

The Body in Twentieth- and Twenty-First Century Performance

Biographies and Abstracts

Alissa Clarke is a lecturer in Drama in the School of Arts at De Montfort University. She holds an AHRC-funded Ph.D. from the University of Exeter. Her research interests include: psychophysical performance and performer training, gender theory and performance practice, and documentation of performance.

‘Laughter and Love: Creative Counter-Discourses within Psychophysical Performer Training’

Strict, silent and solemn atmospheres are frequently demanded in the psychophysical performer training space, with practitioners following Grotowski’s lead and emphasising the need to ‘Leave all giggling, jokes, social chatter... outside the workspace’ (Slowiak and Cuesta 2007: 120). Even where John Britton persuasively argues for the importance of pleasure and fun in the training space, Britton emphasises that ‘this “fun” needs to be intrinsic to the work, not based in the things that surround it (the conversations, socialising, friendships)’ (2010: 47).

However, drawing upon experiences as a participant-observer in Phillip Zarrilli and Sandra Reeve’s trainings, I contend that these private discourses of fun should be viewed and utilised as ‘intrinsic to the work’. Focusing upon the, as yet, unexamined environment of the performer training changing room and other related daily moments and spaces, this argument is rooted in participants’ frequently parodic treatment of the embodied actions, discourses and experiences of the grotesque body stemming from Reeve and Zarrilli’s practices. These discourses produce the means for the participant of jokingly questioning and unwrapping the training processes and their evolving bodymind within them. I argue that these rebellious counter-discourses not only enable the participant’s independent ownership of their training, but develop a powerful alternative form of group awareness. This group awareness strengthens the individual participant’s independence, and creates a deeply useful presence of love and care within the training space.

Mark Crossley is a Senior Lecturer in Drama and Performing Arts at De Montfort University. He is in the final stages of his PHD at The University of Warwick and is exploring the impact of filmic intermediality on teaching and learning within higher education. The key chapters in the study propose a range of new pedagogies drawing upon phenomenological and constructivist conceptions of perception and learning.

‘Can Dogs Speak French? A Pedagogy of Fragility’ attends upon the concepts of *remediation* and *trans-mediation* in the creation of cine-theatrical work and how performance pedagogy may respond to the fluid dialogues present in contemporary intermedial practice. The paper will draw upon a range of theoretical paradigms to reflect on professional practice and consider its implications for performer agency. The work of the Lancaster based company *imitating the dog* offers a central case study to interrogate the challenges of hybridizing media forms and texts within one theatrical spectacle.

Alongside the potentiality of remediation developed by Jay David Bolter & Richard Grusin and transmediation as iterated by Irina Rajewsky, attention will be given to the significance of film theory within the intermedial debate and in particular the conceptions of time and movement as proposed by Gilles Deleuze. His proposition that cinema is not only a specific medium but that

cinematic perception may be seen as our predominant mode of perceiving the world offers a radical means of conceiving what we may have agency over as we witness our *fragile* presence within the world.

Michèle Danjoux is a Principal Lecturer and MA Fashion and Bodywear programme leader at De Montfort University. Her artistic and research interests centre on design through performance and the interactive potentials of wearables in real-time immersive performance contexts. Danjoux is currently undertaking a PhD part-time at London College of Fashion where she is investigating the interrelations of sound, movement, body and garment aesthetics in the generation and exploration of audiophonic or “sounding” garments to be worn in interactive performance contexts. Most recently, she collaborated with musicians and interface designers to create choreosonic wearables for a new performance piece entitled *for the time being*, premiered at Watermans, London in May 2012. Her upcoming co-authored paper “The Sound of Movement Wearables” will be published in the Leonardo Journal of Arts, Sciences and Technology in June 2013. She is co-director of DAP-Lab: <http://people.brunel.ac.uk/dap/dap.html>

‘Wearables in Performance: The Choreographic Potentials of Bodies and Design in Motion’

