

The following texts were originally created during the 2012 SPILL WRITING programme, facilitated by Diana Damian Martin. The texts shared here are extracted from larger bodies of writing made during the festival. They have been selected for inclusion here by SPILL Festival in 2021. Thanks to Diana and all contributing writers.

SPILL WRITING 2012

SPILL Writing in 2012 took that year's festival theme of *Proximity*, and its works, as a provocation to reflect on what it might mean to place experimental performance in a town like Ipswich. It asked, are we near to, or far from, London and Europe? And launching on Halloween, what might it mean to encounter such a packed programme in a five day hit, when the membrane between the living and the dead, the spirit and the body, is at its thinnest?

SPILL Writing 2012 was led by SPILL Writer in Residence Diana Damian-Martin, joined by a group of new writers, selected following an open call-out, who engaged, responded and developed their practice throughout the festival.

The writers included: Laura Burns, Lewis Church, Debbie Guinanne, Daniel Harvey, Rosa Postlethwaite, and Lorraine Wood.

1 November 2012

In lieu of an opening: Brief questions on junctures and proximity

By Diana Damian Martin

Arriving in Ipswich means travelling its distance; intersecting with the River Orwell which forms its estuary here, past tamed landscapes overwhelmed by autumn. If accumulating is part of the process of journeying, then arriving implies a pause; a pause in which the threads of thought tie up together, or perhaps dissipate completely; an encounter. SPILL Festival is certainly such an encounter – it holds its breath and arrives as a cultural strategy, as an intervention, and as a set of permissions.

In anticipation of SPILL Festival, I find myself at a juncture, much in the same way as the town itself.

I find myself considering the ways in which the forty-six National Platform artists will inhabit this town; how the context of the different venues- from an art gallery to a black box- and the walks in between, will shift the consideration of the work and draw parallels. How their genealogies will infiltrate the discussion of the work and embed a particular history live art in a place that has opened to it. How, through the process of relocation and accumulation, one might begin to consider what experimental art is now, its proximity to context and locality.

I think about the ways in which the work might leave traces lingering here for longer, and how the conglomeration of audiences, the deliberately crafted festival architecture and the curatorial impetus to open up live art from within might materialise. There is a sense of radical in this relocation from London's own busy infrastructure, but also a sense of faith that by displacing this centrality and bringing work here, live art might begin to gain visibility in other ways, addressing the politics of place in its journey.

By way of its history, Ipswich has always been both juncture and route; it's been inhabited by everyone from Romans to Vikings, pilgrims to merchants; it was belittled by Chaucer and inspiring to Dickens. It is a town whose history is not always visible, but an eager resident. It seems SPILL Festival's theme of proximity has already inhabited this landscape ahead of me; I think of it as a mode of engagement, a state of being, a geographical noun. It suggests the power of distance and intimacy, and collides with the architecture of performance (place, time, body). I wait to see how it flexes and reforms throughout this five day encounter.

How does a festival inhabit a town? In this estuary both geographic and imagined, what emerges in the collision with performance, both as a curated gesture and a series of fragmented encounters? What kind of social politics does it instigate?

In their history and scope, festivals are interventions that emerge out of and return back to normative social practices; the nearness of the works, their sites, their audiences, makes me consider the live work as a temporary migrant in search of a home, forming and reforming.

Meaning travels like a nomad; it is finite and continuous, mobile and fixed, formless and formed. Over the next few days, a group of young writers and myself will seek to follow the paths within this juncture, consider and question its routes, in search for meaning that emerges in encounters with live work, in inhabiting the festival, in meeting its participants. We will walk the streets of Ipswich looking for connections, explore the range and variety of work and its modes of display, and consider writing as a process of meaning-making.

I see writing as a process of confrontation, in which various tensions are negotiated to produce and open up meaning; it is an encounter, an interpretation, a deconstruction. Through writing, I try and create the cartography of a live piece; I

juggle with certainty and the imposition of the blank page that keeps asking for fixity. I think about the ways in which I inhabit work, and the traces the work leaves for me. Writing is a way of thinking and as such, it is an incomplete and unpredictable gesture, an action of remembering. I hope over the coming days we can sediment the practice of writing about, on and around performance as something distinct, and consider its processes and geography together.

