun. A storm is gathering.

In the foreground, a man falls toward the earth, his arm outstretched, hurtling backward into his own shadow, his rifle as black as night.

In the background, this photo is framed on a wall, pixelated and grainy, black and white in a room full of colour. Fluorescent light washes away the detail.

In the middle of the image, a crowd is gathered. They are different heights and wearing different coloured clothing; some moving past, and others lingering to look more closely. They can be seen behind full-height glass windows that face out onto the street.

In the foreground, a discarded pile of clothing, heaped against the side of the building. A torn coat, a crumpled hat, a scattering of shredded newspaper. It is beginning to rain. A stray dog pauses to sniff the clothes.

In the background, *waters, rolling from their mountain springs/ With a sweet inland murmur.* Lofty cliffs, bounded valleys, steep woods: a vision of never-ending sky.

In the middle of the image, a middle-aged man, married, white, able to walk less far than he used to, looking back on his life.

In the foreground, a bluebottle, carrying the pollen of a goldenrod as it darts between the hazels.

In the background, a dark smear that might be the buzzing of flies, or the swarming of carrion birds, streaked low over the treeline. Or maybe it is just a smear on the photographic plate.

In the middle of the image, a dirt track running off into the distance. Two parallel lines have been worn down by the wheels of carts. Parallel to the track is a rough wooden fence, built to keep in the livestock, or to keep them out. I've driven down a road like this. The southern heat was just fading into the evening, and I had the windows down. I was listening to music. I wanted the road to go on forever.

In the foreground, amongst the piled bodies, is one without a foot, blown clear off by the ordnance.

In the background, a flag waves against the sunset, the sky streaked with colour, and an amber wave of grain.

In the middle of the image, an eagle, swooping. It is Photoshopped here from some other image in which it is landing or carrying a fish; here, it appears to be in mid-air, majestic with its outstretched wings almost blocking out the sun.

In the foreground are the words blazoned across the screen: LIVE FREE OR DIE.

In the background, a line of tin-roofed buildings. An intersection. A blue car with its bonnet open. Men dressed in orange robes.

In the middle of the image, an act of sacrifice.

In the foreground, a petrol can, white, plastic, ordinary.

In the background, the Jockey Boy Restaurant sign furnished by Coca-Cola. The door to the café opens onto the intersection, and the shades are pulled up. It's cool and dark inside compared with the heat outside.

In the middle of the image, a man in a felt hat turns around to look over his shoulder.

In the foreground, a police dog leaps against its lead, snapping, snarling. It is chewing its way into history.

[music fading up over loop: Rock Plaza Central, 'My Children, Be Joyful']

Let us start at the beginning, if it is still possible to imagine such a thing.

Who not will else let slip, a fist raised afore a fire? A dim shape, an in-between light, a tongue too heavy to lift.

In the foreground, a threshold, where we teeter on the verge of the visible and the invisible. In the background, open space on the south and west, where the contour of the ground is far from level, and goose and bramble bushes flourishinstead of tall trees planted with regular precision.

A heave of bodies, urgent, fragile, pressed together flesh against flesh until they can fit on a single page. A flashbulb memory trinket, flashcards for sleepless nights. *In other algorithms the pixels are quantized step-wise with error correction after each step.*

In the background, a field hospital. A site of field work. An application of field theory. The limits of a field of vision. In the middle of the image, an open field. An open fire. A home fire. Homeland. Heartland. Grassland.

In the foreground, a dog sleeps. The sun passes over it. A fly lands on its ear. A still life. A still birth. A birthday. A daybreak. A daytrip. A road trip. A roadwork. A firework.

A graph that shows the hidden numbers. In the background, a key to the icons. A map of the stars and their secret meanings. A call sign. A birdcall. A bird dog. The dogstar. A starfield. An open field. An open fire. A house fire.

The house itself, could it take voice, might speak aloud and plain.

In the foreground, *Mrs S. E. Hammer, advocate of electrical labour-saving devices in the home, and first woman to become chairman of a municipal electricity committee.*

Housework. A clean house. A clean break. The day break. A field day. An open field. An open fire. A grass fire. The grass land. Heartland. Homeland.

I speak to those who understand, but if they fail, I have forgotten everything.

A clear view. A lake view. A lake house. Farm house. Field house. Fight house. Fire house. Firelight. Moonlight. Pilot light. House light. House fire. House call. Bird call.

Morning light. The sun shines in through the glass door.

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Browne, Malcolm. *Self-immolation of Thích Quảng Đức, Saigon road intersection, 11 June 1963.*

Biography

Theron Schmidt is Lecturer in Theatre and Liberal Arts at King's College London. Recent publications include articles on Christoph Schlingensief for *Performance Research* (2011), site-specific performance and monumentality for *Contemporary Theatre Review* (2010), and the performativity of political apology for a special issue of *Law Text Culture* (2010). As a solo and collaborative performer, he has presented work at Artsadmin, Camden People's Theatre, Chelsea Theatre, Chisenhale Dance Space, Nottingham Contemporary, The Place, and the Royal Opera House Studios. He also performed a version of 'The state of images' for Forest Fringe's mini-season at The Gate Theatre, London, 2012.

Thinking through salt, thinking through bark, thinking through cables

Rajni Shah
Birkbeck College

Note: This text was written to be included in delegate packs as Rajni could not be present at the symposium

> "I was attempting to make a bird alighting on a field. And it may have been bound up in some way to the three forms that had gone before, but suddenly the lines that I'd drawn suggested something totally different, and out of this suggestion arose this picture. I had no intention to do this picture; I never thought of it in that way. It was like one continuous accident mounting on top of another." Francis Bacon

I have sometimes pretended that my artistic career is built on solid foundations: foundations of talent, or experience, or intuition. But now I'm thinking of it more as one long series of continuous accidents mounting on top of one another. That's much more like it.

Randomness and Laziness

Mr Quiver (2004-8)

What actually happened is that I mis-heard someone say the name of the film *Mystic River*.

It's incredibly revealing to me that I've never told anyone this before. Somewhere in me, I was so ashamed of the randomness of this act of naming that I dared not utter a word to anyone for almost ten years. Because of a fear, I suppose, that the truly shambolic nature of my creative decision-making process would be unveiled. Because people often asked me about Mr Quiver: who he was, what that title meant, how it related to issues of sexuality and cultural heritage that were raised in the performance. And in the backwards way that I work, I slowly found answers to these questions.

In fact, the further away I was from the performance, the more I seemed to know about it. And it sometimes felt like I was living a lie - because I hadn't already known what I wanted to tell the audience before they came into the room. It seemed so unprofessional that it was only in hindsight having stumbled through the process of making and touring that I could say: well, actually, a year after the last show, I think I know what that performance was about.[77]

And it is, I think, somewhat unusual to work in this way. But I now understand that starting from a place of not knowing, a place of making seemingly random decisions, a place of glimpses rather than full vision, is a key part of my process.

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[77] If you'd like to see the first attempt at this, you might read "On the making of *Mr Quiver"* in Graham Ley and Sarah Dadwell, eds. *British South Asian Theatre: Critical Essays*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2012.

You do not conduct proper research before making a show.

The research is in the presentation, in the desire paths that are formed when we inhabit this space together. The research is in how you enter the space, in how our concentrations ebb and flow, and in how we say goodbye.

To forge a space of not knowing within the machine of the cultural industries is to create a space for genuine learning - not a learning that comes from a place of knowing, but a learning that comes from a place of not knowing and uncertainty. I believe that theatre can do this for us - that within its very solid walls and its very solid class structures and etiquettes, we can find room for a new kind of learning which arises from being with each other.

Show Statistics One

Title: Mr Quiver
Duration: 4 hours
Songs: God Save the Queen + 18-track CD x 2, sometimes played simultaneously
Performers: Lucille Acevedo-Jones (costume), Cis O'Boyle (lighting), Rajni Shah (director)
Audience: Free to come and go as they please and to sit, stand, lie around or within the performance space as they wish
Stuff: towels, cushions (for audience), tapers, tea light candles, lightbulbs, ribbons, guest book, dustpan and brush x 2, sweeping brush x 2, bride costume – double veil, top, skirt, bun, jewel, nose ring, wig, Elizabeth costume – skirt, underskirt, bodice, wig, train, make up: white, lips, eyeliner, powder, hair mousse, baby wipes, bowl, squirty thing, CD x 2, hairbrush (for wig), hair clips, pulleys, Rajni's clothes, grey pants, scissors, fishing wire, gaffa tape, list of tracks for audience to choose from, clock, sticks for skirts, water to drink, salt to pour, mic plus stand and long lead, 2 x CD players
Structure: Three performative loops, of light, costume and 'performance' weave in and out of synchronisation over the four hours. The space is layered and increasingly cluttered, and the performances are improvised within an overall structure.
Ending: During the final hour, all props and lights are packed into three suitcases, and all three performers leave the performance space. The audience who are present at the end are left in a dim room, looking at a textured salt map of England which covers the floor. Tea lights represent cities on this map. The soundtrack that is playing is of an interview that has been played many times before in various versions earlier in the performance.
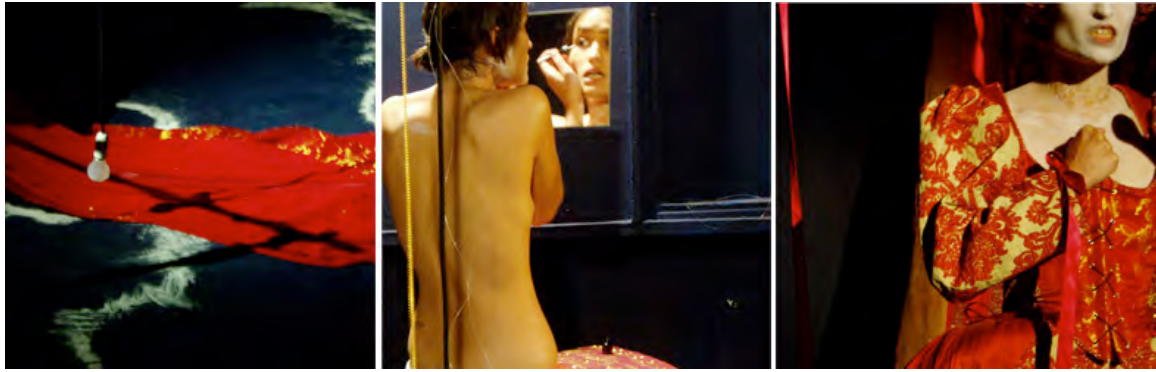
The last time we performed *Mr Quiver* we knew exactly what we were doing. The get-in was tight, the show was tight. We were a well-oiled machine. And that was exactly when it was time to stop. A division would have occurred past this point - *we* would have been serving *you* something. And this is how we knew it was time to put that show to bed.

2. Salt, bark, cables, bodies: how many voices are here tonight?

Dinner with America (2006-9)

In this show I begin dressed as a busty, blue-eyed blonde, centre-stage, wearing pseudo-glamorous attention-seeking clothes that are slowly shed in layers. I work hard: I sing, I strip, I show you my body and I look straight into your eyes and sometimes I cry at you. You, the audience, walk or sit or stand around me over the 2.5 hours of our time together.

But this central performance is an excuse for something else.

This central performance allows you to be in the room, looking one way, while the space slowly folds in around you. You, me, the audience, the performers, whoever we are, we all bring our own trajectories into this space. And they need somewhere to meet. The central performance, this uncertain landmark, allows the peripheries to be present.

What really counts, I believe, are the peripheries.

What really counts is what is being folded in: your body, the show's mulch and film and fluorescents, and all those other bodies that are also in the room.

Each piece in the trilogy contains 'stuff'. And the stuff allows the audience to drift in and out of their own chosen narrative. In *Mr Quiver* and *Dinner with America* the objects and the costumes allude to places outside the theatre: maps are drawn in salt around Queen Elizabeth I and an Indian Bride in *Mr Quiver*; dark mulch, red, white and blue fluorescents, and the flickering of a film encroach upon the central figure in *Dinner with America*.

In each of these cases, over the duration of the performance, those objects become more and less present - they are allowed to seep into our imaginations and then out

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again repeatedly. They inhabit a world of signs and they return to the theatrical space, pointing absurdly at the walls. They allow us to leave the theatre for a while and then stubbornly remind us that they and we exist within its boundaries: the workers are switched on, the salt is swept up in cheap dustpans, the linkable fluorescent lights fail to turn on and need some technical adjustments. This is all part of the show. The story we are telling is the story of how we fictionalise together. And the stuff demonstrates this beautifully.

Every performance project has two languages. Firstly, there is the language that is used to convey its narrative to the world outside the performance - the language that bridges audience, funders and other interested parties into the space and enables the project to be in the world. Secondly, there is the glimpsing, half-focused, internal language of its own enquiry.

This project has described itself as 'a trilogy of performances questioning cultural identity'. In *Mr Quiver* this manifested itself as an enquiry into notions of the female body and British-ness; and in *Dinner with America* the word "America" became a kind of prism for dialogue around ideas of ownership and voice.

But whilst these issues have felt like valid starting points, I'd argue that the more important work is in the theatrical encounter that has taken place within the framework of these questions. In both of these pieces, this encounter both underlines and overbears the fiction that has been set up. So that the narrative that brought an audience into the space topples over into that other narrative of what it means to be in the room. And that narrative of being in the room in turn adds something new to the questions that an audience brought in.

The ebb and the flow.

Show Statistics Two

Title: Dinner with America
Duration: 2.5 hours
Songs: Amazing Grace (first verse, repeatedly, live) + You Need A Magician in Your Life by The Mountain Goats (once, recorded)
Performers: Lucille Acevedo-Jones (costume), Lucy Cash (film), Rajni Shah (director)
Audience: Invited to be there for the start of the show, and to stay till the end, but free to walk around the performance space and come and go during the performance
Stuff: 2 x Squeegees, 9 x extension   cables, 26 power cables, 14 connector cables, 34 x linkable fluorescent lights, 22 x red white and blue gel sleeves, gobo, fabric doilies, shiny white fabric for table, sequinned costume + pants + white shiny pants, fake boobs, Lucy costume + shoes, Lucille costume + shoes, white belt and gloves, white dress plus tent, wig, boots, Rajni dress and shirt for feast, 2 x small black shovels, 2 x DVDs of light/film, 2 x DVDs of soundtrack front and back, 3 x large round silver trays, tape player, 1 x tape of Mountain Goats song, US flag sweets, Mountain Goats CD for feast, 3 x tagging guns, 3 x bags of red, white, blue tags, nutcrackers, white clock, brush for wig, paint brushes for get-out, baby wipes,

small mirror, cotton buds, adhesive and latex for face mask, silver eye shadow, mascara, eyelash glue, diamante eyelashes, blue contact lenses, contact lens solution, baby powder, baby oil, mask remover, face powder , liquid eyeliner, make up brush and eye brush, lip gloss, sponge for make up, foundation, hairspray, conversation starters in tiny envelopes, blackout machine, comments book, 9 bags large bark chippings, vegan fairtrade chocolate, fairtrade fresh dates, amaretti biscuits, seasonal fresh fruit, one bunch flowers, organic walnuts

Structure: The following lines of development take place in parallel during the first 2 hours of the show: Rajni sings until her voice wears thin, standing in one spot; Lucy and Lucille shift the mulch from a maze that covers the performance space into smaller and smaller versions of landscape; the fluorescent tubes move from shades of red and blue to white; Rajni strips layers of Hollywood-inspired costume until she reaches her own naked body; the film seeps from plain colours to moving black and white images; the soundtrack of U.S. citizens speaking becomes more dense. The only line of development that is improvised is that of the audience.

Ending: Naked, Rajni steps out of her image for the first time. The red, white and blue lights that have been shining on her turn into a black and white film showing images of all three performers against classic 'American' backdrops, performing actions from the show we have just seen. All the objects from the show are gathered in one place: the fluorescent lights are covered in mulch as the film plays on top of them. The audience is gathered around. Finally, Lucille, Lucy and Rajni bring out large platters of food and conversation starters that they invite the audience to share. We all consume this ending.

3. Can we agree to pass time differently?

Over the past eight years, I've been making a trilogy: *Mr Quiver*, *Dinner with America*, *Glorious*. Each piece has lived for around three years and then been put to bed. Next year, we'll lay the final one down.

The first two pieces were installation-based. *Glorious* is being presented in theatres with seats and orchestra pits and curtains. This changes the dynamic between audience and performers in so many ways. And yet, at the same time, I feel that many of the questions are the same. The set up changes, but each time we are a group of individuals shuffling around a shifting series of theatrical landmarks.

These landmarks mean something to us, we hold that meaning, and that meaning changes over time.

We hold the passing time between us.

So as I leave you I'm thinking about time passing, and how time passes, and why a fairly impatient person like me makes shows that are long and slow and which critics sometimes struggle with ("the endless repetitions", "it's a long time coming").

And I'm thinking about how twice recently, once in relation to my own work and once in relation to another slow piece of work, I've heard audience members say "Watching that show felt like spending time at a spa."