The aim of this paper is to explore the choreographic potentials of body-worn technologies and performance design (costumes/wearables) in dance-theatre and live art contexts. The key objectives will be to explore whether such interventions challenge and inform movement vocabularies and perceptions of the role of costume within dance / dance theatre, thus affecting choreographic process directly and substantially (as it was demonstrated in historical instances, for example Loïe Fuller’s *Serpentine Dance* and *danses lumineuses* [dances with light], Oskar Schlemmer and the Bauhaus dances or Constructivist music theatre and the more recent constructions of Benoît Maubrey’s Audio Ballerinas, sources of inspiration that I will comment upon in my analysis of wearable-performance design). Explorations centre on how clothing and sound/technology can be used to extend the sensory engagement of performers and the development of real time interactive performance expression for a more embodied experience, which at the same time articulates a specific entwinement with costume or accessories. More specifically, these explorations attempt to understand: 1) How wearable design can influence and shape choreographic composition or movement of a dancer/performer; 2) To what extent garment design and the aesthetics of costume can influence the movement expression of the dancer/performer to enable them to become an expanded techno-organic instrument generating sound on stage. The paper will refer to sounding prototypes created for DAP-Lab’s latest production, *for the time being* (2012 - present), highlighting new integrated methods for building sensual wearable electro-acoustic costumes to create kinaesonic choreographies.

Simon Featherstone teaches Drama at De Montfort University. He is the author of *Postcolonial Cultures* (2005) and *Englishness: Twentieth-Century Popular Culture and the Forming of English Identity* (2009), both published by Edinburgh University Press.

‘The Performative Body in the Early Work of C. L.R. James’

The paper focuses upon questions of colonial and proto-postcolonial performance in four texts that are associated with C. L. R. James’s residence in Nelson, Lancashire during 1932-33 – *Minty Alley* (1936), *The Life of Captain Cipriani* (1932), ‘The Greatest of All Bowlers: An Impressionist Sketch of S. F. Barnes’ (1932) and *Cricket and I* (1933), which was written with Learie Constantine. This eclectic group enacts a dialogue between their various genres and within their shared concern with the colonised body. *Minty Alley*, completed before James’s emigration from Trinidad, establishes James’s interest in the somatic inscription of colonial legacies that delimit the possibilities of indigenous Trinidadian social and economic development, a predicament that also informs the explicitly political analysis of the island’s governance in *Captain Cipriani*. The two later ‘Nelson’ texts that are the main concern of the paper demonstrate James’s use of Lancashire League cricket to develop parallel analyses of Caribbean and English class and racial categorisation and their resultant social exclusions. Using James’s portrayal of Sydney Barnes to explore the politics of professional cricket and traditions of English sports journalism, the paper suggests that the distinctive body culture of the League allowed James to establish an anti-colonial politics rooted in both Caribbean and English popular performance cultures. This found its first full expression in the unexpected context of the ghosted autobiography of the first great West Indian cricketer, Learie Constantine.

Rosie Garton and Ildiko Rippel / Zoo Indigo

Zoo Indigo is an Anglo-German performance company based in Nottingham, primarily performing as a duo in collaboration with new technology artists.

Rosie is currently a lecturer in Drama at De Montfort University. She is a board member for Reckless Sleepers, co-curator of performance platform *circuit* and a freelance dramaturge. Ildiko studies a practice-led PhD at Lancaster University and is a lecturer of Drama and Performance at the University of Worcester

“‘Over to you mum” (Reflections on *Blueprint* Working across Distances)’

Zoo Indigo is an Anglo/German performance company based in Nottingham. With a focus on exploring ideas of the non-performer and the performance of motherhood, the Company’s recent works use live video calls to bring bodies from their home space into the performance place. ‘Blueprint’ is one of the Company’s current touring pieces. It is an hour-long, four-woman performance piece, in a theatre, with live video links to each of their real life mothers. ‘Over to you mum’ is a twenty-minute two-woman version of the work, in a conference room. But wherever they are, however long they are there for; their mothers will make it too. They always do. And they will welcome you. From across the borders of Germany and Wales, the virtual mothers correct their performing daughters and remind us of how to remember and reinvent the good times and drag up the bad times.