1 November 2012

Portal: 11:18

By Lorraine Wood

The journey starts at the end, it begins with the first intention, that which pulls you in, pushes boundaries and gives permission to place your own life into the hands of strangers.

You step onto the platform and encounter people who build a world of façades around you; they encompass your hopes and expectations.

You start a journey, which puts your individual experience at the heart, headphones on, geared up and ready to encounter anything that is thrown at you, never questioning why you make yourself available and open to the unknown and unexpected.

Often personal proclivity leans toward mediating between the struggle of impatience- one's desire to rush to the finish line, to reach a destination and find what lies there for you, as opposed to staying completely present in a moment, absorbing each and every iota of experience that befalls you.

Your senses create a tapestry of immediate experiences. You are pushed from all sides. As the train rushes, what is perceived in your vision counteracts that which you can hear, blurred by the subtle presence of those around you - an audience whether they like it or not.

You hold on to each element for a second, but in a whisper, that trace of something that you think you have grasped has gone again. This moment has passed and it's on to the next one, the mind working at pace to piece together what is happening to you. It's fleeting and whimsical and completely intangible, but for a second there is equilibrium, clarity...and then it's gone again.

Although captured in a moment in time, a series of happenings, one person boards the train, another gets off, girls in red boiler suits hand down huge sacks in linear movements across the train. You embrace that feeling of collectivity, which joins with

others and helps to bind a sentiment that can only reflect that we are all in it together.

We roam as one, yet we still roam alone. You will never see the world through the eyes of another, experience is individual and it stands alone. You see a man through the gap in between two train seats, you share a knowing look that in one way you are inextricably linked, yet still, you notice something out of the corner of your eye that he doesn't, and in that moment you untangle and are separate entities once more.

In motion, you continue, but imagine that your senses become eliminated, you can no longer see, you hear only what has been thrust upon you, controlled by subliminal messages. Your body reacts, it protects. Iciness encompasses and you become vigilant through smell. The slightest touch scares you into submission. Who are those friendly people now seen in your mind's eye, welcoming you so warmly into the environment in which you are present? Can this presence wash over you, allowing you to be in the moment, taking in and feeling the spirit and purpose in which intended.

Whether you are coming or going, leaving or returning, it occurs in a space between time and memory. The time it takes is irrelevant; it is the journey, which has the most bearing, that which has made all of the difference.

1 November 2012

On Movement: Jack James' Undisclosed Number

By Laura Burns

Your movements are deliberate
when you make them.

When you don't -

listen:

mosquito drone, jet-
take-off engine hum
my brain-work

(yours, ours)

relentless at the best of times.

I cannot feel your presence
 (more theirs /
you through them?) weaving

a cat's cradle of sound
out of what otherwise held us
silent, modest in its
 invisible
presence/

now the floor, sticky with drink
and beaten down by years of dancers,
murderers, is pregnant
with jet-streams staining the absence
the hum, the hum, the hum, the hummer,

the horror, the horror,

the om

how much of this white noise
is my blank canvas, and yours -
to squeeze meaning out of fuzz
and static? I see wire-wool,
 and anxious – sparking
 electric shocks -
they speak between them, non-producers

active receivers
and you
orchestrate:

 reclaiming first
or altering (and foremost)
basis of listening or filling ?

space with sound /sound with space

these sounds
were already here, but what about
this longing -

willingness

for sound to find itself
like a cog
clicking into place,
just a moment

clarity

/ congealing / amalgamating

and why revel, like rubbing salt deeper
 into the wound,

in the discord?

Not insomnia, anxiety, the endless workings
of the mind – I've heard these sounds
for that before -

more these conversing creatures

(pushing our dialogue back

/forth

they move you more than...)

that make everything

but you, so much more prominent:

the forgotten matter is air

one forgotten plurality

straining our individual (forgotten-
collective) space between forgotten

made audible audiobject of our collective
concentration:

that,

and this,

making an element solid,

the frequency we're tuned (in)/to

1 November 2012

Displacement and dissonance: SPILL Opening Night

By Diana Damian Martin

[Dis]Placement

In thinking about the work which opened SPILL Festival, I find myself confronted with questions of displacement; how context reshapes perceptions of cultural value; how destabilised boundaries allow a range of encounters to permeate a site. The exposure surrounding work in a place which has not received it until now, at least not in the particularity of such a context, and the ways in which that can inform what [re]constitutes experimental practice within contemporary performance. I wonder what happens when you [de]centralise that which is perceived to be marginal; in proximity to London and its infrastructure, a wider network emerges. With its legacy and modes of work, the festival holds a cultural capital that enables a shift in perspective; in this instance, the National Platform becomes an almost literal process of mapping a range of practices still gaining visibility in the public sphere. Ipswich then becomes a site for a cartography of reconfiguration; in proximity to London's infrastructure, housing the particularity of a critical mass, networked, implicitly and explicitly, to the wider infrastructure of performance and live art.