And I wonder whether, when watching certain types of shows, as if we were taking ourselves to the spa, we maybe allow some kind of internal sense hierarchy to relax. And with our eyes a little out of focus, we can see the details better. And with our minds a little less narrative-driven, we can inhabit a wider landscape.

Maybe the peripheries enable time to pass differently.

Show Statistics Three

Title: Glorious
Duration: 2 hours
Songs, Performers, Audience, Stuff: still to be counted
Structure: still to be summarised
Ending:

4. How we say goodbye

> *Hello. I'm Rajni. I've not done this before, exactly. So, some of you will be pleased about this, and some of you won't, but I'm going to sing. It's a musical. There are some incredible performers, you'll meet them soon. They'll carry the show. But us, you, me, we have to hold it together. We have to create this space together. It's like laying the table for dinner. Here we are. I'm unfolding the tablecloth, laying out the plates, the knives, the forks, the glasses etc. We'll be here together for the evening. Thanks for coming.[78]*

From the moment we walk into the theatre, we know we will have to say goodbye. The knowledge and denial of this fact haunts every live performance. Applause is one way of severing the connection. But I'm really interested in what other options there are.

What might it mean to leave a theatre without complete closure? To return to our other lives more slowly and carefully. To carry something from the theatrical event as a rupture back into the rest of the world.

And what are the responsibilities of a theatre-maker in leaving an audience this way?

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[78] As yet unused opening speech for *Glorious*

After the very last performance of *Mr Quiver* in Exeter, we offered the audience the cushions that some of them had been sitting on during the performance. These cushions had golden tassels at each corner. We had bought them very cheaply in a small shop in Glasgow. Some years later, Simon Persighetti told me a story about his cushion. He said that he had used it outside in his garden and some of the tassels had fallen off during this time. And later he had noticed that a bird had taken the tassels and used them for nest-building. This bird now had a very luxurious-looking nest.

Author's Biography
Rajni Shah is an artist working in performance and live art. Whether online, in a public space or in a theatre, her work aims to open up new spaces for conversation and the meeting of diverse voices. From 2006-2010 she conducted a three-year enquiry into the relationship between gift and conversation in public space called *small gifts*. From 2005-2013 she produced a trilogy of large-scale performances (*Mr Quiver*, *Dinner with America* and *Glorious*) addressing the complexities of cultural identity in the 21st century. In 2012, Rajni is an Artsadmin Associate Artist and an Honorary Research Fellow at The Centre for Contemporary Theatre, Birkbeck College. www.rajnishah.com

Where Performance Thinks: A Response

Stephen Bottoms
University of Leeds

An instant contribution for the final plenary of How Performance Thinks, April 2012.

I've been avoiding reading papers at conferences since 2001."Thus spake Elena Cologni, during her non-paper this very morning.but I am not so brave as she. I'm reading this response from the screen, in a bid to sidestep those awkwardnesses, stumbles, and slips of intention to which Joe Kelleher referred yesterday, so beautifully.

And I'm writing it *to* the screen during my lunch hour, sequestered in Kings Cross Station eating a wrap and drinking lemonade. So my apologies in advance that I am not responding to anyone speaking this afternoon.Because their papers have not happened yet.

Mmm. This wrap is kind of tasteless.

I would like to title this tenminutes of talking, "Where Performance Thinks". Because while Nik Wakefield may well be right that "How Performance Thinks" is durationally (thought being a temporal process), WHERE the thinking occurs is just as important.

1. Thinking in Relation

Performance, and indeed thinking, are relational procedures. One thing is juxtaposed with another, or placed in proximity with another, in order to compel or propel thought. Is that dialectic? Is it becoming?

I'm thinking now of Broderick Chow and his colleague Tom Wells. A wrestler on his own is not a wrestler. He needs another wrestler to wrestle with. In wrestling with each other they do not only 'take care' of each other. Through their 'work' they become each other -- an assemblage of limbs, with more than one face, and more than one heel.

I'm thinking now of Bertolt Brecht and Walter Benjamin, in Freddie Rokem's plenary. Of the Arcades Project and the *Messingkauf Dialogues* as relational texts, determined through their authors' relationality in mutual exile.

I'm thinking now of the father and the son in the Castellucci performance described by Joe. Relations in relation.A father and son defined purely in their relationality to each other – and by the utter dependence of one, the father, on the other, the son – an old-age reversal of parental responsibility. If the father is dependent on the son, then one would think that placed the son in a position of power. But the son is, like *Endgame*'s Clov, imprisoned by responsibility to his father. He can only make a response. As his father shits all over the stage.

Interesting that Joe read the scene primarily in terms of the father's position – so that the deliberate pouring of liquid stage-shit from a plastic bottle reads to him as an image of shame and self-immolation. I remember reading it, from the son's position, as an act of aggressive hostility. "Yes, I will continue to shit all over the shop, and you must clear it up, because you are responsibility." I meant to type responsible then, but the wrong word occurred. I'll leave it, and say it again: "you are responsibility."

For me, the desecration of the image of Christ at the end of the performance – the desecration of an image of unspeakable gentleness – was an image of the son's desire to desecrate the self-sacrifice that Christ represents. I have given and given and given and given and given. I can give no more. There is a limit to humility, and this is it. You are not my shepherd.

2. Thinking in London

Here I am in Kings Cross station. I came here because I couldn't think in the Lincoln Lounge.[79] Yesterday I sat there listening to a group of patrons – all male but one – conducting an extended disquisition on the precise connotations of the term "pussywhipped."

What can that conjunction of words possibly mean?

To fall between two chairs.
To stand on an angle.[80]

On Thursday afternoon, after arriving in London prior to this conference, I stood *at* various angles in Tate Britain. I was listening to the new downloadable audio performance by the activist art collective PLATFORM. Platform and their colleagues at Liberate Tate and Art Not Oil are engaged in an ongoing campaign to get Tate Galleries to stop taking money from BP. As part of this campaign, we now have a guerrilla tour – an audio installation that Tate cannot remove unless it bans us from walking in with headphones.

The Tate Britain leg of *Tate à Tate* takes me first to a cubicle of the downstairs toilets, to lock myself in. The Gallery, I am informed, is built on the site of Millbank Penitentiary – the first large scale prison ever built in the UK, and the only one ever to be explicitly modelled on Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon. The performative proposition now, however, is that I am in the Panaudicon. As I am guided round the gallery, I am asked to position my body in particular directions – sit on particular seats and look at particular pictures. If I look through this or that painting, and keep looking for x-hundred or thousand miles, I will see the despoliated oil fields of the Caspian Sea, or the site of the Deepwater Horizon spill, or the capital of the now-obsolescent whale oil trade.

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[79] The Lincoln Lounge is the café-bar next to the symposium venue, where participants went for coffee breaks. It was simultaneously being used by other members of the general public.
[80] These lines refer to phrases queried and literalised in performance by Every House Has a Door, during the work-in-progress presentation that formed part of the symposium.

It's a perfect example of what TeroNauha was referring to when he discussed site-specific performance and its potential to de- and re-territorialize space.
*Or:*It's a perfect example of what Freddie Rokem was talking about this morning. A dialectic between history and philosophy, or in this case between art and geography: as I look at this gorgeous Turner landscape, I can hear the mechanical scream as oil is scraped and dredged from the Canadian tar sands.

"The main thing is to learn to think crudely."

Thankyou Freddie. Crude thinking .Crude oil thinking. The gangsters have become the bankers. Get BP out of Tate. *Crumpesdenken* is produced by a dialectic which is its own antithesis. A thought must be crude to find its way into action.

This week I came up with the final edit on an interview article I've been preparing for *Performance Research*. An interview with Platform's James Marriott, discussing another walking performance last year – that led its audience around the City of London and across the Millennium Bridge to Tate Modern, while telling us the tale of the banks and corporations that had helped BP survive after the calamity of Deepwater Horizon:

> JAMES: Somebody, maybe it was you, said, "Gosh, there's a lot of art in the City."
> STEVE: Yeah, that was my blog. I was struck by all the corporate art in office buildings, the public art in walkways and squares, and then of course you led us across the river to the Tate.
> JAMES: And I find that thought very helpful, actually – to look at that space, literally the urban space from the RBS building to the Tate, as one zone, one space, with art spread throughout it. Because the danger might be that we just work within the bit that's called the art bit – around the Tate – and say, "Right, we're going to try to change things in here." And then very soon you're inside an echo chamber – you're in this insulated space where the only thing you can do is play with the rules of the game that apply in that zone. Which means basically that you're involved in the politics of the history of art. Do you see what I mean?
> STEVE: Oh God, yeah. Ever-decreasing circles of self-referentiality.
> JAMES: I mean, that's interesting. But for me it's as interesting as rebelling against the rules within pigeon fancying or dentistry. Someone's got to do it. And I'm sure there are some very rebellious pigeon fanciers. I just don't see that as part of the work that I need to spend my time on.

3. Thinking in the theatre

And now I'm sitting here at Kings Cross wondering about those echo chambers James mentioned. Where Performance Thinks.The galleries, the studios, the theatre spaces.Performance as, in JosefineWikstrom's words, "the privileged site for experimentation between disciplines." If the thinking doesn't stretch beyond – or look

through – the walls of these spaces, these disciplines, then are we merely the privileged? Narcissistically playing around with "a never-ending enigma machine" – as Helmar Schramm put it? Or: have we *been*disciplined? Are we just the machine's cogs? And are we pushing off stage, into that dark no-place that Shimon Levy described, many of the things that really matter in this world?

Is this beginning to sound like a Brechtian*lehrstuck*?[81] I need a band: here come the drums here come the drums.

Because while I agree with myself about all this, I am also in disagreement. Thought needs to be crude to find its way into action, but perhaps my skill set and my instincts orient me towards that interminable pedagogic relation to which Joe referred. Infinite thought. Perhaps I am not inclined toward the infinite self-sacrifice that Christ and Brecht require of me, for the greater good.

Where is humility's ethical limit?

Perhaps I want Peter Boenisch to be right that the theatre is – or can be – an autonomous zone, free of social stratification, a space of play and liberation. Perhaps I want Joe Kelleher to be right that there is a different sense of justice in the theatre.

And I'm thinking now of Oscar Wilde. All art, he wrote, is perfectly useless. (It's not a thought that would play well on a REF impact statement.) And of course Oscar discovered the hard way that the theatre was not an autonomous zone. That if you think too far and too fast on stage – and in court – you can end up in Reading Gaol. That's the implacability of the law's saw blade.[82]

But Oscar kept thinking, and he kept performing. Where does performance think? From his prison cell, after almost two years hard labour, Oscar wrote in *De Profundis*of the humility that suffering had brought to him. Buthe wrote of this humility with immense pride. And he wrote of his newfound interest in Christ – Christ as an aestheticist, and as "the supreme individualist", and thus as someone very much like himself.

You are not my shepherd.
You are my brother.
Let's wrestle.

Biography

Steven Bottoms is Wole Soyinka Professor of Drama and Theatre Studies at Leeds University.

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[81]A reference to one participant's description of the Every House Has a Door presentation, which included a 3-piece rock band on drums, bass and guitar.
[82]Another oblique reference to the Every House Has a Door presentation.

The conference programme is reproduced in the following pages.

This was correct at the time of printing April 2012.

Friday 13th April, morning

9.15 – 9.45   **Registration**

9.45 – 10.00 Welcome:
                   Laura Cull, Helen Julia Minors and
                   John Mullarkey

10.00 – 11.00   **Keynote 1: Vida Midgelow**
                   Chair, Helen Julia Minors

11.00 – 11.15   **Coffee**

11.15 – 12.45   **Parallel Sessions A**

   Track 1
   The Know-How of practice-led research
   Chair, John Mullarkey

   Duffy / *The International Theatre/Performance Festival: Gaps, Interruptions and Unpredictable Crossovers.*
   Walker / *Total Practice: putting the professional into practice-led performance research*
   May / *Mental Predicates and Intelligent Performance: The Ontological Primacy of Know-How and its Implications*

   Track 2
   Labouring, working, living
   Chair, Laura Cull

   Chow / *Work and Shoot: professional wrestling and embodied politics*
   Wikstrom / *Performance as Labour: Where thought and action meet*
   Nauha / *Life in Bytom: neoliberal contamination, mess and performance*

12.45 – 1.45 Lunch [not provided by the conference]

   Plus **Michelle Graves** will be showing documentation of her performance
   DEATH -> HEART -> BREATH.

<center>**Friday 13th April, afternoon-evening**</center>

1.45 – 3.15   **Parallel Sessions B**

   Track 1
   Dancing Thinking
   Chair, Laura Cull

   Hug / *Disturbing Thoughts. On the Relationship between Sensory Perception and Reflection in Performance*

Irvine / *Performing processes: thinking worlds into being*
Sachsenmaier / *On 'thinking' and 'not-thinking' in performance-making: a cross-cultural philosophical investigation*

Track 2
Directing Thinking
Chair, Freddie Roken

Boenisch / *Directing & Dialectics: Re-thinking Regietheater*
Gansen and Schilling / *Thinking Performance: René Pollesch's Interpassive Theatre and Beyond*
Levy / Chaos, Offstage and Self-Reference: Notes towards a (new) Methodology of Performance

3.15 – 3.30   **Coffee**

3.30 – 5.00   **Parallels Sessions C**

Track 1
Making it together: Rehearsal and collaboration
Chair, Helen Julia Minors

Husel / *Watching the(m) play. Re-Thinking rehearsing practices*
Hillman / *Acting on Behalf of Thought: Thinking On How Performative Expression Acts, In Rehearsal, Performance, And Non-Theatrical Contexts*
Jones / *Impossible Collaboration: Performances Thinking Inbetween*

Track 2
Thinking performance with contemporary philosophy
Chair, John Mullarkey

Gotman / *L'objet singulier/Singular object: The trials of Clément Rosset's philosophy of the "Real"*
Richards / *Non-performance of philosophy, non-philosophy of performance: what is François Laruelle's non-philosophy and what does it have to offer performance studies?*
Florencio / *"Staging the World: Performance, Object-Oriented Ontology, and that thing called Knowing"*

5.00 – 6.00   **Keynote 2: Joe Kelleher**
                              Chair, John Mullarkey

6.00 – 6.30   Drinks / Reception

6.30 – 8.00   **Evening Performance**

Every House Has a Door **work in progress**

Followed by post-show discussion

Saturday 14th April, morning

9.30 – 10.30am   **Keynote 3: Freddie Rokem**
                            Chair, Laura Cull

10.30 – 10.45   **Coffee**

10.45 – 12.45   **Parallel Sessions D**

Track 1
Spaces and durations
Chair, John Mullarkey

Wakefield / Time-specificity or How Long a Thing Takes: an invitation to think duration
Cologni / *SPA(E)CIOUS PRESENT*
Hilevaara / *Idle fancies, lucid dreams and startling memories: remembering as a form of active spectatorship*
Schramm / Houses, Towers, Islands: *On Notable Spaces in Philosophy and Performance*

Track 2
Theatre-making as thinking
Chair, Helen Julia Minors

Denman-Cleaver / I Can See Better From Here
Bowes / *Kings of England: On Staging The Parrot That Thinks*
New & Zacharias / *thinking together – invasive hospitality*
Corrieri / *In Place of a Show*

12.45 – 1.45   **Lunch**

During lunch there will be a screening of: *How Long a Thing Takes: an invitation to think duration in practice* – a slow-motion performance by **Nik Wakefield**

Saturday 14th April, afternoon

1.45 – 3.15   **Parallel Sessions E**

Track 1
Choreography, dramaturgy
Chair, Freddie Rokem

Groves / *"Dramaturgies of Thinking: In/Of Performance"*
Levin / *Choreographing Opera: How Ballet ReThinks Operatic Performance*
Colin / *Choreographic Presence: Thinking in Time*

Track 2
The body politic
Chair, Laura Cull

Calchi-Novati / *Performance in the Age of Biopolitical Ideology: Testing the Factuality of 'Post-abyssal Thinking'*
Saffrey / *Thinking in the stand-up comedy club: deindividuation or the leadership of anarchy?*
Greenwood / Punk Performance: Sid, Nancy, Kylie and Mark Greenwood

3.15 – 3.30   **Coffee**

3.30 – 5.00   **Parallel Sessions F**

Track 1
Speaking, listening, writing
Chair, Helen Julia Minors

Anzengruber / *"ENACT: speaking nearby your tongue"*
Schroeder / *Network[ed] Listening – towards a de-centering of beings*
Soloyeva / *RSVP Editions –* Paper and Virtual Performance Project
Minors / Reassessing the thinking body in Soundpainting

Track 2
Hiding and appearing
Chair, Laura Cull

Kirkkopelto / *An actor never deals with elements smaller than a world*
Lagaay / *Secrecy vs. Revelation: Reflections on the Dramatics of the Hidden in Performance and Philosophy*
Schmidt / *The state of images*

5.00 – 6.00	**Roundtable / Closing remarks** **with response from Stephen Bottoms** Chair, John Mullarkey
6.00 – 7.30	**Drinks**

Additional contributions to the conference are made by:

Craig Smith will be providing delegates with a CD of:
THE PARASITE: A SOUND AND TEXT COMPOSITION

Rajni Shah will be offering delegates the text of:
Thinking through salt, thinking through bark, thinking through cables - an exploration of the 'stuff' of performance in relation to a trilogy of Shah's own works (*Mr Quiver*, *Dinner with America* and *Glorious*)

Close

Keynote Addresses

Keynote 1: Vida Midgelow, Northampton University, UK

Some Fleshy Thinking: Improvisation as philosophy in motion

Through a playful conversation between a dancer and her practice Prof Vida L Midgelow explores how somatically based improvisation practices might be said to be a way of 'thinking' and questions how this 'thought' is perceived by audience member's. In doing so, this presentation tussles with the ways that deeply internalised experiential movement practices enter the perceptual field and how this field can be understood as a critically embodied form by dancer and viewer. Drawing up Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, and research emerging from cognitive sciences, the presentation extends notions of embodied knowing to articulate improvisation as a distinctive mode of thinking in which knowledge is both produced and explored.

