

PAPERS 10 Body/presence/noise

Chair – Alice Lagaay
THUR 12.00-13.30 | RR6

Text please: the problem of utterance

Lynne Kendrick

Text Please, or sometimes just a bellowed text!, is Philippe Gaulier's demand for the physical performer to speak. Whether the performer is presenting clown, bouffon or a character this instruction is often met with an incredulous silence, why doesn't the text emerge?

Physical performance has a notorious relationship with language. Increasingly characters do not speak, or when they do they resort to use of the third person. Action is narrated, commented on, recorded and played back but speaking is rarely embodied.

This paper will examine the tension between physical performance and utterance. Using Caillois's ludic theory, Kendrick will argue that we need to incorporate the voice in physical training not only as a skill but as a performative act. She proposes that we need a physical attitude to utterance; whatever the text is.

Vocal improvisation in Dwelling

Nichola Scrutton

Scrutton reflects upon extended-technique vocal improvisation, electroacoustic composition and live performance. Through this practice she developing a series of works under the umbrella title Dwelling.

In these works the umbrella concept of 'dwelling' arose from her wish, as composer/performer, to inhabit the work, confronting several fundamental aesthetic questions.

First, the particular qualities of the voice, in its most expansive sonorous potential, seems to give focus to bodily experience not only through the experience of producing sound, but also in the associations it triggers and the embodied experience of the audience (for whom the performers have "theatrical" presence). She also explores the sense that the interaction between live/'pre-composed' vocal material occasionally results in ambiguous audio-visual experiences. What might this say about the relationship between the most humanly intimate sonorous material, and the electroacoustic technology through which it is experienced?

Repeat after me: theatre, complicity and the participating voice

Philip Stanier

From pantomime to political oratory, theatre and performance have had a history of prompting audience noise. Audience responses, from applause to heckling, challenge or reinforce ideologies and practices, on the stage and in everyday life.

As part of a performance triptych, The Strange Names Collective recently made Repeat After Me, a performance consisting entirely of a call-and-response game with the audience. They were asked to repeat a variety of texts spoken by the performers, including performative language, statements of values and recognisable texts such as the national anthem; all implicating the audience in existing power structures, unless they chose not to repeat the phrase. The performance explored the audience's speaking role in theatre and how complicity and resistance are expressed through the spoken word and silence.

This paper discusses the role of audience noise in the completion of theatre acts. This will be achieved through a discussion of Repeat After Me in relation to the history of audience noise in the theatre.