Threshold[s]

The night of the thirty-first of October is one of thresholds; where liminality becomes, for a short while, a place everyone inhabits; boundaries between the imagined and the real, the material and the immaterial, the internal and external become more fluid, and performance inhabits the public sphere as a mode of enactment and recall. Bodies that are perform bodies that once were, and in this timid act of reconsidering what is often a social trauma, a different context permeates. It's a night of permissions where the spirit, in all its potential imaginings, holds a more material presence.

Be it the confluence of time and place or the architecture of the work itself, it feels as if all three performances that took places over the night of Halloween at SPILL tapped into this liminality in various ways; collectively as agents of change, and individually as gestures of transformation navigating between ritual, image and affect.

In this case, it was a reconstitution of space that became a political act. The former nightclub, now the venue for Spill X throughout the duration of the festival, was closed down in 2007 after it became the scene of a murder, its management deemed unable to take necessary steps to prevent crime. By inhabiting a venue with

a notorious history and a closed future, Spill has reconstituted its history and breathed new life into it.

So the agent of change in more ways than one, intervening in this landscape throughout the opening night, was sound; destabilising those frameworks that mark beginnings and ends; as a strategy both immaterial and affective which investigates, makes visible, fades in and out; a wall of noise washing over you like a wave of potential narratives; or perhaps a way of constructing and re-constructing space. I'm thinking in particular of the post-industrial band These Are End Times [think the work of Godspeed or Silver Mount Zion]. A wave of sounds washing over you; barren landscapes inhabited by snippets of texts; riffing guitars and broken violin sounds.

Rippling back in time, witnessing the work that just took place; the only performance that played on the stage of this former nightclub as the audience reconfigured from participants to witnesses.

Silence

And before the flurry of these notes, navigating textures and narratives, there was the silence. The silence that emerges in between interventions becomes a different thinking space. It was this silence that inhabited the room ahead of Nicole Canavan's performance. The silence before a ritual, and the charged moments in between performances. The silence after the storm that resets the parameters of an experience and allows some traces to be reinscribed.

In light of this, Nicola Canavan's *A Divine Trauma* travels the site of this enactment like a myth looking for its narrative; hers is a body being moved, and its silent motion – a struggle between the image and the body's own agency. Clothed in orchids fixed onto her body with needles, the gentleness of her movement and the tenacity and violence of the removal of these flowers are a contrast held in suspension, although the metaphor travels in and out of this affective image. This is, in the artist's own words, adorned flesh, and we are witnesses to a process of renewal; we are lead into this landscape through her slow movement, and as our gaze begins to focus, we notice the needles and smell the strong scent of the flowers. It's a brutal gentleness that becomes more explicit as Canavan walks onto a white surface which reconstitutes the image; as she removes the flowers, small trails of blood trickle down her body, and the flowers hit the ground. In her ritual of cleansing, reaching towards a half full fishbowl of water, we await the formation of a new iconography. She is no longer a mythical creature, nor is she a subjective body. And as she walks away from the site of this ritual, the white cloth fixed onto her hips with needles, we tap into a different iconography. She carries this like a bride walks away from the altar – and this action filters her ritual through a different context. There are incomplete references her to gendered bodies, to the construction of symbols and to release through traces.

Engaging with a different form of provocation, Jack James' Undisclosed Number presented a different configuration of sound, site and object, using reclaimed speakers in a number of architectural constructions as modes of making sound visible. Moving from sonic landscapes to puncturing noise, playing with rhythm and tempo and navigating the distance as a way to enable meaning, James' work recalls and marks the history of this site, enabling sound to [re]configure the perception of space. We are both participants and witnesses inhabiting several time frames. In the silence of the night, the dissonance echoes a further interruption.