Keynote 2: Joe Kelleher, Roehampton University, UK

The Writing on the Wall: on aporia, and the scene of thought

The very question 'how does performance think?' can put a block on thinking. At least it is a question to persuade us to interrupt ourselves, to register and respect the block, before we set about translating our perplexity again into conversation, into argument and rhetoric, into scripture and image, into further performances of thought. This is odd perhaps because we are used enough to thinking about performance, all sorts of performance, and elaborating between us what we think through all sorts of discursive and performative fluencies, which we acquire with practice; there would indeed be no such thing as society to speak of if we did not do this. We are used, then, to thinking about and also using performance as a medium of thinking, not only in the 'practice-based' teaching and research that concern those of with a professional interest in these things, but really wherever and however performance might be a way of working something through, of having something happen, of making something felt, for oneself, for others. Performance thinks; we know it. Performance helps, to borrow Lois Weaver's phrase. It matters to our thought; we know that too. Nor is thoughtfulness only still and silent, it also moves and makes noise, and performance covers all these bases; this is all stuff we know, and think about, and speak of. So, wherefore the block? I wish to explore this question through consideration of scenes where a seeming incapacity to act – that is, an incapacity to speak, to show, to do, or to do anymore in a particular situation – is as it were spoken, shown, done. I am interested, let's say, in specifically theatrical ways of thinking about, and of transmitting, perplexity, indecision – aporia, in short – in situations where we come up against our limits, not least those limits we take as determining who – or what, creatures and creators, human, animal, thing – 'we' take ourselves to be. There is something interminable about all this, brought to term in each particular performance. There is also, every term, something to learn, doubtless; but then again – or so it can seem when we think it through – nothing to learn that we do not already know. Example: Bill Readings writes of the scene of teaching in the ruins of the modern university as one in which we might 'de-centre'

our subjective takes on the matter (as students, as teachers, as administrators) and listen instead to the thinking being performed beside us, attempting to account each time for what that thinking contains, and in so doing recognise the ways we are profoundly (ethically, politically) accountable to each other – accountable, he says, beyond accounting. If, in the university classroom, much of the writing that registers the thinking going on is – both literally and metaphorically – on the wall, that is no less the case in the theatre, for instance the theatre of Romeo Castellucci's recent show *On the Concept of the Face, Regarding the Son of God*. Here the terminal condition that we all share – being human, in sum – is put on stage. This condition is shown, spoken of, acted out and suffered, under a sort of *Mene Tekel Peres*, itself a sort of unaccountable accounting that interrupts thoughtless living (and which will have provoked all sorts of exemplary interpretive thought). The scene reproduces the sign of a thinking that looks and looks and sees and sees but which has, ultimately, nothing to say, of itself or for itself, offering to attention – and perhaps to compassion also – the articulate silence of a creature without name, that struggles to produce an image of itself, that struggles in the meantime to reduce itself to that.

Keynote 3: Freddie Rokem, Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv, Israel

Crude and Sublime Thinking:
Additional Encounters between Bertolt Brecht and Walter Benjamin

The friendship between Bertolt Brecht and Walter Benjamin led to numerous encounters between them, culminating in Benjamin's visits to Brecht's 'exilic home' in Svendborg, Denmark during the summers of 1934, 1936 and 1938. This paper examines Benjamin's reaction to the expression "plumpes Denken (crude thinking) which Brecht had used in his *Threepenny Novel*, published in 1934. The paper contextualizes the performative nature of this expression on the basis of the six years earlier Brecht/Hauptmann/Weill *Threepenny Opera*, as well as on Pabst's film adaptation, which in turn had led to Brecht's writing the *Threepenny Lawsuit*, where he claims that "To have sublime thoughts is not the same as to have culture." Benjamin interprets the notion of "plumpes Denken" in dialectical terms which are further developed in *The Arcades Project*, and later also in Brecht's own *Messingkauf*-materials.

Every House Has A Door

Lin Hixson and Matthew Goulish, after a twenty-year collaboration as co-founders of Goat Island, have formed *Every house has a door* to create project-specific collaborative performances with invited guests. This company seeks to retain Goat Island's narrow thematic focus and rigorous presentation, but to broaden the canvas to include careful intercultural collaboration, and its unfamiliar, even awkward, spectrum.

http://www.everyhousehasadoor.org/about.html

Abstracts

Anzengruber, Bernadette / *"ENACT: speaking nearby your tongue"*

speaking nearby your tongue is a performance by Bernadette Anzengruber, staged at Stonborough/Wittgenstein House, Vienna in 2011 and a re-enactment of Ludwig Wittgensteins *Lecture on Ethics*, which he held in Cambridge in 1929. At the core of the performance is the question, where speaking leaves the territory of language and becomes an invasion of space and bodies. The thesis is, that speaking is not abstract and intangible. It can be understood as a process of appropriation and therefore even internalized modes of speaking stay porous, vulnerable and to a certain degree mark the speaking of the Other within one's own speaking, be it the direct quote in a scientific text or the phenomenon of glossolalia.

ENACT: speaking nearby your tongue is translating the performance back into a lecture. By flattening and deleting the bodies from the original piece, important information as sound and noise, that is not considered language, will be spared out as well as all effects, which are produced through light/darkness, transformation of or movement in space. The viewers are challenged by their own perception as they will be noticing, that there are acts, that can only be uttered by bodies they are missing out on them.

Boenisch, Peter / *Directing & Dialectics: Re-thinking Regietheater*

Theatre directing is commonly conceived of as a practice of 'translation' between media (playtext and performance), or as adaptation 'from page to stage'. Such an approach proffers expectations and value criteria such as the ominous 'truthfulness to the text', which often functions as a principal charge (especially) against so-called "directors' theatre"; it also informs our acts of spectating as a theatre audience, as well as the training and education of future theatre directors within our institutions and academies. The lack of a sustained theoretical reflection of directorial *mise en scène* is therefore a rather striking lacuna in theatre theory, especially given the efforts of scholarly thought recently bestowed upon elucidating practices of *performing*. It seems as our own discipline hence lacks in articulate methodology to fully engage with philosophical assertions such Alain Badiou's reflections on the theatre director as a 'thinker of representation', who in the name of theatre as a (Badiouian) event of thought 'carries out a very complex investigation into the relationships between text, acting, space and public.' (Badiou 2007, 40).

With my paper, I shall attempt to outline preliminary contours of a more refined and historically informed understanding of 'directing'. I will start from a historical outlook on theatre directing, which as German *Regie* and French *mise en scène* emerged from the early nineteenth century. I therefore propose to situate the practice within the cultural context of what Jacques Rancière has termed the 'aesthetic regime of art', turning, in particular, to Friedrich Schiller (also one of Rancière's favourite informants in matters aesthetic) and his notion of 'aesthetic play'. Read in conjunction with the remarkable appearance of a Chorus in his late play *The Bride of Messina*, we will be able to situate the practice of directing within the structure of thought embodied by Hegelian dialectics, functioning as *Vermittlung* and concrete

Anschauung – a term which directly refers us back to the *thea* (the 'Schau', gaze, or show) that directly connects theatre and theory.

In consequence, the tangible *dissensus* frequently caused by "directors' theatre" will from this perspective appear not as accident, but as prime cause and principal purpose of *mise en scène*. Understanding directing, hence, as a figure of thought and as a structural relation will point us to the principal importance of *how* rather than *what* "directors' theatre" thinks – hence a 'relational aesthetics', in a sense very different of Bourriaud's: as a 'play' of and with thinking, where theatre opens perspectives and relations, to traditions (such as the dramatic), ideologies, and the world.

Bowes, Simon / *Kings of England: On Staging The Parrot That Thinks*

In 2011, Kings of England convened "*In Eldersfield*" a ten-chapter, decade-long cycle of works all for the Twentieth Century. The performances will inform the writing of a series of books, slight but substantial new volumes of history. Each chapter invokes a moment from a past that is quickly receding, slipping from view. We use performance as an intervention in historiographical method – loosing sources from contexts – invoking the past in the present – asserting liveness as a primary mode of historical understanding.

Our first chapter, "*Elegy for Paul Dirac*", stages a few scenes from the life of the Nobel prize-winning physicist. Our fondness for Dirac comes from a description in Farmelo's 2009 Biography: Niels Bohr said to Ernest Rutherford: "This Dirac…he seems to know a lot about physics, but he never says anything". Rutherford replied that Bohr could either have the Parrot that *Talks*, or the Parrot that *Thinks* (Graham Farmelo, *The Strangest Man*, 2009: 158-9).The performance itself centres on a second, rather more difficult anecdote: Dirac is working in a laboratory at St. John's College, Cambridge, 1927. A colleague asks him "*where are you going on your holidays*"? Twenty minutes later (twenty minutes later) he replies with the question: "*why do you want to know*"? "Elegy" plays this outin real time.

At the premiere at the Barbican in April '11, an initial attentiveness from our audience gave way a creak of chairs, a chorus of footsteps down the raked seating, and, at one point, a distressed scream. Fourperformers remained onstage, silent. But a significant section of our audience had ascended from something like quietude to something like restlessness to something like uproar (Diana Damian, Matt Trueman and Dr. Theron Schmidt have all given accounts of the 'silence'. Telling as these are, a verbal response from Marty Langthorne, the lead technician for the Festival, most insightful: "I didn't know whether the performance was going to continue").

Months later, the performance has come to feel like an attempt to stage the un-stage-able. To invoke Dirac, in all his strange reticence and hesitancy, is to invoke his double, The Parrot, whose presence on stage suggests a field of thought (in a notable case, internalised by the performers – externalized by the audience)that remains unknowable, impossible to resolve. Dirac, and the Parrot are alike in their unlikeness to anyone at all, and between them we sense an undiscerned, marginal

absence, which flourishes in the gap between thought and the impossibility of its translation.

The *Call for Papers* asks, "Can performance be understood as a kind of thinking" and, if so "what are the benefits and risks of doing so, for performance and/or for philosophy"? Contrary as we are, we re-state: "Can thinking be considered a kind of performance" and, if so, "what are the risks and benefits &c": a productive misunderstanding between disciplines – a welcome confusion of the terms delineating our fields of enquiry. We might consider points of convergence with De Certeau: "historians always create absences" (De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 1992: 288) (yes – and performers do, too!), and with Rancière: "History doesn't have to protect itself from any foreign invasion. It merely needs to reconcile itself to its own name" (Jacques Rancière, *The Names of History*, 1994: 103). This paper (twenty minutes in duration) will suggest how *thought troubles the event of performance* in an ethical moment that refuses to foreclose an encounter with historical subject as a thinking –*performing* – body.

Calchi-Novati, Gabriella / *Performance in the Age of Biopolitical Ideology: Testing the Factuality of 'Post-abyssal Thinking'*

For Portuguese sociologist and legal scholar Boaventura de Sousa Santos modern Western thinking operates 'along abyssal lines' designed to divide what is human from what is sub-human, or to say it à la Agamben, what is legally considered a 'form-of-life' from what is not considered so. The work of Santos is very much focused on trying to go beyond what he refers to as Western 'abyssal thinking' via the development of new 'ecologies of knowledge', so as to overcome the still commonly unquestioned *modus cogitandi* for which Western systems, whether scientific or legal, are *the* systems *par excellence*. In this paper, I will employ Santos' theory of 'abyssal thinking' alongside Agamben's theory of 'biopolitics' in order to problematise the contemporary hegemonic *modus cogitandi*, namely that of our biopolitical ideology. The work of contemporary Mexican artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer instigates a critical engagement with biometric systems and computerised tracking systems of identification. I claim that Lozano-Hemmer's work presents the audience with innovative ways of thinking about the means of surveillance that have become normalised via the virally intrusive hegemonic ideological apparatuses. By revealing the fluid reproducibility of digital fingerprints, and the technological tricks hidden behind tracking systems of identification, these works could
be interpreted as performances that inhabit the ideological terrain of struggle. "Performance in the Age of Biopolitical Ideology" might elicit 'an alternative thinking of alternatives', in relation to our traces, both digital and physical alike. It is by displaying these very traces, that works such as Lozano-Hemmer's perform strategic contestations through a 'radical copresence' of the visible and invisible processes of biopolitical.

Chow, Broderick / *Work and Shoot: professional wrestling and embodied politics*

This demonstration/talk will contextualise and theorise the in-progress findings of *Work Songs,* a practice-as-research project by Broderick Chow and Tom Wells (*the dangerologists*).

Addressing the question of 'how performance thinks', I consider the idea of a 'thinking between' bodies and subjects, taking place in the mixed space of uncertainty and tacit knowledge that is raised in practices of physical improvisation with others (such as Contact Improvisation). I argue that such thinking between can have a deeply political dimension, which lies in the relationship between the 'social body' and its individual bodies. For the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, it is not only the unconscious that is structured like a language; the physical body itself is marked by the Symbolic Order. As socialisation takes place, the body is over-written by signifiers; pleasure, for instance, 'becomes localised in certain "zones."' (Fink 1995: 24). Approaching the question of the body and the social order from another perspective, Michel Foucault famously analysed the ways in which acts of power on social body are then enacted in practices by individual bodies. It is affective dimension of practice between bodies that potentially disrupts or poses a challenge to the zoned, divided body (Lacan) or the governmentalised body (Foucault), and is the focus of this practice-as-research project.

This paper will specifically consider our original physical improvisatory practice, which is derived from (but deviates from) the techniques of British and American professional wrestling. Professional wrestling distinguishes between two forms of fighting: 'work', and 'shoot.' Worked fights emerged in the early 20th century as promoters discovered they were able to make more money by determining the outcome in advance and presenting ever more spectacular moves. The term refers today to the practice by which a series of moves are sold as real, and the kinaesthetic response of improvising a 'chain' of moves with one's partner. 'Shoot' refers to real violence. 'Working' in wrestling is unequivocally *real* — most moves are indistinguishable from those used in Greco-Roman ('amateur') wrestling or mixed martial arts. However, the work itself specifically requires the worker to protect his/her partner from actual violence. Within this context, our practice-as-research points to the possibility of an embodied political thinking. In this way, performance itself can think politics, outside the frames of allegory, narrative or spectatorship. I connect this embodied political thinking in this specific example to the principle of solidarity, fundamental to the projects of the Left. Physical practice between bodies does not represent but simply *is* a relationship of solidarity. I call this embodied political thinking an 'ethics of rowdy play.'

Colin, Noyale / *Choreographic Presence: Thinking in Time*

This practice-based presentation examines how the question of memory, relates to the way in which the past survives in the present through the emergence of a choreographic presence in the event of performance. Using a lecture –performance format I aim at exploring the issues around the capacity of a performer's body to be always in adjustment with the real.

Drawing on notions of deconstruction, Lepecki argues for the ephemerality of dance to be compared to a disappearance. To that effect he uses the Derridean concept of trace to relocate the presence of the dancing body in the realm of absence. In Derrida's words, 'the trace is the erasure of selfhood, of one's own presence, and is constituted by the threat or anguish of its irremediable disappearance, of the

disappearance of its disappearance.' While this description seems to encapsulate the idea of dance's *ephemerality as disappearance*, then viewing the unravelling of dance movement as a self-erasure would tend to subjugate the field of dance studies to a literary register. One might argue that such a discourse might be more concerned by writing than by dancing.

While my intention is not to re-construct historical dance pieces, in this solo, I am interested to explore questions of presence of a dancer's body in relationship to time and more specifically historical time. If the ephemerality of dance can be compared to a disappearance how can dance composition account for traces of process and still generate an affective response for the audience members?