Helena Goldwater is an artist, making performance art and paintings. Most recently she made a new performance *Once in a while it's important to clear out your glory-hole* for the 1st Venice International Performance Art Week, December 2012, collaborated on a new photo work with Manuel Vason for *Double Exposures* (2013) and has a forthcoming solo show of her paintings with Art First (2013). She is Senior Lecture in Drama Studies at De Montfort University.

“‘The movement of the boundary itself’: 1st Venice International Performance Art week, 2012’
Citing examples via image and video I shall offer a short talk on some of the work presented at the 1st Venice International Performance Art week, December 2012.

I had been invited to make a new work amongst highly prestigious artists such as Jan Fabre, Valie Export and Hermann Nitsch. What was most engaging was the breadth of live practice from artists working currently across the globe. Performance Art has the body at the heart of its disclosure but the many ways in which current makers are choosing to engage in discourse was testament to how diverse current practice is, as well as the openness of the curators in choosing so many formal approaches. I will show examples of work by some of the following: Jill Orr, Lee Wen, Nelda Ramos, Prem Sarjo, Suko Off, Alperoa, Jason Lim, Boris Nieslony, Weeks and Whitford, Zierle and Carter, Macarena Perich and Joseph Ravens. It seems that Performance Art has reached a stage of inclusion rather than, as seems to be perceived, a state of limitation.

Tim Martin

Dr. Tim Martin is Reader in Architecture and Cultural Theory at the Leicester School of Architecture. He has trained in psychoanalysis at the Champ Freudien, Paris and is an affiliate member of the New Lacanian School. His publications include *The Essential Surrealists* (1999), *From Cabinet to Couch: Freud’s Clinical Use of Sculpture* (2008) and *Psychosis and the Sublime in American Art: Smithsonian with Rothko* (2010). He is currently working on a monograph on Robert Smithson.

‘The Function of the Symptom in Twentieth-Century Performance’

We usually think of performance art as the performance of something conscious. This paper gives a few examples of performance art as the performance of the unconscious through the body, where the symptom is what performs. Distinctions are made between neurotic and psychotic symptoms and humour. Examples will range from the Marx Brothers in the 1950s, Oldenburg’s “Ray Gun Theater” in the 1960s and Laurie Anderson and Marina Abramović in the 1980s.

Roberta Mock is Professor of Performance Studies and the Director of the Doctoral Training Centre in the Arts & Humanities at Plymouth University. Her research tends to focus on the body, gender and sexuality and her books include *Jewish Women on Stage, Film & Television; Performance, Embodiment and Cultural Memory* (as co-editor with Colin Counsell); and *Walking, Writing and Performance* (as editor). She is also the editor of Intellect’s Playtext series. From 1996 to 2006 she directed and performed with Lusty Juventus physical theatre; now she makes occasional quasi-autobiographical solo performances. Later this year, she will be co-directing a dancefilm inspired by the work of Jean Genet, entitled *Heaven is a place (a place where nothing ever happens)*, as part of an EU-funded project with partners in Greece, Spain and Turkey.

‘Bodies of Performance’

This paper will begin to think through the relationships between the body of an individual performer and her body of performance work over an extended period of time. It will specifically focus on the

ways that performance events embody the ghostings, reanimations and accumulations of previous performances by both the artist in question and others. At the heart of this exploration is the spatiality of the performing body, borrowing from Maurice Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the body as a "nexus of living meanings" and Doreen Massey's characterisation of space as a dynamic "simultaneity of stories-so-far". For Massey, space is "a product of relations-between, relations that are necessarily embedded material practices which have to be carried out." In this presentation, I will explore "the processes of being made" through, in and manifest as the bodies of three performers: Canadian performance artist, Jess Dobkins; London-based interdisciplinary visual artist, Oreet Ashery; and USAmerican comedian, Joan Rivers. Rather than considering how a specific body operates in a space of performance, I am interested in establishing how that material body might act either as a constituent of that space or else as a performance space in and of itself, in order to transgress gendered expectations of sexed bodies. For each of these women, the tensions between interiority and exteriority operate as both spatio-temporal seams and fault lines, enabling deep vertical connections to the historicity of performing bodies as well as affective horizontal ones with audiences and participants in the moment of performance.