2 November 2012

Writing, Duration, Document

By Debbie Guinanne

Debbie spent the duration of Alan Delmar's Monument responding live to his work; the section below is a transcription of her document.

whitesheetlargescreenspacemarkedwithredsplashes
dotsmarkingsdrippingdownfromcentretoptocentred

dividingAlansituatedlengthofspacedividingth
roomoctagonalwipemouththreadlipstickstainedwip
emouthpalmhandsrubdrawalongthelengthof
hisfaceslidesteadywalk_____stoptape____
videotapestickytapeFRAGILEFragilefragilestick
woundundercentrefigurewaisthipsbuttocks
octagonalobjectsmirrorreflecting_tapesurroun
dsedgeshandsdrawingtapearoundthehead
mirrorreflectingexternalperceptionmirrorfacehead
forwardhandsfingerstwitchthumbforefinger
wristwalkmeetingeachfaceofaudienceblank
wallmovementApparelunderwearblackgrey stitching

ofletterspeoplerepondssilentreflectionsoctagonal

reflectionsglassmirrorspacessiteroom
cameralightsflash&follow

+through__facethemirrortakeper_____
tapeunravel__leg__aroundtiedpulldrag

sitblack_worm_like____&rollrewindsitcentre
spacefacewrappingeyesupdownblacktape
drawnacrossaroundtyingmasking_____masking
windwindwindwindwindwindwindwindeyesblackened
onlyslightseenrightlegiswoven

(excerpt from longer text)

spitplatefacetearnewspapermouthchewchewchewreadreadpageturnspitpageturntea
rippscrunchupmouthchewchewchewreadreadspitJesusfaceplateblue+yellowchairsch
airvaseplateJesusChristfacethornedsitsnewsprintteareatchewspit

(snapshot)

2 November 2012

Alan Delmar: Monument

By Daniel Harvey

I walked into the exhibit space to find myself transfixed; roses laced up with red cotton, an umbrella banded together with layers of cling film, piles of black tape and newspaper, an empty chair. Alan Delmar smothered his lips grotesquely with a pink lipstick while dragging himself along a river of tinfoil, leaving a trail of residue behind him. This made me consider the ways in which individuals can easily emulate others through the influence of media; the tinfoil acted as a mirror, a portal allowing me to see the beliefs that can be forged around ourselves in the process of understanding our position in society.

Our eyes act as fast speed shutters flicking through content we can relate to on a personal level, either in its appearance or in the construction of speech. We are surrounded by a cosmos of information and ideas; in a way, the gallery space, with its mix of performance and sound, allowed audiences to chose their own paths. Delmar's use of objects allowed spectators to interact with his process of personal excavation. This durational piece made me look into my own journey and the accomplishments and failures we go through during the process of developing.

Delmar moved onto another object, a mirror he fixed to his head using tape with the word fragile imprinted all over it; a sense of irony when walking around in a circle allowing spectators to stare at their own reflections, or perhaps a statement on truth.

We are fragile when it comes to the skin we wear each and every day to illustrate our sense of character.

After making a full loop of the space, he began climbing up to the next hurdle of endurance. He grabbed a bamboo stick from the ground and rummaged through the pile of newspaper, until one of the pieces balanced perfectly on the end of it. He looked up at the balcony and pulled a chair over to help him reach, lifting the bamboo stick with the newspaper in place, failing to balance it over the rail. After many attempts, the brain resolving into making solutions, Delmar searched for another bamboo stick and strapped it together with tape to make the task easier to accomplish. This achievement acted as a monumental discovery.

At the beginning of time, indigenous people used the resources that surrounded them in order to address their basic needs; in this process, the body is physically and emotionally in need of change, and I felt Delmar encountered this throughout his journey. This influenced the reaction of the audience, who watched him struggle under different circumstances, baring the urge to assist him.; yet this was something he had to resolve on his own in a state of possession used to shape tribes distant from the technologically savvy civilisations.

Monument was a performance of rebirth. Through every object Delmar was constricted; after endurance and patience, the same object revealed itself with purpose and value.

2 November 2012

Tom White: Exposures and Liz Crow: Bedding In

By Rosa Postlethwaite

The voice recording re-played during Exposures frames the projected image of a (familiar looking) street as: “pure hell”. The voice presents this subject - ‘the real’ streets from a distance. It recalls the experience of Exposure Therapy to combat Agoraphobia: the performance of taking in surroundings, the social space they are both immersed in and outside of. “In Out” says another voice.