From a Bergsonian perspective, *thinking in time*, assumes that memory is part of time and time – defined in terms of duration - is a force, which is constantly at work in the compositional plane of a performance as well as in the reception of a live piece. Time and memory in live performance are bound to their intrinsic relation to the body. Suzanne Guerlac underscores that whereas 'the body is a centre of action that acts in the present', consciousness - which is here equivalent to memory and therefore to the past - operates as a *coping* mechanism for the body 'by synthesising the heterogeneous rhythms of duration into temporal horizons of past, present, and future.'

I will address the central questions outlined above, through a discussion of the choreographic process in my solo 'They tried to stand [I am still falling]'. While this work focuses on exploring how the audience members could be considered as an imagined component of composition *in becoming,* I will focus on examining how presence in dance composition contributes to the articulation of a choreographic thinking in terms of time.

Cologni, Elena / *SPA(E)CIOUS PRESENT*

Dynamics of collective and individual experiences of space and duration within *specious present*, adopting technologies for enhancing audience engagement, while producing forms of documentation ([1] Micro-geographies, *microphies)*.

Dr Elena Cologni, *Spa(e)cious Present*

The workshop is based on the multidisciplinary approach of my current project Rockfluid (see below), where participatory site specific art practice is underpinned by elements of cognitive psychology and philosophy. Hence, here the relationship Memory – Time – Perception is informed by Bergson's notion of the present within duration and as produced by the body in space (Bergson, *Matière et Mémoire*,), and by Merleau-Ponty's reference to 'sensation' as the basis for knowledge (Merleau-Ponty citation
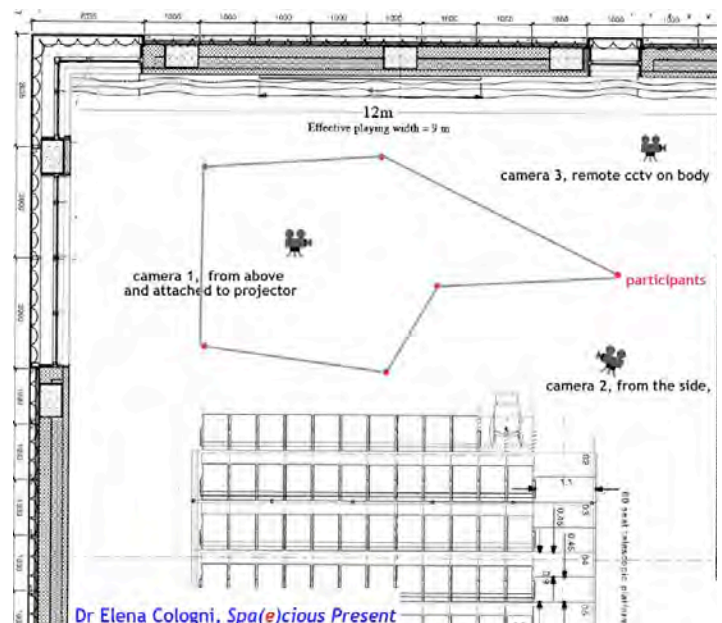
of Gestaltd Theory in *'Association And The Projection Of Memories*, Phenomenology Of Perception). On the other hand the role of memory in the present is seen from a shared perspective (psychology and philosophy of science) including the definition of specious present (James, William. 1890. *Principles of Psychology* 2 vols. New York: Henry Holt, p 608, in Anonymous [E. Robert Kelly], *The Alternative: A Study in Psychology* (London: Macmillan and Co.,1882) as well as the nature of retention as involving perception of duration (1898. *Metaphysic of Experience* 4 vols. London: Longman, Green, and Co. [reprint (1980), Garland Publishing, New York]).

The workshop format is considered, as a form of peripatetic practice, where produced and shared knowledge informs the artist's creative process. It also creates the physical and psychological conditions to enhance an awareness of the perception of time and space.

What:
Three exercises, within this condition: audiences and participants can see two projections, one of the views is from above and the other view is from the remote cctv camera on one of the participants.

1- Memory in the present.
8/10 participants will be asked to choose a point in the space and mark the floor. From this position they will describe a game they used to do from memory. The participants will be asked to form a shape in space by using elastic string. They will then move in turn forming a series of changing shapes in space. The final shape will be fixed on the floor with masking tape.

2- How has digital time disrupted our sense of subjective time? The perception of time, subjective time (non measured time) and distance in *specious present* (the time duration wherein a state of consciousness is experienced as being in the present). The exercise will test how differently we experience distance within a set amount of time, depending on certain conditions. Using the shape on the floor, participants will be asked to walk over it and write how long this takes.

3- How does technology effect our perception and memorization of place? by relating memory to our experience of space in time. Starting from the observation that there is a time distance between the now of perception and the after of the recollection, and a space distance between where we start from and where we return: What does 'this' gap tell us? Is such gap there at all? Starting from a memory exercise (participants to draw the walking activity from memory), this will highlight similarities and differences between our mnemonic archive and technology produced documents of personal space, which I shall call *microphies*.

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Cologni, E., *That spot in the 'moving picture' is you, (perception in time-based art)* in *Blood, Sweat & Theory: Research through Practice in Performance* ed. John Freeman, Libri Publishing, London, 2010, pp. 83-107)
Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). The phenomenology of Perception (C. Smith, Trans.). London: Routledge/Kegan.

Suzanne Guerlac, *Thinking in time: an introduction to Henri Bergson*, Cornell University Press, 2006 (Cologni, E., review for Consciousness Literature and the Arts Journal, Volume 9 Number 1, April 2008, ed Meyer-Dinkgraphe, Lincoln University,
http://blackboard.lincoln.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/users/dmeyerdinkgrafe/archive/guerlac.html)
Vicario, B., Il Tempo, il Mulino Ricerca, Roma 2005
The Images of Time: An Essay on Temporal Representation by Robin Le Poidevin Oxford University Press, 7 Dec 2007
E. Robert Kelly, *The Alternative: A Study in Psychology*. London: Macmillan and Co., 1882 (specious present)
A Brief History of Time-Consciousness: Historical Precursors to James and Husserl, Holly Andersen, Rick Grush, *Journal of the History of Philosophy,* 2007
James, W. (1893). *The principles of psychology N 1.* New York: H. Holt and Company, p. 609.
1898. *Metaphysic of Experience* 4 vols. London: Longman, Green, and Co. [reprint (1980), Garland Publishing, New York]
Nicola Greer*, On the Move: Technology, Mobility, and the Mediation of Social Time and Space*, The Information Society, Volume 18, Issue 4, 2002, Taylor & Francis.
Examples of previous workshop
http://www.elenacologni.com/experiential/that_spot.html
http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2004/entries/time-experience/
http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consciousness-temporal/specious-present.html
http://www.manchestertiming.co.uk/

Corrieri, Augusto / *In Place of a Show*

What happens inside a theatre when nothing is happening there?
This presentation revolves around a visit I made to the Teatro Olimpico (Vicenza), the first purpose-built indoor theatre in the West. The Olimpico is built to resemble an outdoor amphitheatre, replete with illusory street perspectives and a sky-painted ceiling. On the occasion of my visit, a swallow flew inside the theatre, performing aerial revolutions beneath the painted clouds. Through photographs and text, this presentation is the attempt to find a language with which to track the flight of that swallow.

Denman-Cleaver, Tess and Chen, Ko-Le / I Can See Better From Here

Alice in Bed is an ongoing theatre production by Tender Buttons (tenderbuttons.co.uk). The project actively engages mental health service users, health practitioners, academics from multiple disciplines as well as the general public in the formation, interpretation and performance of Susan Sontag's play. In creating Alice in Bed we are investigating how a theatre production can feature in an academic community such as Culture Lab, or this conference. Working in partnership with academics has so far inspired a heightened awareness of and reflection upon our creative practice, and as such has enabled a greater understanding of philosophical, social and political understanding of questions raised by the text.

As well as presenting our work-in-progress, we would like to ask: what stake do we have, as theatre practitioners, in the dissemination and publication of Humanities studies?

Duffy, Jennifer / *The International Theatre/Performance Festival: Gaps, Interruptions and Unpredictable Crossovers*.

"Becoming is a movement *from* some place, but becoming oneself is a movement *at* that place" (Kierkegaard '08 p.66)

A performative presentation which explores and highlights the pedagogical potential the model of International Theatre/Performance Festivals (examples which include *Sibiu International Festival of Theatre* (Sibiu, Romania) *ACT Festival* (Bilbao, Spain); *Flare International Festival of New Theatre* (Manchester, UK); *Gateshead International Festival of Theatre (GIFT)* (Gateshead, UK)), hold as a site for experiential learning and for the dissemination of performance and practitioner knowledge.

The presentation will explore and utilise as a case study, the findings of practice led research undertaken via the delivery of a series of workshops at the international student theatre festival: *Dionysus Festival*, (Osijek, Croatia, 2012). The workshops, which explore the development of audience/performer relationships within performance practice, through interrogating varying modes and techniques of collaboration and participation, will be conducted with a group of international students attending the festival.

Through presenting the findings from the case study, the presentation will examine the potential of the context of the festival model as methodologically relevant for practice led research into the dissemination of practitioner knowledge. It will also highlight its potential as a site for the exploration and generation of performance as thinking via the exposure of cross cultural performance practice and training grounds.

Against a backdrop of research which highlights the space of 'the festival' as a "place for working out a new mode of interrelationship between individuals" (Bakhtin, '65 p. 123) and for providing opportunity for dialogue as a site for: "trans-national identifications and democratic debate" (Euro- Project '10 p.7) and in also acknowledging the opportunities created within this space for exposure to "a variety of critical interceptions" (Pitches '11 p.143) for its audiences, participants and artists; I aim to utilise this presentation to provide a working example of the specific model of festival examined here and the creative research it allows for, with regard to the dissemination and evolution of performance and practitioner produced knowledge.

The presentation will performatively present the findings of the workshops, through creatively presenting documentation of the workshops and in demonstrating their inherent exploration of the audience/performer relationship through re-presenting this within the utilisation of the audience/presenter relationship within the context of the conference. It will highlight the potential of the festival model examined for

encouraging fluid movement between the differing modes of participation encountered within this specific context.

 "To work collaboratively, passing the shuttle of creative vision back and forth, in a way that advances or changes the pattern, is to imagine community in terms of affiliation, rather than filiation. It is a technique for making sense of the gaps, interruptions and unpredictable crossovers."
(Carter '04 p.5)

The presentation aims to highlight the potential the site of the International Theatre/Performance Festival holds for "passing the shuttle of creative vision back and forth, in a way that advances or changes the pattern" and the potential of this for the development of performance as thinking.

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Carter, P. (2004). Material Thinking. Melbourne University Press, Victoria.
Euro-Project (2011). "Euro Project." Retrieved 17th October, 2011, from http://www.euro-festival.org/docs/Euro-Festival_D3.pdf.
Kierkegarrd, S. (2008). Sickness Unto Death. Wilder Publications.
Pitches, J. (2011). Performer Training: Researching Practice in the Theatre Laboratory. Research Methods in Theatre and Performance. B. K. a. H. Nicholson. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press**: 137 - 162.

Florencio, João / "*Staging the World: Performance, Object-Oriented Ontology, and that thing called Knowing*"

Performance Studies, one could argue, has been suffering from what can be seen as a certain humanist or anthropocentric malaise since its inception as an academic discipline in the early 1980s. With few exceptions (cf. McKenzie 2001), our field of enquiry has mostly been focused on the study of performance as a kind of behaviour able to transform humans acting as performers and/or audiences (cf. Schechner/Appel 1990). However, in recent years, we have been witnessing what some have termed the nonhuman turn in academia. From philosophy to sociology, from ecology to gender studies, the realm of that which is not human has been given centre stage in our attempts to think and make sense of, i.e. to known, the world around us. This paper will attempt to exercise a similar change of focus in performance studies, by bringing the nonhuman to the centre of the contemporary debates on what it means to perform. In a world in which events appear more and more often to happen outside our human control and with no traceable human agency, our species finds itself increasingly in a position of anxious uncertainty towards the future, being forced to unknown what had hitherto been taken for granted. The way out of this conundrum can only be one: to abandon old paradigms and to start thinking again from scratch without falling in the old mistake of building ourselves ontological thrones and crowning ourselves lords of the land of being. Either that or being doomed once again by the blindness that comes with the all too familiar delusion of entitlement. It is in the urgency of this doomsday context that a new and more democratic way of knowing ought to be brought forth. It is also in this here-and-now that performance studies will have a decisive say, but not without

having first to abandon all the remainders of humanism and anthropocentrism that still populate its practice, our discourses. If, in the truly democratic world that we envision, being and agency are found equally in all that there is, then performance has a lot to teach us. If, as one often hears, the whole world is a stage, then performance is the only way through which we, things of this world, are capable of encountering each other. If, according to Object-Oriented Philosophy, in this increasingly animated world everything – from quarks to mountain ranges, from table tops to democratic dreams – is only able to give itself to experience by playing a character, a double of itself, then performing is indeed another, more democratic, name for letting oneself be known.

Gansen, Moritz and Schilling, Elisabeth / *Thinking Performance: René Pollesch's Interpassive Theatre and Beyond*

The German director René Pollesch, arguably still one of the most interesting and innovative figures in theatre today, has over the past two decades developed a new form of discursive theatre, in which he has come to interrogate the role of thought on stage. The presentation will, in order to discuss the question of how performance thinks, or how thought is brought into performance, take Pollesch's approach as its vantage point and critically examine both its problems and its possible merit. We will begin with short introduction to the director's theatrical work and its various modes of staging thought; from there, we will be lead to consider performance as a thinking subject in itself, as we can find precisely this implied in the director's relatively recent notion of 'interpassive theatre'. Accordingly, the paper will conclude asking how we can take Pollesch's method beyond itself to develop from it a better understanding of the relation between thought and performance in general.

A hybrid of metatheatre and metatheory, Pollesch's work performs thought on various levels. Perhaps most obviously, fragmentary ideas and quotes taken from the writings of contemporary theorists (such as Giorgio Agamben or Jean-Luc Nancy) are incorporated into the spoken text and spun further; in fact, primary text in Pollesch is usually a discursive performance of thought rather than mere dialogue between characters; for Pollesch, 'theatre is a thinking space'. Yet the staging of thought does by no means end here: the ideas related in the actors' speeches are reflected in the general structure of the performance, establishing for instance deconstruction, repetition and interpassivity as significant formal features. On a further level, it is then precisely the notion of 'interpassive theatre' that introduces yet another mode of staging thought by rendering the performance itself as a thinking subject.

The concept of interpassivity, taken from Robert Pfaller's elaboration of an idea essentially formulated by Jacques Lacan and taken up by Slavoj Žižek, essentially refers to the obverse of interactivity. In this sense, Pollesch's plays *Ich schau dir in die Augen, gesellschaftlicher Verblendungzusammenhang* (*I Look You in the Eyes, Societal Relation of Blindness*) and *Was du auch machst, mach es nicht selbst* (*Whatever You Do, Don't Do It Yourself*) suggest that the apparently inevitable art of interactive theatre has 'terrorised' audiences for decades, forcing them into an undesired ideal of activity. Interactive theatre claimed to allow people to 'break out of the role of passive observer following the spectacle staged by others, and to

participate actively not only in the spectacle itself, but more and more in establishing the very rules of the spectacle'. Interpassive theatre, on the other hand, is supposed to permit people to *not* experience things which they had thought they wanted to experience. Interpassive art, Pfaller suggests, relieves audiences even of the burden of beholding it, since it includes its own reception. If Pollesch's discursive theatre is thus indeed interpassive (which may still be debated), it must ultimately lead its audience to delegate thinking to the performance, hence creating a thinking environment, a thinking thing that purports to think *for* its audience; just like a sitcom's canned laughter laughs for its audience.

All this of course leaves us with the question whether a conception of thinking in interpassive theatre has anything fruitful to offer beyond the idiosyncrasies of an individual director obsessed with contemporary theory. We will hence, by way of conclusion, seek out ways in which Pollesch's method of bringing thought onto the stage, of creating a 'thinking space', can enable us to conceive new ways in which to think performance and perform thought.

Gotman, Kelina / *L'objet singulier/Singular object: The trials of Clément Rosset's philosophy of the "Real"*

I was struck, speaking with a student recently, to realise that Clément Rosset's work was of course hardly available in English; but, more significantly, that it probably should be made available. This student more recently suggested that it is just beginning to be translated. Yet, Rosset's work remains largely invisible in the Anglophone canon and in the new field of theatre and philosophy in particular. In this short presentation, I hope to highlight and critique some of the major tenets of Rosset's philosophy of the "real," as it pertains to cinema, music, history, and pleasure. I will suggest a few points of convergence (and divergence) with strands of philosophical thinking about theatre (and how theatre "thinks"), and gesture towards a Rossetian approach to theatre and performance that takes into account problems of doubling, mimicry and historical time. I hope to argue that in Rosset's work, the "tragic" doubles the comic in a return on Nietzsche and Artaud that articulates stasis as an eruption in time: one that instantiates neither transcendence nor deliverance, but a Benjaminian breath, an aspiration, a hiatus, that looks upon itself with horror. And in that, finds joy.

What this will suggest practically is a dramaturgy of constant returns: this is a Nietzschean trope, articulated to prove again and again why we need theatre (or experience life as such, in the best of times), and why theatre is the stuff of a liberated and indeed serene everyday life. Indeed, in Rosset's work, what I will call an immanent theatricality enables us to gain distance from the Real, so that we can enjoy it better, and live without care in present time. In Rosset, the doubling of reality and its observation (and its immanent, at times purely affective experience if not articulation) paradoxically instantiates a greater self-presence (présence à soi) and, arguably, présence envers l'autre (or presence-toward-the-other) in the ability it grants us to stare in the face of an always tragic (brooding) life. But this to-and-fro between the Real and that which observes it comes at a cost: we cannot just stage life (mentally) and so see through it (or see through to it) better, and gain freedom. The doubling is posed as a constant tenet of the Real, and thus one, as I will argue,

that makes this daily theatre (and theatricality) impossible. It is theatre's quasi tautological relationship to the real, however, that, as I will argue, also enables us better to arrive at a theatrical conception that is precisely Artaudian: a non-theatre collapsed onto itself, refusing both itself and its double.

Clément Rosset has published over 30 books in philosophy over the last fifty years, including La philosophie tragique (1961), L'anti-nature : éléments pour une philosophie tragique (1973), Le Réel et son Double (1976), Propos sur le cinéma (1977), L'objet singulier (1979), Route de nuit : épisodes cliniques (1999), Le réel, l'imaginaire et l'illusoire (2000), and L'école du réel (2008). He lives in Paris.

Greenwood, Mark / Punk Performance: Sid, Nancy, Kylie and Mark Greenwood

My practice and research interrogates the body as a site of writing; it identifies this site as marked by and capable of inscriptive acts, as both being actively written upon by culture and as a necessary event of resistance to cultural commodification.

My enquiry develops the hypotheses that since our society uses words as its primary means of social control, marginal groups find their most effective expression through the body's wider resources rather than the restrictions of verbal language, where the body becomes a site of resistance through thought, action and 'doing'. It is here that the act of writing can be considered not only in a traditional sense, but as an inscriptive act that leaves an impression on materials and space through repetitive gesture, mark-making, stillness and action – a situation where expression asserts individual identity and then social identity on the receptive but resistant material of the world. I therefore use the term 'writing' to refer to a dialogue between the performer and a range of images and objects gained through direct contact with specific environments and the subsequent physical representation of these experiences into action.

This paper proposes that the performance artist reclaims the body, literally inscribed and marked within an art form that negates forms of recording and dissemination in a reproductive economy. This resistance employs an approach similar to that of alternative music networks, where a 'punk' ideology is applied, organising events in esoteric sites and employing 'not for profit' strategies. Paradoxically, this mode of thinking encourages aggressive individualism and independence in terms of identity and expression, while encouraging community through exchange and the sharing of work.

I propose to deliver a paper that explores how individual and collective performance art practitioners approach work, emphasising a 'punk' ideology and influence in the works of Alastair MacLennan, Roddy Hunter and Andre Stitt. 'Thought' and 'thinking' are highly significant in these works that negate the institutional control exercised by theatres and galleries. This resistance of the 'establishment' allows a larger set of networks and performance art organisations such as *OUI Performance* in York, *[performance space]* in London and *Bbeyond* in Belfast to perform their own autonomy and simultaneously perform and develop a collective political utterance.

My paper will explore the possibility of shifting political and social consciousness through performance art practice. I intend to demonstrate and develop ways of re-thinking the perceived space/time templates of performance and writing as modes of presencing, while suggesting alternative models for their interpretation and dissemination within the contexts of institutional research. In this context I propose that performance events operate immediately as methodologies that explore modes of communication and participation through the re-claimed, physical, tangible body in relations and encounters that provoke aesthetic and political questions around the institutional commodification of cultural practices.

Graves, Michelle will be showing documentation of her performance: *DEATH -> HEART -> BREATH.*

DEATH -> HEART -> BREATH is an experimental lecture. It is an analysis of a macro-timeline consisting of writing on a dry-erase board and facing the audience to "lecture" scientific facts and personal philosophies with an overlay of raw emotion. It presents my personal synaptic leaps between these three significant terms. Death, the heart or heartbeat, and the breath or breathing have chronologically been focal points of my art-making over the past decade. Each topic has naturally guided me through a captivating line of research leading to the next topic. Each new topic has informed the previous. I have empirically and associatively committed to memory intense emotions with each topic, triggering my sympathetic or parasympathetic nervous system throughout the analysis. Death and the Heart trigger a deeply rooted, grief-stricken and heartbroken emotion. Breath and remembering to breathe throughout the analysis is a struggle, calms my emotions enough to continue the analysis. At the peak of the analysis, I briefly interact with the audience as a means to bring myself, and those witnessing, out of a state of heightened emotion. This process transcends the skill base of performance/acting and shifts the performing body toward being through synaptic thinking, writing text, and facing the audience when the emotions are triggered. I am fully aware of my vulnerable body and mind in these moments and permit the struggle to control exactly how I present myself. "Operating within the limits of the few words that you chose to write on the board in the lecture was crucial to the economy of your philosophy. The words don't prepare us for your tears." – Bryan Saner.

Groves, Rebecca / *"Dramaturgies of Thinking: In/Of Performance"*

tbc

Hilevaara, Katja / *Idle fancies, lucid dreams and startling memories: remembering as a form of active spectatorship*

For Henri Bergson, memory is fundamentally connected with perception and its temporal quality is defined by a notion of delay. This delay is produced between the object of perception and its response, whilst the present stimulus searches for the most appropriate memory in the past to interpret it, and to act upon it. If the search is prolonged, Bergson suggests, if a myriad of possible corresponding memories are presented, if the choice is multiple, the outcome becomes increasingly undeterminable.

In this paper I suggest that contemporary theatre makers enable a delay of perception for the spectator, where the stimuli offered triggers an elastic breadth of memories to come forward, and bring forth interpositions which, in their uniqueness, are completely unforeseen. Whilst singling out and examining the strategy of distorting time within contemporary theatre performance as an example of extending perception, I propose that by striving for unpredictability, theatre makers are tapping into radical innovation that is genuinely creating responses that cannot be known in advance. By creating conditions for imagining and conscious dreaming in which perception is prolonged, theatre makers invite indisputably new thinking. In doing so, it can be argued that not only does Bergson's philosophy on memory and perception foreground performance's ontology as remembering as opposed to its liveness, but that 'remembering through performance' puts this philosophy firmly in practice and expands its use.

Hillman, Rebecca / Acting on Behalf of Thought: Thinking On How Performative Expression Acts, In Rehearsal, Performance, And Non-Theatrical Contexts

By focusing on a series of 'open' rehearsals and promenade performances that took place in a disused pub in Reading, in October 2011, this paper considers how and to what effect ontologies of rehearsals, performances and performative acts effect real conditions of experience and understanding.The rehearsals, performances and events discussed connect to my doctoral research project, which asks what modes and combinations of theatrical response are effective in addressing political issues for contemporary audiences. By deploying verbatim material mainly sourced in Reading and politically driven agitprop theatre with practices developed by non-politically driven companies such as Punchdrunk, the work asked participants and audience to engage viscerally, emotionally and critically with the subject matter.

This paper begins by considering how performance can be understood as a mode of expression operating beyond theatrical contexts, by reflecting back to the 2011 England Riots that happened on the first day of the project's rehearsals. I will briefly consider how and to what extent recent emerging social-political communities have been evolved/repressed, and what relationship to performance or other (privileged?) discursive modes these positions bear. The rest of the paper asks how the conditions of the rehearsal process (i.e. expectations and practices associated with performance, rehearsal and experimentation, as well as political efficacy) led to the cast performing their own subjective and expressionistic work, and sharing personal and sometimes difficult experiences 'through' performance. How do abstract, poetic, physical, self-conscious and performative expressions create a range of different meanings and experiences from those channeled by prevailing conventions of the communication of thought? The paper then considers how, by offering the general public access to the rehearsal space, unusual ways of interacting and thinking with members of local communities was facilitated. Finally, it considers the extension of these processes in the performances themselves, focusing on the physical and emotional experience of the participating subject, to ask what effects these durational processes combined with certain performance styles had, and what ramifications for the objectives of the research project. Fundamentally the paper inquires into a unique attraction and/or agency of performance, which some senses

remain at a 'safe' remove from reality, whilst in other ways encounters heightened levels intimacy with it.

Hug, Joa / *Disturbing Thoughts. On the Relationship between Sensory Perception and Reflection in Performance*

The topic of my doctoral artistic research is the relationship between sensory perception and reflection in the context of contemporary dance performance. Approaching the investigation from the perspective of the dancer/performer, the main questions are: what effect does consciously altering one's physical state and awareness have on one's way of thinking, and vice versa: How can conscious activity of the mind alter the body's perception in relation to itself and to others? My background as dancer/performer is significantly shaped by *Body Weather*. The practical investigation of my doctoral research builds on one of the core elements of *Body Weather* training practice: the so-called *Manipulations*. Usually practiced in couples, one person *manipulates* the body of another through a specific application of touch, weight and pressure. Currently, I am revisiting a research-score in which I *imagine* to be manipulated (= without an actual giver) while attending to thoughts and sensations simultaneously.
My presentation combines a demonstration of this research-score with reflections on the specific modes of thinking that are enacted in its performance. In particular, I will relate to Simon O'Sullivan's ideas about the production of subjectivity. Instead of drawing conclusions I will share some observations about how thinking in perform-ance might differ from other forms of thinking in which sensory perception plays an implicit (and neglected) role. I hope to thereby contribute to a more differentiated and detailed understanding of what it could mean *to think in performance* and how performance can possibly alter *what* and *how* we think in performance.

Keywords: *Artistic Research; Change; Contemporary Dance Performance; Embodied Reflection; Imagination; Subjectivity*.

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Husel, Stefanie / *Watching the(m) play. Re-Thinking rehearsing practices*

My talk suggests two shifts in the view on performance: Firstly, to focus on audiences rather than on the activity of performers, and secondly, to take a closer look at the rehearsing process of performances. Both queries seem to contradict one another at the first glance, but they actually start supporting each other mutually if one takes into account that watching is a practice. If we understand watching as a practice that needs to be performed skilfully, rehearsing can be understood as practicing the gaze of the other. As a "participant observer" I visited rehearsals of British performance group Forced Entertainment since 2003, with my focus on the relation between playing and watching. My talk wants to share some results of my

ongoing research: How does rehearsed practical knowledge diffuse into the structure, that is later presented as "the play"? Which points of view are presented to an audience? And which kind of audience is accordingly build into the play's structure?

Irvine, Rosanna / *Performing processes: thinking worlds into being*

Deleuze asks, What is a thought without the image of a thought? This question invites an approach to thinking that is not *about* something (with the allegiance to representation that this entails): rather of thinking as the occurring of the *process of thinking.*

Western dance and choreographic practices since Judson in the 1960s have adopted and been influenced by particular practices of non-western cultural origin, now commonly found in dance trainings, e.g. Aikido, Tai'chi, Yoga, which cultivate particular qualities of/in thinking. What might be understood as 'in common' in these divergent practices includes a concern with mind body unity, and an approach to training perceptual awareness that is grounded in a mutuality of 'being' and action. Such practices may (potentially at least) train our capacities towards engaging in/with the world 'beyond' the dualisms at the origin of Western philosophical thinking (which Phelan suggests gives rise to representation.) I suggest that the prevalence and potency of these practices over the last fifty years, has prepared a milieu for performance and choreographic practice that shifts the concerns of practice towards *the activation of processes of thinking* and towards (the development of) capacities of and conditions for thinking. The paper discusses this *activation* from my perspective as a performance maker engaged in practice-as-research and with references to two projects: *what remains and is to come,* the 'collaborative dialogue' with Katrina Brown www.whatremains2.wordpress.com and *Project* by French choreographer Xavier Le Roy.

In *what remains and is to come,* we work with paper, charcoal, body, breath, agreeing that we prefer not to make work *about* something, and that we will make *something.* There is a growing sense of *being-with* each other, of *being-with* the materials, and a growing sense of the properties and capacities of/in the different materials. Distinct and particular processes continue to emerge. The choreography of the performance event comes into being through the activation of these material processes - or what might be understood as the activation of the capacities of/in the materials: material is in Karen Barad's terms 'given its due as an active participant in the worlds becoming.' The paper considers how we might then understand material as co-constituted in the thinking of/in the performance event.

Xavier Le Roy created the work *Project* through extended discussions and negotiations with his collaborators to develop rules for games that would be 'performed' in theatre situations. This work exists as much through the decision-making processes that (continue to) generate it, through their manifestation as performance event(s) and through the potential for the work's reactivation by others through the 'general rules score' - a set of processual instructions which Le Roy has made available for others to use. Through a reflection on my approach to reactivating *Project,* the paper examines how each of these modes generates

processes or acts of decision-making as the event(s) of the work. I suggest that two projects discussed activate different, and differently, particular *processes of thinking* which, rather than representing pre-existing worlds, bring worlds into being.

Jones, Simon / *Impossible Collaboration: Performances Thinking Inbetween*

This paper will use examples from recent performance to explore how collaborations across media, across expertises and between auditor-spectators and performers produce a kind of *thinking inbetween* which can only be directly experienced in the event; and it is this inbetweeness that is performance's essential contribution to philosophy. Returning to Heidegger's definition of the artwork as a preserving outstanding standing within, by way of both Levinas' encountering the Other in the face-to-face and Deleuze's description of art as realizing sensation, the paper will consider three works, each with a specific collaborative relation across visual media: *Void Story* (2011), Forced Entertainment's combining of graphic novel and radio play; *Kellerman* (2008), Imitating the Dog's cine-theatre piece; and *Model Love* (2008), Bodies in Flight's theatre and installation work focusing on the relation between performance and photography. The paper will suggest that the disclosing and realizing of inbetweeness is performance's unique contribution to thinking, occasioned by its setting forth a relation between performer and participant outside of the everyday: indeed, the between between performer and auditor-spectator participant is posited as standing in for all other betweens, including the technological; hence the paper proposes that performance is the art form *sine qua non – the* art form of all art forms.

Kirkkopelto, Esa / *An actor never deals with elements smaller than a world*

Good acting provokes thoughts. But what kind of thoughts are they? And who actually thinks when we, the spectators, watch a performance? Whose thoughts are we thinking – those of the actor, those of the playwright, those of the director or, or perhaps, those of our own? As I am going to argue in this presentation, in a performance the question of thinking is first and foremost a power issue. The one who thinks has the power. And changes in power entail changes in performance practices, in their aesthetics and ethics. For the same reason, the very procedures of thinking, the *scenic logic*, are highly dependent on the choices made on the practical level.

While thinking, we always deal with symbolic elements (representations, images, signs, phenomena). They are connected by means of certain rules in order to achieve results, which, in the beginning, are unknown to us. The elements, the rules, as well as the results, vary according to the activity and its specific mode of thought. The idea of the intellectual content of a theatrical performance stems from Aristotle, for whom the primary aim of a tragic poem was to produce "thinking" (*mathesis*). The thoughtful content of a performance was supposed base on the dramaturgical composition – "arrangement of facts" (*systasis tôn pragmatôn*) – graspable to our practical intellect (*phronesis*). At the beginning of the 19th Century, German poet and philosopher Friedrich Hölderlin took this Aristotelian conception into serious reconsideration. In his *Remarks on Antigone,* Hölderlin presented a distinction between a "philosophical logic" and a "poetic" one. In philosophical constructions, the

elements consist of relatively dependent conceptual "organs" (*Glieder*), which together create an organic whole. The elements of a poetical composition, however, function as "more independent parts" (*selbstständigere Theile*) whose "connections" (*Zusammenhänge*) remain necessarily looser, freer and ambiguous: rhythmic. Hölderlin applied this idea to the analysis of the Sophoclean tragedy in which these parts can be conceived as "struggling bodies", connected by actions, words and orders.

This Hölderlinian insight creates a link between poetic and scenic composition. This can be of greater use today, as we try to understand and redefine the role of the *actor* in contemporary performance. The actor forms an obstacle to the idea of the equality of all the *scenic elements*, which is so crucial for the logic of the "post-dramatic" composition. Human body, with its desires and resistances, does not automatically turn into compositional "material" – at the disposal of an external author, the theatre director. The recent attempts at "actor dramaturgy" have intended to resolve this problem, both ethically and aesthetically. However, what lies at the core of the problem, is the question of the *logic of acting*. It cannot be reduced to a mere "stylistic", "technical" or "cognitive" issue. Our practical understanding of the scenic element–of its behaviour, and how the *equalisation* between different elements takes place in various scenic contexts – depends on our way of thinking *how the actor thinks*. The fact that we usually do not even care about these questions only reveals the historical gap that still exists between our ideas and practices. This gap is the site of the power struggle, splitting the actor's body and the stage.