At moments, the voice falls silent. I sense the distance from the body and the streets. The site of the installation is filled with the absence of suffering. The image becomes refreshing, quiet, calm and mundane.

When the narration returns, it captures a single step of concrete: a source of panic. The shallow and ordinary journey is retold as a conscious act of decoding danger. On the perpendicular wall, the image is of a virtual city. Faced with two moving

pictures overlapping at the corner to create a column of lighter space, I hear “It’s the trivial things that kill us”.

Next doors, I see a woman with a soft cheek faced upwards, the other (cheek) against the pillow in a (familiar looking) bed. In *Bedding In*, Liz Crow presents the private self exposed in the public realm. It is an urgent piece calling to collective action and asking for clarity from those encountering it in this shared experience. Crow’s body language, its repulsion and attraction to the crisp synthetic fabric of her bed, speaks of the complexity of daily existence. I am confronted with the frightening prospect of those facing cuts to their welfare benefit, people whom like Crow (and family and friends and unknown others, my future self) must ‘parade’ their body as justification for state support.

Being contemporary is an unstable condition; the material grounds in which these performances happen in: the street, the steps, the bed, are transformed from the heavy load of reality to an unstable proximity between individual and collective body(ies).

I recognise myself as attached to these grounds, in ‘these times’ and I am impelled towards the future. It’s instability, a space of fantasy, a welcome thought.

3 November 2012

Rosana Cade: Walking Holding

By Lorraine Wood

To hold one’s hand, interlocking four fingers and a thumb with another, the union of skin on skin, palm on palm, a simple and seemingly innocuous act that can have increasingly wider implications. This gesture can conjure feelings depending on one’s age group, race, gender and sexual orientation. I wondered how this could be so; how a simple gesture could have so much weight behind it. This variation made me question how we attach meaning, and what does it mean to different people?

Bumbling through the town of Ipswich there are a sea of unfamiliar faces around me. In my perception, many of them are strangers, conversely I myself am also a stranger. I imagine a world where everyone is emotionally aware of one another, accepting and tolerant, but yet we all make assumptions about the people we encounter, whether wrong or right we bear judgement and reservation and there exists a constant negotiation about how we interact, whether we interact and what the implications of these choices mean.

Walking: Holding is an exploration of how we encounter people, with its roots centred in queer discourse, looking at how we all have the ability to judge and be

judged. Cade explains at the beginning of the experience that she has to exercise caution when holding hands with her same sex partner in public. In certain areas she would feel comfortable, but this was often overshadowed by the awareness that in certain contexts it would attract unwanted attention. Often the fear or anticipation would make the couple feel self conscious and wary of reaction.

There is certain prevalence in this, which runs throughout the work that points towards its primary audience. I found my senses were heightened, I became acutely aware of the reactions of those around me, the secondary audience – the strangers, this balanced with the odd irony that I was also holding the hand of a stranger.

There was a part of myself that wanted to provoke a reaction; I wanted to become an extension of myself and for people to judge me in a way that they normally could not, perhaps because I was holding the hand of another woman, or of a man dressed in drag. However I felt safe in the knowledge that this was a transitory experience, I could make a choice, let go of my partner's hand and it would not matter that people would have judged me because it wasn't my reality. In this (short lived) comfortable bubble I lay witness to the fact, as seen through this microcosmic telescope that this was completely real, projections from the public realm bouncing back in to view, this was real life.

This experience and experiment stands not only as a political gesture, but also as an act of appropriating the right for individuals to live without being judged or even scorned for their perceived sexual orientation.

4 November 2012

I'm Going Hunting

By Debbie Guinanne

I see through the words I use to transcribe. I write what I see and I see what I write. I am a hunter. I work within the practice of pursuit of any living things, hunting wild-life or feral animals for recreation or trade. I engage with the performance artist through the process of writing: documenting the experience by interpreting it through language.