The ideas presented in this lecture result from the actor pedagogical research project "Actor´s Art in Modern Times", carried out at the Theatre Academy Helsinki in 2008 – 2011.

Lagaay, Alice / *Secrecy vs. Revelation: Reflections on the Dramatics of the Hidden in Performance and Philosophy*

"Truth is not a matter of exposure which destroys the secret, but a revelation which does justice to it. "
W. Benjamin. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*

My paper will revisit the relationship between performance and philosophy by means of a reflection on the relationship between *theatre* and *theory* as implied by their shared relation to *theoria* – the act by which something is brought to light, or *revealed in its truth*, by contemplation. Whilst there is clearly something implicitly dramatic about the very notion - and phenomenon - of revelation, my enquiry will focus here less on the role of that which is shown or reveals itself, than on the hidden or withheld, the untold, unsayable or unshowable both in terms of the relevance thereof to philosophic enquiry as well as with regard to the implicitly dramatic and performative potential of the 'secret'. A driving question here is: What - or how - does the secret show?

Drawing on explorations of secrecy by Michael Taussig, Pierre Boutang and Jacques Derrida, my talk will begin by distinguishing various pragmatic dimensions or modes

of secrecy as they apply, albeit in different ways, to both performance and philosophy. These include that which is intentionally or strategically – and often skilfully – withheld or obscured (e.g. 'masked' in order not to spoil the 'show' or give away an argument) as well as that which implicitly or structurally remains hidden (e.g. background knowledge or know-how). Various yet interconnected phenomena will be explored ranging from the purely unsaid to the magically mysterious. Touching upon a paradoxical logic proper to secrecy, by which the secret must reveal itself in order to remain hidden, in sum my talk will outline a certain productive – and indeed dramatic – dynamics belonging to the hidden side of theory.

Levin, David / *Choreographing Opera: How Ballet ReThinks Operatic Performance*

tbc

Levy, Shimon / Chaos, Offstage and Self-Reference: Notes towards a (new) Methodology of Performance

In this paper I argue that critical concepts used in the interpretation of theatre performances should emanate from the experience of the performance rather than be imposed, ready-made, from the (philosophical) outside. Thus, I oppose theatricality to theoretical extrapolations on the written as well as the directed stage-text. Relying on my experience as a stage director, translator and theoretician, I propose three determining factors in the constitution of dramatic/theatrical texts: self-reference, chaos and off-stage. In many, if not most studies of drama and much too many performance analyses, "a philosophy" has been superimposed on the event in an attempt to prove that the work behaves in accordance with, or at least follows, some main notions of "the philosophy".

Whereas some works may gain in clarity by the intervention of an external theory, literary or philosophical, theatre, since initially intended for performance, is by its very nature less receptive to non-medium oriented notions of interpretation, because performance, first and foremost, exposes practical and experiential rather than theoretical factors. In the following notes I therefore contend that theatre performances are better explored with the help of interpretative notions ensuing from the particular performance factors of the piece itself.

I rely, as an example, on what for me at least, but also for many other Samuel Beckett directors, proved to be the playwright's superb sensitivity, originality and profound understanding of "theatricality".

Whereas many of Beckett's philosophical critics prefer to avoid his stage instructions, Xerxes Mehta, director and theoretician in the "practical" sense of having experienced the subject of his theatrical enquiries, says that in Beckett's plays "stage directions, which solicit the images, *are* the play."

The reasons for this are both practical and theoretical. My way to understanding Beckett's plays has been paved, first of all, through translating all of them into Hebrew, thus forcing myself to touch each and every word while rendering them into a language for which I relatively rarely need a dictionary. I still am pleasantly

surprised to realize to what degree and how exquisitely Beckett inserted stylistic, thematic and "medium-oriented" fractals, dramatic and theatrical seeds that developed and transformed in many of his plays. The three main notions I shall address are *self-reference*, chaos-oriented theories and *offstage*. They ensue from the works rather than being imposed on them. I a way, they are "organic" philosophy.

May, Shaun / *Mental Predicates and Intelligent Performance: The Ontological Primacy of Know-How and its Implications*

In this paper, I want to draw on the work of Ryle, Dreyfus and Heidegger in order to elucidate what precisely it means for one to 'perform intelligently'. According to Ryle, the 'prevailing doctrine' which has riddled the intellectual tradition from Plato onwards holds that this entails both action and theorising. I.e. that action on its own is never sufficient to be considered 'intelligent'. Although articulated prior to the birth of Practice-as-Research, this resonates with contemporary PaR research programmes which specify that practice needs to be accompanied by theoretical writing in order to be equivalent to a 'conventional thesis'. Both Ryle and Heidegger positioned themselves against this doctrine and asserted that know-how was more fundamental than know-that, a position which I will attempt to defend in this paper.

In my view, whilst the primacy given to know-that in the intellectual tradition was tenable as a faith position until fairly recently, the failure of artificial intelligence projects attempting to simulate human understanding suggests that Ryle and Heidegger were correct. Using

Hubert Dreyfus' influential critique of AI in his book *What Computers Can't Do,* I will argue that there is now a strong empirical case for the primacy of know-how. Finally, I will conclude this essay by drawing out what I believe the implications of this are for both Practice-as-Research and 'conventional' research projects.

Minors, Helen Julia / What is Soundpainting and how do we think during performance to create a piece in the moment? This audio-visual presentation will reassess my own practice.

Nauha, Tero / *Life in Bytom: neoliberal contamination, mess and performance*
In a project "Life in Bytom" my starting point is contamination, which in my argument is exercised by neoliberal capitalism with a wide diversity of devices. In this context, what can a performance do? A specific location for this inquiry is Silesian mining town, Bytom, in South-Poland. In past twenty years this area has been transformed from industrial labour to neoliberal capitalism. Instead of perceiving capitalism as functional or rational, I propose to regard it as a mess: *aer* instead of *air*. "Through *Air* everything attains a moderated clarity and normality. […] In contrast, *aer* "belongs to war, the fog of war" writes Reza Negarestani in *Cyclonopedia* (2008, 103). In such a war my aim is to craft a device of practice and theory, which may contest the strategies, which have been adopted in transition to neoliberal capitalism.

What is the relationship between a subject and technical device in the neoliberal context and particularly in the post-industrial context of Poland? I will be collecting material from several workshops organized for a group of people in Bytom. It is a

diverse group of unemployed, self-employed, artists, other professionals or skill-less people. I will be meeting them in several sessions, which will lead into a performance and exhibition in Kronika Centre for Contemporary Art in Bytom, in the mid October. What is the relationship between performance and objects and devices, which are produced during and after the transition to neoliberal capitalism? This is a question which produces material for an event and performance in the gallery. I will use schizoanalysis as a tool to approach affectively such material. Schizoanalysis is a tool of potentiality: it explores a particular mess of capitalism. Contaminated, as such, life is not being restored in this process, but recombined in a way, which probes potentiality and produces agency. Schizoanalysis is a process of becoming, transformation and not change.

Neoliberal capitalism takes advantage of the life itself, writes Paolo Virno in *The Grammar of Multitude* (2004). Conversely, Jon McKenzie reads this change as a turn towards the "society of performance" (McKenzie, *Perform or else,* 2001). In both cases, performance is the key to production, where improvisation and compatibility are some of the most decisive skills in this context. In the "fog of war" these skills become significant in general practice, i.e. in ways how to endure a mess of capitalism. Moreover, it is a particular skill of neoliberalism to represent a mess as lucid as *air.* After crisis, which is being used as a device of reformatting and recombination, all devices, machines and performance practices are either terminated or recycled to fit a new *dispositif.* In the project "Life in Bytom", schizoanalysis is adopted as a device to give expressive articulation for a mess and crisis: the affective side of them. Neoliberal capitalism recombines and contaminates life. This project is probing some potentialities and affective debris, which are left a-signified in life, and eventually produce articulation in theory format and in performance practice.

New, Sophia & Zacharias, Siegmar / *thinking together – invasive hospitality*

Sophia New and Siegmar Zacharias have been teaching together Performance and live art for 3 years. Through being constantly in dialogue whilst teaching they have developed a pragmatic method of thinking together as a form of hospitality. We understand hospitality as a paradoxical activity of generosity and endangerment towards each other. This refers to the Derridean idea of hospitality as a way of allowing oneself to become estranged by receiving the stranger into one's own home and the problematic power relationships which thereby occur, what we however propose is that strategies of performance intrinsically produce these paradoxical relations and thus allow the reflection of philosophical theories to simultaneously be developed and destabilized. In this way hospitality is a gesture of opening up a structure of thought and artistic practice, and letting it be endangered by the presence and contribution of the other.

Richards, Tom / *Non-performance of philosophy, non-philosophy of performance: what is François Laruelle's non-philosophy and what does it have to offer performance studies?*

What is non-philosophy? Described by Deleuze and Guattari in a footnote to their final work as "one of the most interesting undertakings of contemporary philosophy",

Laruelle's 'non-' suspends philosophy to develop a 'materialism of the form of thought'; a science of what philosophy is that considers it as one among many equal kinds of thinking. Laruelle specifically states that philosophers cannot understand non-philosophy as they are too committed to the self-sufficiency philosophy aims at. Non-philosophy's natural constituency is the performance studies community for whom it should be intuitive, familiar as performance scholars are with the idea of practice as being of equivalent value to research. Unlike philosophy, non-philosophy thinks from an axiomatic real and uses as its basic terms an immanent performativity of thought; it is a theory seemingly akin to philosophy but always stemming from the concept of performance. Ultimately, Laruelle's 'non-philosophy' represents a performative definition of performance in the idiom of philosophy. During the same 40 years in which performance studies has come to be what it is today, in Laruelle's writing the concept of performativity has slowly broken its way out of the language of philosophy, twisting this scenario to its own ends to become 'non-philosophy'; in other words, performance.

Non-philosophy sets itself up against (but not really as much against as before) "what François Laruelle identifies as the core invariant of Occidental philosophy, the coincidentiaoppositorum, or unity of opposites"[Rocco Gangle]. When performance studies constructs and debates, for example, an opposition between thinking and doing, it is attempting to fit into these structures. However, practice-as-research as a formulation radically troubles this 'core invariant' and functions as an instance of non-philosophy. The second section of this paper draws the link between Laruelle's 'non-philosophy' and performance studies. I try to move away from the terminology of non-philosophy in order to avoid overcoded philosophical language and take the concept out of a direct relation to philosophy, in which Laruelle unavoidably situates it. Using the language of performance studies and considering the parallel development of performance studies and non-philosophy from the same root in Austin's definition of 'performativity', I investigate what non-philosophy as an idea has to offer performance studies as a discipline, arguing that the agency of this newly articulated concept for performance studies is in offering us a new way to think our relationship to philosophy; how we use philosophy to talk about performance, what happens when we do this, and what happens when we try to embody philosophical ideas in our performances. Furthermore, if we take Laruelle's idea to its (non-)logical conclusion; that is, read it in the same way he reads philosophy and accept that we proceed from its axiomatic basis rather than trying to push his ideas further by setting up transcendental a priori from which to look back at our work (in the manner of the philosophers he criticizes as attempting, for example, to be "more Kantian than Kant, more Spinozist than Spinoza"), we find ourselves at the immanent reality of his concept; the basis of all thought in an imminent performative Real. We need not talk of philosophy of performance or even 'performance & philosophy'; we can simply talk of performance studies and acknowledge that we are already doing the work Laruelle predicts, a statement absolutely unproblematic for non-philosophy.

Sachsenmaier, Stefanie / *On 'thinking' and 'not-thinking' in performance-making: a cross-cultural philosophical investigation*

This paper will discuss processes of performance-making, with a particular focus on the aspects of 'time' and 'duration' in creative processes that work towards a logic of 'discovery', rather than through a method pre-planning.

The present enquiry establishes the necessity for a process-sensitive approach to a theorisation of contemporary 'devised', 'experimental' or 'other-than text-based' performance-making. The project specifically engages with the problematics of an analytical approach to a theorisation of 'creative processes', with the aim of identifying 'points of focus' that might contribute to an understanding of the creative practice of devising in process-specific terms. It draws on theoretical models borrowed from both the disciplines of 'process philosophy' and 'practice theory', in order to establish a practice-philosophical model of performance-making.

Process-specific issues such as 'time', 'duration', 'creation', 'spontaneity' and 'novelty' will be discussed, drawing both on Western as well as Eastern philosophical writing. Philosophers such as Henri Bergson, François Lyotard and Brian Massumi are exemplary of the writing drawn from the Western range, whereas Ancient Chinese concepts drawn from Taoist writings by figures such as Lao Tse are representative of the philosophical concepts applied from Eastern philosophy.

Asking what sort of 'thinking' and states of 'not-thinking' might be at stake in a practice that seeks to actively avoid a pre-planning of performance material, I will draw on my experience and observation of a range of performance-making processes, such as choreographer Rosemary Butcher's 2010 reinvention of Allan Kaprow's *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* as well as the choreographic residency and research project Artscross, in which Taiwanese, Chinese and British choreographers worked towards dance pieces with dancers from a range of cultural backgrounds.

As part of the Artscross event I observed a variety of choreography-making processes, which seemed to 'function' in different terms. While some choreographers approached rehearsals with a clear sense of the aesthetics and the choreography itself already 'thought out' by the choreographer, others worked according to a logic of 'discovery', in which the actual choreographic material only emerged in rehearsals. In the former processes the emphasis of the dancers seemed in my view to be on 'interpretation', whereas in the latter processes, similarly to Butchers reinvention of *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, the dancers were drawn on as 'creators' of actual choreographic material.

Saffrey, Charlie / *Thinking in the stand-up comedy club: deindividuation or the leadership of anarchy?*

How can we best explain the political psychology of a stand-up comedy performance? A good stand-up comedian must clearly appear to be at least 'leading' the thoughts of the persons present in the room, and the shared laughter of an engaged audience would appear to suggest that some kind of intersubjective deindividuation is going on amongst audience members: the shared laugh creates moments in which (in Schopenhauer's terms) the *principium individuation* is broken and the audience become an entity which thinks together. However, at the same time, stand-up is unique amongst all the performance arts insofar as the extent to

which dissent is possible and individual audience members can contribute to the directions such thinking takes. A heckle, a response, or even a look from an audience member can change the mood of the performance, the material the stand-up chooses, and even – in some cases – change the thinking of the room to the extent that it brings the performance to an end. It appears, then, that the stand-up comedy club is an environment where, even though no *legal*power-structure exists, a constantly shifting power-structure nevertheless emerges which is characterised by the potential for sudden swings between collective thought and individualist thought. In this paper, therefore, I will make several somewhat heterodox claims. In particular, I will draw on the recent work of Jacques Ranciere to argue that stand-up comedy is not as individualistic in its form as it may appear. The fact that there is generally only a single performer onstage at any given time does not necessarily mean that only one person creates the show, and the acts of creative thought involved are in fact often a collaboration between the performer and the audience. I will finish with a few comments suggesting that if good stand-up comedy is indeed such a collaboration then it may provide a model of social psychology that might even be applied normatively to wider political life in democratic.

Schmidt, Theron / *The state of images*

In *The Future of the Image* (2007), Jacques Rancière asks, 'Under what conditions might it be said that certain events cannot be represented? Under what conditions can an unrepresentable phenomenon of this kind be given a specific conceptual shape?' Rancière is here trying to connect world-historical problems – primarily the Shoah – with an aesthetics of the sublime as developed in other contexts. But his questions also suggest a distinction, as well as a continuity, between representational objects and the durational activity of 'giving shape'. This lecture-performance seeks to prolong this moment of giving shape, that in-between state in which an image is not yet a representation, though it will eventually be one.

Schramm, Helmar / Houses, Towers, Islands: *On Notable Spaces in Philosophy and Performance*
The British sculptor and installation artist Mike Nelson is known internationally for his dark and provocative installation works in which he creates strange and frequently uncanny worlds that often contain narrative elements. In 2011, in the British Pavilion of the 54th Venice Biennale, he presented a labyrinthine space that was as unsettling as it was thought provoking, and which should here form the starting point for a consideration of the important role of the "house" in the history of philosophy.

On his utopian island New Atlantis, Francis Bacon includes an experimental house of deceits. In Leibniz, the idea of the "windowless monad" forms the philosophical key to his utopia of the best of all possible worlds in which the negative, evil, ugly, fortuitous, inexplicable are suspended in the teleological *theatrum mundi* of a pre-established harmony. And Immanuel Kant remarked that human reason "so delights in building that it has several times built up a tower and then razed it to see how the foundation was laid". Right up to the present, the spatial configurations of houses, towers and islands have repeatedly acquired key positions in philosophical discourse.

Precisely against the background of a history of knowledge, it becomes clear that we currently find ourselves in a situation in which a thorough rereading and reconsideration of Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* seem advisable. In this context the interplay of performance and philosophy also acquires an important role.

Schroeder, Franziska / *Network[ed] Listening – towards a de-centering of beings*

This presentation ties in with your conference's theme of "how performance thinks", specifically as this paper was born out of a 'practice-as-research' context.

In this paper I question modes of listening; specifically I draw on my experience as a performer listening in network environments. The paper is an extension to a text developed in 2009 (Schroeder 2009), and constitutes one specific way of defining a mode of listening as seen by one performer with one specific instrument playing a certain type of music. It must be understood as a culturally variable listening that Paul Carter has described as a listening "subject to the prevailing ideologies and power relations of a given place at a given time" (in VeitErlmann, 2004, p.3).

Listening is understood as an embodied mode, shaped by socio-political and cultural concerns, and I will touch upon writings that address listening in such a corporeal light (Born, 2010 and Voegelin, 2010).

This phenomenologically-oriented standpoint allows me to abstains from an objective apprehension of the environment to which one listens, and thus acknowledges that everybody hears and listens differently, and that indeed being in a place (such as the network) already constitutes a subjective interference, a type of 'editing' of place. Listening in/to the network sheds light on how such environment can make us question our fundamental position in the world and our position to each other. Listening in/to the network as a performer has highlighted how the network makes one listen to oneself, which in turn has repercussions for re-thinking our relation to others. The network reveals various differences between the 'here' and 'there', between the 'self' and the 'other', between 'listening' and 'being listened to'.

I draw on theoretical discourses by writers in the fields of music anthropology (Born, 2010), media theory (McLuhan, 2006), music psychology (Clarke, 2005), composition (Schaeffer, 2006, Atkinson, 2007), and the writings by performers, such as Pauline Oliveros (2005, 2006). I look at how the composition and distribution of music inevitably question our modes of listening, an argument that will be extended by examining the writings of Theodor Adorno (1941, 1969) for example.
Listening in the network, or what I also term network[ed] listening, can be seen as an activity and an interactivity that not only shapes our perception of a musical work but, ultimately, performers as listening subjects themselves. Network[ed] listening requires the performer to engage in what I elsewhere call a "sonic flânerie" (Schroeder, 2009), a permanent move between haptic and optic listening, enticing the ear to be constantly zooming in an out of different nodes, acoustic sites and sounds.

Listening in the network exposes the body of the performer as particularly vulnerable and fragile. The fragility of the performative body will be examined by drawing

parallels to the Japanese art form Butoh (Kasai, 1999, 2000, 2003 and Kuniyoshi, 1991, 2004).

I will argue that network[ed] listening is an ideal corporeal state for rethinking linear conceptions of the other and a subject's own relation with her world, and that network[ed] listening posits listening as a corporeal and multi-dimensional experience that is continuously being re-shaped by technological, socio-political and cultural concerns.

Soloyeva, Julie / *RSVP Editions* – Paper and Virtual Performance Project

My project aims to examine the significance of language in the discourse of live art practice, and to trace the history of the relationship between image, word, and movement in teleological and aesthetic realms. I plan to address the specific practices of Tino Sehgal, Xavier Le Roy, Eszter Salamon, and La Ribot as instrumental for experimentation with speech, communication, written word, performance, dance and situation.

I would like to treat the notion of interruption, particularly in the context of laboratory simulating practices of Le Roy and Sehgal as an instrumental strategy in knowledge production. These artists use workshops, lectures, conferences and otherwise rehearsed as well as spontaneous encounters to bring together participants, initiate linguistic and movement games for set durational periods, recycle and augmenting game structures for the purposes of generating individual reactions and stimulate collective response. While La Ribot and Salamon implement visual, linguistic, and dramaturgical cues in their highly choreographed performances to interrupt the progression of choreography itself as well as to disturb the *gestault* of audience experience.

Furthermore, I propose a part of the project to take place in virtual space, namely in a form of a performance game called *RSVP Editions*. A website that will serve as the arena and vessel where presence and interchange will mark the conceptual potential of blending exhibition making and performance. *Editions* will engage a variety of 'bodies' such as artists, dancers, theater professionals, performance and art critics, philosophers, historians and theorists who concern themselves with production, exhibition and critique of live art in concrete and real time. The paper and online component will investigate live, virtual and historical participatory experiences that constitute research as practice.

Given a task of collecting and selecting work that exists only in digital form, each body will perform a role of mediating his or her own presence though an abstract fragmentation of ideas. This agent will deposit gathered media into an online folder, which will in turn become accessible to the public and another body of a cultural producer who will attempt to devise a fictive account of an exhibition based on the material available in the folder. The game that is generated is a meditation on creative and fictional knowledge, collaborative, yet generated individually and virtually. Editions demands each body to assume its own position in carrying out an immaterial endeavor, conceptually vesting an effort to embody curatorial practice out of the public eye, thus resisting early performative trope of presence and

embodiment in a way. Instead, the active body will appear in linguistic and spectral media form, suggestive of the gestures beyond and linking visual world with the world of linguistic signs – textual or speech acts. I hope that How Performance Thinks Conference will serve as a starting point of this yearlong project, actively engaging conference speakers and audiences as participants.

The process of gathering material and analyzing it should also be emphasized and analyzed with the system of virtual exchange that *RSVP Editions* would generate. The participants would be encouraged to draw particular attention to the semiotic economy of virtually generated, found, or existing content and the living economy, or the "living currency" to borrow Pierre Klossowski's term, that one's body must enter to take part in this project. The living currency here refers here to the physical, embodied presense of each participant in his/her own space, virtual unknown to the other but potentially mediated in the virtual as well as the immaterial labor contributed by each individual. Thus the web will act as a virtual laboratory for the critical imaginary to enact and reflect on the physical processes and conditions of performing a role of artist, curator, or story-teller conceiving exhibitions in private for a unique recipient, similar to mail art, but with potential for larger and infinite audience.

I am currently working on developing the online platform for this and it should be ready by April with a presentation of the first "Edition" prepared by myself in collaboration with Malgorzata Misniakiewicz, a writer and research of Mail Art and unofficial artistic networks that emerged between South American and Eastern European in the post-war context.

Wakefield, Nik / 'How Long a Thing Takes: an invitation to think duration'

Presentation - 'Time-specificity'
Abstract - Time-specificity describes the relationship between performance and time through adapting the model of site-specificity onto the temporal framework of Bergsonian duration. Arguing that theatre thinks in duration, time-specificity advocates the incorporation of a living, indeterministic temporality into a contemporary understanding of performance. To find how time-specificity emerges I identify temporal parallels between my own practice, Bergsonism and elements from the work of John Cage, Vito Acconci, Tehching Hsieh and Christian Marclay.

Performance - 'How Long a Thing Takes: an invitation to think duration'
Description - This performance aims to, after Deleuze, 'render time sensible'. But the kind of time it seeks to manifest is Bergsonian *durée* (duration). The performance becomes a kind of alternative 'clock', through performing durée from the body and with the body as a clock performs clock time. This showing of practice based research is part of a larger project on time-specificity and is therefore related to the paper presented at this conference on that subject.

Walker, Jessica / *Total Practice: putting the professional into practice-led performance research*

Singer and writer Jessica Walker looks at a professional framework for practice-led performance research, with her circular model of total practice, which combines the practical elements of making work to earn a living, with critical reflection on the practice itself. Through analysis of the production process of her last solo show, The Girl I Left Behind Me – commissioned by Opera North in 2010 and still touring internationally– this presentation will describe and unpick the first revolution of the total practice cycle, from pitch to performance and beyond.

Wikstrom, Josefine / *Performance as Labour: Where thought and action meet*

Within the context of the visual arts, theatre and dance, performance has historically functioned as a privileged site for experimentation between artistic disciplines and for breaking down already existing categories within art. From the early-avant garde movements, through the 1960s and up until today, various forms of performance practices have therefore been characterised with *open-ended*, often *action based* activities conceived as *ends in themselves*. Within these practices little or no priority has been given to a final product, instead the focus has been on the *process* and *continuous movement* of the explorations.

In this presentation I am suggesting, that in order to understand performance within the history of visual arts, theatre and dance, we must consider this specific form of activity, or labour, that performance proposes. What is *specific* to the practice and labour of performance that distinguishes it from other artistic disciplines and practices? How is it characterised and how does it correspond to the concept of 'praxis' in Western thought? And what are its implications in relation to advanced capitalist forms of labour, which are also characterised as on-going activities without any finished products?

Biographies

Bernadette Anzengruber, born in 1980, lives and works in Vienna; studied at the Academy of fine Arts Vienna, the University of Greenwich and Kingston University London; works in the fields of performance, video, installation and text shown at (selection): *Philosophy on Stage*, Wittgenstein House (Vienna); *rules of play*, Tin Sheds Gallery (Sydney); *FEMINA International Women's Film Festival* (Rio de Janeiro); *identities - QUEER FILM FESTIVAL* (Vienna); *DotDotDashDot:Queer*, Toynbee Studios (London); *Nashville Film Festival* (Nashville); *zinegoak 2011* (Bilbao); *Triennale Linz 1.0*, Lentos Kunstmuseum (Linz); *Marfa Film Festival* (Marfa); *Diagonale* (Graz); *13 Lessons in Performance Art* (Vienna); *SWANHOTEL*, brut Wien (Vienna); *WUNDERKAMMER*, Die Färberei (Munich); *Sense and Sentiment. Mistakes are closely followed by Effects*, Augarten Contemporary (Vienna). Awards: Birgit Jürgenssen Award, Organizers Award for *just a meaning that you attribute to it* at the International Video Festival Bochum.

Peter M. Boenisch, originally from Munich/Germany, is Director of the European Theatre Research Network (ETRN) at the University of Kent. His research interests are in theatre directing and dramaturgy, dance, intermediality, and the aesthetic politics of theatre. Recent publications discussed the works of Thomas Ostermeier, Frank Castorf, Jan Fabre, Michael Thalheimer, Guy Cassiers, Rimini Protokoll, and William Forsythe. He co-edited, with Lourdes Orozco, the *CTR* special issue "Border Crossings: Contemporary Flemish Theatre", and currently writes on his *monograph Regie: Directing Scenes & Senses in European Theatre.*

Simon Bowes is senior lecturer at Glyndwr University.

Gabriella Calchi-Novati, received a B.A. *magna cum laude* in Letters and Philosophy and an M.A. with honours in Public Relations and Corporate Communication from Universita' Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. She also received an M.Phil. in Irish Drama and Film from the Drama Department, Trinity College Dublin, where she lectures in Performance Studies and Critical Theory. While her work on contemporary theatre has been published in international journals such as *Theatre Research International* and *AboutPerformance*; her more recent work on the interconnections between "biopolitics and performance" has appeared in academic publications such as *Performance Research*, *Performance Paradigm*, *Cinema: Journal of Philosophy and the Moving Image* and *Cinemascope-Independent Film Journal*; as well as in edited collections. Recipient of the prestigious *Samuel Beckett Scholarship* (2010-2011), awarded by Trinity College Dublin in conjunction with the Irish Government Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Calchi-Novati has recently completed her Ph.D. research entitled *Performativities of Intimacy in the Age of Biopolitics.*

Ko-Le Chen is the associate researcher of this project. She is also a video maker based in Culture Lab, Newcastle University.

Broderick Chow is a lecturer in Theatre and Modern Drama Studies in the School of Arts at Brunel University, London. He is also a performer, stand-up comic, and trainee professional wrestler. He is one half of *The Dangerologists* with Tom Wells, a

physical and dance theatre duo who explore labour, masculinity and violence. Broderick's research centres around the popular performance as political intervention. He has written on stand-up and comedy based performance art, parkour (free-running), professional wrestling, musical theatre and theatrical protest movements. In 2010 Broderick became the first doctoral graduate of the Central School of Speech & Drama, University of London.

Noyale Colin is a dancer/choreographer, exploring notion of time and memory in the form of solo or collaborative work. She trained in contemporary dance at national superior conservatoires in France and at the Martha Graham Dance School in New York. She then specialized in somatic and choreographic practices including a practical study of the work of Trisha Brown. She co-founded Imago Mundi, a collaborative cross art platform. In 2009 she received a research Studentship in Performing Arts at Middlesex University where she is currently leading a doctoral inquiry into collaborative practices in contemporary performing making.

Elena Cologni's work is mainly live, installation and performance grounded in conceptual art, and its tangible translations/manifestations. Cologni has a PhD from the University of the Arts London, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, with the thesis: *The Artist's Performative Practice within the Anti-Ocularcentric Discourse*. Her post doc project *Present Memory and Liveness in delivery and reception of video documentation during performance art events'*, received an AHRC Grant (2004-2006). In the outcome Mnemonic Present, Un-Folding series of 2005-2006, the use of 'live-recording' and 'prerecording' opened up questions on the involvement of the audience and their perception of what is present and represented, generating a form of 'mnemonic present' (also with the use of the time gap in live projections). She was Research Fellow at York Saint John University during which time she developed the project Experiential (Re-Moved 2008, CCA, Gi08 and Geomemos, Yorkshire Sculpture Park 2009), when site specificity and notions of memory as archival and removal in trying to enhance the audience's and her own experience of the self in any given moment. She is particularly active in the discussion on Research as Practice, and she contributes with her expertise to the Cambridge University, Faculty of Education, Mphil Arts course since 2008.

Augusto Corrieri is a performance artist and writer.
His performance works investigate the theatrical apparatus through playful deconstructions and reversals. He has shown work in theatres and galleries in the UK and Europe. Augusto is currently in the last year of a PhD writing project at University of Roehampton, within the context of the *Performance Matters* research project.

Tess Denman-Cleaver is the artistic director of Tender Buttons, a theatre company based in Newcastle Upon Tyne.

Jennifer Duffy is a performance maker and writer, festival coordinator for the Higher Education strand of Gateshead International Festival of Theatre (GIFT) and a post graduate student, currently undertaking a practice-led Arts MRes at Northumbria University. Her research explores the development of

audience/performer relationships and utilisations of audience participation in contemporary performance practice.

João Florencio is based at Goldsmiths University in London.

Moritz Gansen is currently a postgraduate student in philosophy at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, Kingston University, and at the Free University of Berlin. He holds an MA in Critical and Creative Analysis from Goldsmiths, University of London, as well as a BA in English and American Studies and Philosophy from the University of Freiburg, where he has also worked and taught. Moritz's ongoing research projects revolve around the problematic knot of art, politics, and philosophy on the one hand, and metaphysical questions especially in German Idealism and contemporary French philosophies on the other. Besides his academic work, he has collaborated with different artists in both Germany and the UK and has occasionally worked for Freiburg Theatre.

Kelina Gotman is a Lecturer in Theatre and Performance Studies in the Department of English Language and Literature at King's College London, and Convenor of the MA in Theatre and Performance Studies. She received her PhD in Theatre from Columbia University, and her BA in History from Brown University, and has taught critical and cultural theory, writing, literature and performance at Columbia University, Bard College and The New School. She is translator of Félix Guattari's The Anti-Oedipus Papers (Semiotext(e)/MIT Press, 2006), and author of "The Neural Metaphor," forthcoming in The Neuroturn: Transdisciplinarity in the Age of the Brain (University of Michigan Press, 2012), and articles, reviews and translations in journals including Parachute Contemporary Art Magazine, TDR, Conversations across the Field of Dance Studies, Theatre Journal and PAJ. She is currently the recipient of a Jerwood Charitable Foundation Blue Touch Paper award to develop an experimental music-theatre work with composer Steve Potter and the London Sinfonietta, to be premiered at the Village Underground in May 2012. She has performed in and/or collaborated on over two dozen theatre and dance productions in the USA, the UK, Canada, France and Belgium, as an actor, dancer, director, choreographer, translator, dramaturg, designer and musician, and is an associated artist of New York City-based dance-theatre company Witness Relocation. She was born in Montréal, and lives in London.

Matthew Goulish co-founded Goat Island in 1987, and Every house has a door in 2008. His 39 Microlectures – in proximity of performance was published by Routledge in 2000, and Small Acts of Repair – Performance, Ecology, and Goat Island, which he co-edited with Stephen Bottoms, in 2007. He was awarded a Lannan Foundation Writers Residency in 2004, and in 2007 he received an honorary Ph.D. from Dartington College of Arts, University of Plymouth. Goulish is Provocations editor for The Drama Review, and he teaches in the MFA and BFA Writing Programs of the The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Michelle Graves (b. 1980) considers herself a text-based interdisciplinary artist drawing inspiration from fields of neuroscience, anatomy, quantum physics, phenomenological and existential philosophy, empiricism and belief systems. The common thread throughout these fields of research is the mysterious. Graves sees

the mysteriousness in death and consciousness, for example, as an opportunity for interpretation and infinitely generative for art making material. Graves received her BFA in Photography from Indiana University Bloomington (2003) where she focused on digital manipulation and video work. She will receive her MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts and Media from Columbia College Chicago in May 2012. She has exhibited her work in Tokyo, New York City, Los Angeles, London (in April, 2012) and extensively in Indiana and the city of Chicago.