Hunting: The Process of the Encounter

My encounter with the work is one of impression and expression. Following the material through intuition and submission. I chase, obeying the person before me, the performance artist/live artist, and I follow the command to write and describe the

essential bits- everything in sight. The distilled essence. Time and rhythm are triggers that stimulate the growth of the experience. The desire to hunt for the intangible prey (the phantom) of presence and live-ness is a major symptom of the affect that performance art can have on its spectator (as in "I"). This desire to hunt is another way to express the urge for consumption and occupation. My encounter with art work that is both live and human drives my hunger for such a transformation. Escapism in its highest form. To complete the silent, suppressed ambition is to surrender to the material unfolding before my eyes. I want to fold inwards on the experience, dissolve, transcend. Pursue and kill. Bells ring out in pursuit of one another, ravenous. Stalking through the space, tracing the movements, my eyes are peeled, always open, both ears pricked.

Tools/Instruments/Material

Looking, listening, watching, thinking, responding, writing, transcribing, documenting, evolving, transforming, dissolving, repeating –repeat, repeat, repeat, repeat, repeat- + follow follow- the rhythm, rhythm, rhythm, rhythm. Impulse, impulse. Perception.

Interpretation:

Receive.

Persist.

Tran

-scend.

Gaze-graze....

Devour.

Conquer.

Satiate.

Express!

Intuition.

The trap- is in flux_____ - fluid. A pen- loaded! (in) liquid- black or blue ink. Or sometimes red.

Paper: Light, heavy, white, off-white, lined, unlined, boxed/graphed/cubed/triangular *chocolate-that's Toblerone.*

Pull the trigger- touch. Test. Pressure. Language. Hand-point. Elbow-angled. Arm-angling.... Instrument cocked - *Ready, aim, fire!* Fired. Obedient. Servile. Obey.....

The instrument of a minute ink plumbing system oscillates around the desired/ inspired speed, position and state. *Limbs are simple cogs in the machine.*

Capture + Captivity: Duration + Interpretation

The process of this endeavour involves the writer to succumb to the experience of 'the presence'. Attention must be heightened and trained-in on the performer. The hunter must hold captive both the materials and the artist before her. Time is indiscriminate, uncomfortableness (the dawning of self-consciousness) is nonexistent. The moment of capture – rapture – is found between the lines of vision from the site/sight of the artist to the eyes of the dear-stalker, and the lines of words drawn from the weapon to the page. Capture + Captivity is the layering of these words, babel or the language of the dead tongues onto the flat plane of the white material - the pulp of wood. Lines of infinity are cornered and reshaped to form the idea of vowels and consonants that can be heard or read as words. These may also be considered as text-formed drawings, a live-scribe jive. Or, a score of the target's position. A mapping of the prey's course of action. Markings, etchings of breathes passed through bars of boundaries – lines marking the site/sight of the art with the site/sight of my posture/position/pursuit/ambition. The precursory scene of the strangulated prey, deafended, mutilated and blind.

A body is left coursing through a thicket of the damp putrid sweat, of a black/blue liquid, settling in between the leaves of paper- winter is arriving the trees are turning bare. The presence being captured throughout the performance becomes embalmed between the fibres of a material alchemy. A performance has drowned on a page, through its sensual touch- a lick or a slathering of the animal's tongue. Words repeat, repeat, repeat; repetitions are immeasurable in their density and trace. An archeological dig where the ideas enriched in soil are thrown out onto elongated white halls, marked with short and direct cubed tiles- prison cells are forever opening and closing! This commiserates through duration and an interpretation that is endless.

The Kill: Transformation + Completion

You must complete the hunt with the kill for the word to be fulfilled. The animal/act is caught, trapped and slaughtered while the event is passed, deceased, busy being busy dressing up all funeral and grieved:

I open my laptop.....

.....Type O blood drips as the cattle runs.

I sever heads from tails, and begin to de-skin the beast. Sharply cutting along the edges of the spine following the bone structure before I shatter its fragments entirely, de-boning the nest. I slowly with respect and trepidation begin to peel the flesh off from the bone. Leaving magnificent pools of a blood-like substance in my wake.

I begin this by pressing down onto black plastic keys. The pages to the left of me contain lines of words, writings or scrawls, legible and illegible worm-like manifestations of experiences held within the machinations I set. They are the recordings of the performances. Silent responses caught up in the web of human interpretation-flawed and incomplete. I use the keyboard to type and re-record/transcribe the pages into something else- dissect the worms, extract their intestines, their wet inner bits n' pieces.

Dissection is mandatory.