Mark Greenwood is a performance artist/ writer originally from Newcastle but now based in Liverpool. He has presented work across the U.K, Europe and the United States as well as curating the RED APE; a performance platform dedicated to the preservation and legacy of provincial performance art practice in the U.K. Utilising indefinite durational practice and minimal actions as art forms, Greenwood's interests lie in anthropomorphic puzzles and inter-textual folds. Mark is currently researching a PhD in Fine Art at Kingston University, London.

Rebecca Groves is a PhD candidate at Stanford University.

Katja Hilevaara is an artist, a teacher and a researcher. She is currently a recipient of a Queen Mary University of London scholarship for her PhD research on performance and memory. She is an Associate Tutor at Goldsmiths University of London and further information and images of her artwork can be found at www.katjahilevaara.com.

Rebecca Hillman is an AHRC funded PhD student in her third year of study, in the University of Reading's department of Film, Theatre and Television. Her PhD in Theatre uses practice as research to inquire into the efficacy of live performance for empowering a contemporary audience around social and political circumstances that are local or otherwise specific to their lives. Her recent practical project *'The Pact'*, and the performance collective *In Good Company* who formed for the project, explored the effects of engaging audiences in rehearsals as well as performances, in deploying diverse theatrical models (practiced by both politically-driven and non-politically driven companies) in the same performance, and in the efficacies for community engagement of rehearsing and performing in places of cultural significance. Rebecca has enjoyed the opportunity to co-organise the University of Reading's annual postgraduate conference *Journeys Across Media*, and to co-found and co-edit the *Journeys Across Media* Annual Special Issue Series in the *Journal of Media Practice*. She has teaches undergraduate students on the course 'Introduction to Theatre Studies', and has lectured on Naturalism, Ideology, and Practice-as-Research. She has also taught practice as research to postgraduate students. She has presented her work at a number of international conferences, most recently on the themes 're-source' and 'failure' at TaPRA 2011.

Lin Hixson co-founded Goat Island in 1987, and Every house has a door in 2008. She is full Professor of Performance at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and received an honorary doctorate from Dartington College in 2007. Goat Island created nine performance works and toured extensively in the US, England, Scotland, Wales, Belgium, Switzerland, Croatia, Germany, and Canada. Her writing on directing and performance has been published in the journals P-Form, TDR,

Frakcija, Performance Research, Women and Performance, and Whitewalls; and included in the anthologies Small Acts of Repair – Performance, Ecology, and Goat Island, Live Art and Performance, Theatre in Crisis?, and the textbook Place and Placelessness in Performance. Hixson has directed two films, Daynightly They re-school you The Bears-Polka and It's Aching Like Birds, in collaboration with the artist Lucy Cash and Goat Island.

Joa Hug studied History, Political Science and Sociology at the Universities of Freiburg and Oregon/Eugene (US), and Choreography at the *School for New Dance Development* in Amsterdam. He worked as independent dancer with *Body Weather Amsterdam* a. o. and completed his M. A. on *Artistic Research* at the University of Amsterdam (2009). Based in Berlin, he currently follows the artistic doctoral research programme at the Theatre Academy Helsinki.

Stefanie Husel is a PhD student, supervised by Prof Hans-Thies Lehmann (Theatre Studies, Goethe University, Frankfurt/Main) and Prof Stefan Hirschauer (Sociology, Gutenberg University, Mainz). In her doctoral thesis she is analysing the situations provided by post-dramatic performances; subject of her investigation are Forced Entertainments plays Bloody Mess and The World in Pictures. Stefanie worked in different theatre professions, including as sound-and-light technician, dramaturge and festival producer; she has been assisting Forced Entertainment and visited the group as a participant observer regularly since 2003.

Rosanna Irvine is a choreographer working with performance, digital media and language practices often in collaboration with others. She is the recipient of an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award with Dance4 (producer of Nottdance Festival) and University of Northampton in a practice-as-research project through her own practice and in relations with the Nottdance archive. The title of her developing thesis is *Thinking and Presence: towards a non-representational poetics of choreography.* www.rosanna-irvine.co.uk

Simon Jones, Professor of Performance, University of Bristol, is a writer and scholar, founder and co-director of Bodies in Flight, which has to date produced 17 works and numerous documents of performance that have at their heart the encounter between flesh and text, where *words move* and *flesh utters*. He has been visiting scholar at Amsterdam University (2001), a visiting artist at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2002) and Banff Arts Centre (2008). He has published in Contemporary Theatre Review, Entropy Magazine, Liveartmagazine, *Shattered Anatomies*, *The Cambridge History of British Theatre*, Performance Research: *on Beckett*, co-edited *Practice as Research in Performance and Screen* (2009) and his work with Bodies in Flight features in Josephine Machon's *(Syn)aesthetics? Towards a Definition of Visceral Performance* (2009).

Joe Kelleher is professor of theatre and performance at Roehampton University. He is also Head of Department for Drama, Theatre and Performance. His research interests are largely in contemporary theatre and performance. A central concern of his work has been with structures of theatrical persuasion, both within and beyond the professional theatre. Much of his research over the past years has been on European performance, with a special attachment to work being produced in

northern Italy. Joe is currently working on a book, provisionally titled *The Illuminated Theatre. Essays on the Suffering of Images.*

Esa Kirkkopelto (Born in 1965)
2007-2012 Professor of Artistic Research, Vice-Rector, Theatre Academy Helsinki.
2012-2015 Responsible leader of the "Doctoral Programme of Artistic Research" (Theatre Academy Helsinki, Academy of Fine Arts, Sibelius Academy, Aalto University)
2011-2014 Responsible leader of the "Asian Art and Performance Consortium" (Theatre Academy Helsinki & Academy of Fine Arts)
2009-2011 Responsible leader of the "Actor´s Art in Modern Times" research group (Theatre Academy Helsinki, University of Helsinki)
2007-2011 Member of the Steering committee of the "Doctoral School of Music, Theatre and Dance" (Sibelius Academy, University of Helsinki, University of Tampere, Theatre Academy Helsinki)
2009-2012 Member of the "Figures of Touch" research group (Aalto University, Helsinki University, Theatre Academy Helsinki)
2004-2007 Post doctoral position at the department of aesthetics, University of Helsinki.
2002 PhD at Université Marc Bloch (Strasbourg).
Former theatre director and playwright.
Convenor of "Other Spaces" – live art collective (2004–).
Author of « Le théâtre de l´expérience. Contributions à la théorie de la scène » (Presses de l´Univerisité Paris-Sorbonne 2008).

Alice Lagaay, Dr. phil., is a post-doctoral researcher and lecturer at Bremen University. From 2002 to 2011 she was employed at the Collaborative Research Centre "Performing Cultures" at *Freie Universität Berlin* where she completed her doctoral thesis in 2007 with a study of the Philosophy of Voice. Since then her work has focused on the performativity of silence, secrets and *not*-doing as well as on the relationship between performance and philosophy. Recent publications in English include: "Passivity at Work. A Conversation on an Element in the Philosophy of Giorgio Agamben" (with J. Schiffers), in: *Law and Critique* 20.3 (2009), "Towards a (Negative) Philosophy of Voice", in: Lynne Kendrick/David Roesner (eds.), *Theater Noise. The Sound of Performance,* Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, and *Destruction in the Performative* (ed. with M. Lorber), Amsterdam: Rodopi. Alice Lagaay is currently working on an anthology with Laura Cull entitled *Performance and Philosophy.*

David Levin is Professor of Germanic Studies, Cinema and Media Studies, Theater and Performance Studies, at the University of Chicago.

Shimon Levy is a Professor in the theatre department based at Tel Aviv University.

Shaun May background is theatre and philosophy, and throughout his academic career he has tried to bring the two disciplines into fruitful dialogue with each other. He is the Artistic Director of Square Moon Theatre, a company with which he has written and directed several productions. Additionally, he worked with the Rare Theatricall on the final production of their Leverhulme Fellowship at the Royal

Academy of Music and with The Dummy Company on several productions including a residency at Cambridge University. As a producer he specialises in site-specific work, with his credits including Flatpack, an opera in Ikea. Shaun is one of the editors of Rhizome, an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional performance research website, and is a peer-reviewer for Platform, a postgraduate journal based at Royal Holloway. He is the recipient of the Beatrice Lillie Scholarship.

Vida L. Midgelow is Professor in Dance and Choreographic Practices (University of Northampton). She studied dance at The Place and University of Surrey, completing her doctorate in 2003. She has published in various journals and her monograph, published in 2007, was entitled *Reworking the ballet*. Her research led movement works have been presented internationally and her practice focuses upon somatic approaches to improvisation in movement and video installations. Recent works include: *Threshold :Fleshfold, TRACE: playing with/out memory* and currently the accumulative work: *A Date with (my improvisation) Practice* can be viewed at: http://danceimprovisationpractice.blogspot.com. She is also chair of the Standing conference on Dance in Higher Education and co-editor of *Choreographic Practices*.

Helen Julia Minors is a senior lecturer in music at Kingston University where is also acts as associate director for the Practice Research Unit. She has an edited volume, *Music, Text and Translation* (Continuum) and various articles exploring music-dance relationships.

Tero Nauha b. 1970. Performance and visual artist. He is a practice-based research student in the Theatre Academy in Helsinki, in the department of Performance Art and Theory. Research interests are subjectivity and performance in the context of cognitive capitalism. Has been working in the field of performance as solo artist and collaborating with several groups such as Kukkia with Karolina Kucia and Houkka brothers with Juha Valkeaäpää, Pietu Pietiäinen and Kristian Smeds. Founding member of mollecular organization, an interdisciplinary organization, which focuses on the questions of cognitive capitalism.

Sophia New studied Philosophy and Literature with German at Sussex University (1993- 1997) and has an MA in Feminist Performance from Bristol University (1998). She taught Performance Art at Gloucester University between 1999-2001 and then moved to Berlin. She is a co-founder of plan b with Daniel Belasco Rogers and since 2002 they have made over 25 projects for over 25 different cities, festivals, and galleries. Their work is often site specific and often includes sound and video. In 2004 they were artists in residency at Podewil, Berlin. She also has worked as a solo performer and video maker and has had grants from Artsadmin and the Anglo German foundation in London and Isis Arts in Newcastle. She also works as an independent performer and has worked with Antonia Baehr, Penelope Wehrli, Petra Sabish, Gob Squad, and Forced Entertainment. She has taught on performance courses in Gloucester University, Aberystwyth University and Das Arts in Amsterdam, as well as giving a course on Urban Intervention with Daniel Belasco Rogers on the Metropolitian Cultures BA at the Hafen City University in Hamburg. She regularly teaches Live Art and Performance with Siegmar Zacharias at Folkwang Acting school in Essen and Bochum and is currently a Guest lecturer on the MA SODA at the Inter University for Dance, Berlin.

www.planbperformance.net

Tom Richards is an MA theatre and performance student at Kings College London.

Freddie Rokem, author of the prizewinning Performing History: Theatrical Representations of the Past in Contemporary Theatre, is the Emanuel Herzikowitz Professor for 19th and 20th-Century Art at Tel Aviv University.

Stefanie Sachsenmaier works in the performing arts department at Middlesex University.

Charlie Saffrey is an associate tutor and research student in Philosophy at Sussex University.

Elisabeth Schilling is a contemporary dance artist and currently a postgraduate student in performance at London Contemporary Dance School, The Place. Formerly, she studied at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London, and Dr. Hoch's Konservatorium, Frankfurt. As a dancer, Elisabeth has worked with various artists in Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the UK and is presently touring throughout Europe. Her choreographic work is guided by a curiosity about the development of dance as an art form and engages in the performance of constellations of the body, movement, music, and thinking. It has been shown at the Bonnie Bird Theatre, Blackheath Halls, the International String Quartet Festival Greenwich, Teatro Bolzano, and several urban sites around London. Elisabeth received the award for expression and interpretation at the International Dance Competition Bolzano and was, thanks to Gill Clarke, part of the Young Sparks Programme at Dance Umbrella 2011.

Theron Schmidt is a Lecturer in Theatre & Performance Studies at King's College London. His critical writing on live art and performance has appeared in *Contemporary Theatre Review*, *Dance Theatre Journal*, *The Live Art Almanac Vols. 1 and 2*, *Performance Research*, *RealTime*, and *Total Theatre*. He has presented solo and collaborative performance at Artsadmin, Camden People's Theatre, Chelsea Theatre, Chisenhale Dance Space, Nottingham Contemporary, The Place, and the Royal Opera House.

Helmar Schramm is Professor at the Institut für Theaterwissenschaft, at the Freie Universität Berlin.

Franziska Schroeder is a saxophonist and theorist. She was awarded her PhD from the University of Edinburgh in 2006, and has since written for many international journals, including Leonardo, Organised Sound, Performance Research, Cambridge Publishing and Routledge. She has published a book on performance and the threshold and an edited volume on user-generated content. Franziska has performed with many international musicians including Joan La Barbara, Pauline Oliveros, Stelarc, the Avatar Orchestra, and Evan Parker. Franziska has released two CDs on the creative source label, and a recent CD with Slam records. Franziska is on the steering committee for the DRHA (Digital Resources in the Humanities and Arts) conference, for which she was the Program Chair in 2010. She currently is the

Artistic Director for the Sonorities Festival of Contemporary Music, Belfast. Franziska was an AHRC Research Fellow (2007-2009), where she investigated network performance environments, and is currently a Lecturer/RCUK Fellow at the School of Creative Arts, Queen's University Belfast. www.sarc.qub.ac.uk/~fschroeder/

Julie Soloyeva is a graduate student at the The Courtauld Institute of Art.

Jessica Walker is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music. Her opera work includes roles with Opera North, Reis Opera, Glyndebourne, Muziektheater Transparant, The Opera Group. Her 2010 solo show, The Girl I Left Behind Me, commissioned by Opera North and co-devised by her and director Neil Bartlett, has toured extensively, including a residency at the Barbican Pit, and has been invited to the 2013 Brits Off Broadway festival in New York. A CD of Mercy and Grand, taken from her recent tour of Tom Waits songs with Opera North, is released on the GB label in April 2012. Patricia Kirkwood is Angry, her new solo show, will be staged at the Manchester Royal Exchange and the Howard Assembly Room in Autumn 2012. In April 2013 she makes her debut at the Châtelet, Paris, in Sondheim's Sunday in the Park with George. Jessica is a third year PhD candidate at Leeds university, conducting practice-led research into 'The Singer as Creator and Co-collaborator.' She has given papers at two International Song, Stage and Screen conferences, and will present papers at the Guildhall's Reflective Conservatoire conference and the Leeds University opera conference this Spring. Her article, 'The Girl I Left Behind Me': the disjunction between vocal and visual performance in male impersonation, appears in April 2012 Studies in Musical Theatre.

Nik Wakefield is a practice-based theatre researcher from the U.S. He has studied at Boston University, Aberystwyth University and is currently at Royal Holloway, University of London working on time-specificity. He is head of performance and research at Heritage Arts Company.

Josefine Wikström is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy (Kingston University). The title of her thesis is *Performance After Post-Fordism: Towards a Materialist Ontology in Performance* which investigates performance art as a category of labour, departing in Karl Marx's 'Theses on Feuerbach'. Wikström is a freelance critique and writes for Afterall Online Journal among others. She has lectured in London, Stockholm, Bergen and elsewhere, mostly on the topic of labour, advanced capitalism and its relation to performance art practices. She has worked with choreographers such as Marten Spangberg and she is one of the founding members of the performing arts collective INPEX which most recent project is *The Swedish Dance History*.

Siegmar Zacharias (RO/D) is a performance artist. Her works develop formats of theatre-, lecture-, and multimedia-performances and installations, dealing with questions of participation and being together. They are situated between philosophy and sensuality, humour and labour, do-it-yourself low tech and high tech, and have been described as "Visionary. Challenging. Witty". They have been presented nationally and internationally in theatres, galleries, green houses, clubs, festivals, the woods and up in the sky. Newer works are Super!Power! –the Rock Opera (HAU), SWEAT- The Movie (impulstanz), *The Pavilion of Hot Air and Hopes (Festspielhaus*

Hellerau), You & Me together. My first…(STUK, Vooruit, GrandTheater Groningen), fear_lab (Telling Time sophiensaele), zero (Timbuktu), Dracula 89/03 (sophiensaele).

She was part of *International Festival: THE THEATRE, a collaboration between architects and performance artists.* She is a co-founder of SXS Enterprise. She is a co-founder of WOW – 'we work here' which is a Berlin based artists initiative that seeks to highlight research and development as work.

Siegmar studied philosophy and comparative literature in Berlin and London, and performance art at DasArts in Amsterdam.

Teaching activities: concept development, live art, contemporary performance practice: Masters of Choreography, University College of Dance and Circus, Stockholm; Folkwang Hochschule Essen; DasArts Master of Theatre, Amsterdam; MA SODA at the Inter University for Dance Berlin. She also teaches rhetoric within business corporations.

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