But worms are tricky little creatures, slippery to touch. They writhe across the page unprecise and ill-considered. Messages of accounts are lost or misplaced. A 't' is mistaken for a 'k' and 'ing' is _____ something, 'zlkjwof2op' represents the artist's left wrist..... Interpretation as you can see is delicate. But, when the worm is caught and pierced with a pin, appreciation for its sculptural form is undulating and pleasurable (this is thick with a b). The pregnant worm gives birth to a translation of the performance. This may be used as an instructions book: on 'how to build' or recreate the live event. An Ikea manual for performance art....! Batteries are not included.

The Hanging of the Trophy: The Document + Its Reader

The ambition of the hunt is to document. Pay heed to languages' potential ability to archive, or shift the terms of experience into new terrain -using language as its prime negotiator. Which finally leads to the presenting of the trophy. Two, or three trophies may emerge (with many more to be considered): 1. Gestural scrawls across planes both white and flat. 2. Thick black pools of the 'words of the encounter' that are smothered in great quantity and great quality (of spirit!).3. A text document written in the font of Times New Roman, regular, size 10, with "left:right:up:down:in:out:red:brown:forward:arm:raised:over:brushing:hair:into:mouth:teeth:gu:msexposed" (as an example), neatly scored along Tesco Value's printing papers finest.

Trophies of archives, documents, notes: fetishized objects for a certain idolatry and worship- I collect thee in great abundance. I mourn for your loss, or my absence when I am not present. Yet if I am there, then I must work to hunt. For if I am stale or retired my arm only grows cold and heavy, the right hand hangs twitching by my

side. My inactivity reflects the loss of a substantial experience, my words are the measurement of my belief, without which I suffer the symptoms of withdrawal. I am hooked on the encounter. Facebook has no 'album' 4 me. I see both the artist and myself in the traces left behind, we are like conjoined twins.

My 'reader' is perhaps another hunter or a wordophile. The one who likes to forage for letters, manipulating words, excavating sentences, tearing apart the most fundamental expression of experience and human trajectory. Whose casual habits involve restructuring the lines of communication to form periods of non-verbal, pre-verbal recognition, pre-history, pre-dated, abject and deliciously base. Actions are forming between plates beneath the earths crust as we stand; watching and waiting in a volcanical mesmerisation, ever gazing, grazing, mourning our wet appetites. The loss of the word is happening, the thoughts drawing the text are lessening. The performance is dead, the hunt is over – or at a pause – A drive continues, to be continued.....

4 November 2012

Home Sweet Home

By Lorraine Wood

Imagine starting all over again, building a house, a street, a town from scratch, reimagining the world in which we live.

Home Sweet Home is a participatory installation whose presence spanned the full duration of the festival. Offering a blank canvas, with carefully marked out streets and plots to create the perfect home, mapped from Ipswich's own cartography and set within a backdrop of beautiful riverside surroundings. This arrangement set the guidelines for hope and creativity, this fun and exciting challenge allowing all that enters its gates the opportunity to see the cause and affect of every house constructed, every garden pruned, giving scope for the shops and businesses created to flourish in abundance. Inside these city walls, anything goes; this is it, a world to be created.

As ideas and social values begin to emerge, members of the community determine how to navigate as individuals. Through the communal notice board and with the presence of a friendly postman, word starts spreading, letters, images, flowers and offerings become dispersed, people making themselves known or remaining anonymous.

A simplistic, humble beginning sees the streets soon teeming with rising buildings, one more elaborate and detailed than the last. There is a sense of

competition in the air - who has the nicest vegetable patch, the most innovative business? Patterns begin to emerge as the community begins to take shape. In this space, where people from all walks of life are welcome, built up from the ground, undeniably diverse, there no boundaries and no exclusion; a true reflection of a particular form of utopia, a place where co-existence just will not do that inaugurates this aspiration - a dream.

A question rushes to my lips - What if we could start again, how would we do it? Building something from its foundations and creating a landscape of hope, poses the question - can we get this right?

My concerns and reservations were nullified by the abundant and fertile sense of community spirit. Within this blank canvas, lies not only a map of Ipswich, but also a vision for the future, something that we have created together, which neither starts nor ends with SPILL Festival. This positive and political movement seeks to ordain the town and give the people who inhabit it a direction and hope for the future.

This is Ipswich, your town and a place to call home.