

*The following texts were originally created during the 2013 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 2013

SPILL Writing in 2013 took that year's festival theme of *Contact*, and its works, as a provocation to reflect on the possibility of collectivity and collaboration in critical writing about, from and with performance. The festival theme questioned issues of connection, exchange and advocacy.

SPILL Writing 2013 was led by SPILL Writer in Residence Diana Damian-Martin, joined by five new writers, selected following an open call-out, who engaged, responded and developed their practice throughout the festival.

The writers were Laura Burns, Lewis Church, Steve Fossey, Debbie Guinnane, and Lorraine Wood.

**4 April 2013**

### On Making Contact

**By Diana Damian Martin**

What does it mean to present, support, and develop experimental practice?

I am attaching this question to the potential impact that current financial and cultural legislation might have not only on reshaping (and problematically so) conditions of cultural production, but on what we consider to be of value in society- and the ways in which culture can remain (or not) a way of accessing, deconstructing and reshaping (of thinking about things differently). Experimental practice emerges in relation to its conditions, in response, rather than as a simple manifestation; it purposely attempts to constitute a language that can make issues visible, outside of the normative and the homogenous.

In thinking about contact during this edition of Spill, I am also thinking about risk (its funding, development and future)- and the importance of modes of access, spectatorship, engagement, participation- and context. Context as something constructed within and around performance; constructed through a myriad of

strategies visual, physical, aesthetic, linguistic and nomadic. A setting aside in order to return.

So this is in lieu of a beginning. This is in lieu of a beginning, because the conversation has already started.

I think of this edition of Spill as an intersection of several gestures, discourses, politics: a cartography of propositions and iterations superimposed onto London's own. If London is a city of disappearances then Spill becomes a mode of making visible- of action and appearance. The contact points are multiple, competing, swallowed by the city's own rhythms, by the intersecting cultural conditions that might inadvertently frame a festival that becomes a form of public intervention.

The festival as a form of reactivation, as a network of sites of discussion that might have the potential to construct spaces outside of normative legislation: here I am thinking of collaboration, solidarity, and the impetus of a collective force; the here and now of voices, the presence of bodies, the possibilities opened up by that which seeks to re-draw the starting points in order to consider what the future might look like.

Amongst its trajectories, sites and modes of discussion, between the pale red bricks and the late snow, an event is being written. I am here, together with a group of writers, at the borders of memory. We are looking back on Spill Ipswich, pulling those threads this way, and forward into London. In thinking about the legacy of Ipswich, we're thinking of cultural memory, engrained in the local, already a point of reference and form of contact: on distance, proximity, sustainability and risk. On social practice and congregation, on temporary communities and cultural constellations.

Encounters with work, with people and conversations, hold a certain poetic of their own. And I think of Franco Berardi who said that "poetic language is the occupation of the space of communication by words which escape the order of exchangeability". I think of the ways in which writing can be less of a mode of occupation, but more an engagement with processes of visibility. In this instance, bringing threads together and pulling them apart. Placing emphasis on a moment, an encounter, an event, a point of contact (expanding and contracting it too). Residing in this space of occupation whilst allowing the idea/s to hold their own agency.

In Ipswich, we thought of roots, legacies and networks; here, we might think of ways in which these can construct something – exchange is a powerful currency. Within the writing, we will be thinking of ways of acknowledging, of opening up, of following traces.

Over the following eleven days, myself and a group of writers will investigate, consider and explore. In lieu of a beginning, I asked each of them to share brief

thoughts on contact within their own expression and trajectory of writing as action, writing as fiction, writing as process. Below are their responses:

**Debbie Guinnane:**

Contact: thoughts and feelings that surround our experience and knowledge of the senses. Action-reaction, finding another, finding an answer, for finding hope, or a foundation for living, a ground to walk upon, and place to rest.

Contact: a belief system that guides your way through myriad structures indefinable and unending, a degree of hope.

Contact: Relational encounters or aesthetics, a-coming-together-as-one. An act for change, for prosperity, for progress. To challenge, envoke and enlighten. To learn. To experience.

Contact: A great Jodie Foster film of heresy and faith. Of vast universes, tragic lives, and dying suns, breathing stars.

Contact: Political encounters, the revolutionary and forceful, the fragility and potential fallacy of politics. Temptations, addictions, threats, hallucinations, transformations, and affectations of spectatorship. Voyeursims. Wars. Revelations. Passions. Yearnings, urges, devotional, beauty, spontaneity, human. My-heart-was-in-my-mouth-beating.... breaking its wings, it caught the wind and trapped it in my lungs, beating back Time.

Contact: Becoming multiplies, becoming - man, becoming - woman, becoming - animal, { ..... }, becoming – death, becoming – earth, becoming – history.

**Laura Burns:**

Contact speaks to me as an encounter, not a connection; contact can be touching, where the physical meets, but the connection may still be distanced. To make contact feels like a desire [maybe this is my projection, my distraction at the moment about being 'in contact' all the time, too much of the time, but wanting to 'contact' the world/earth/others in a more connective way].

I feel ambiguous about this word. Close contact, too close for comfort, contact touch, contact dance, sensations of being in contact body to bodies the air holding everything in contact, atoms contact, combust, contain. There's something distanced about this: something happens as soon as you come into contact.

To attempt to be in contact or to come up against something, like conflict, like proximity of contact not-called-for, the tube in London, the expectation of speed, of communication, of development, of togetherness; the adverse desire to escape, to leave, to be in solitude and self-sustaining.

An inwards and outwards motion, burgeoning regardless, ever increasing [but contact can be small and fleeting, momentary, profound, or elusive]  
The contact made – a glance, a smile – between train windows, on tubes, buses; contact in a piece.

Contact between individuals is different, and what happens when this contact is co-created, readily or resistantly? Contact makes me want to curl up, but I want to connect.

### **Lewis Church:**

Tactile connections in our daily lives are few and far between, and true contact, face-to-face or skin on skin, is becoming increasingly rare in the digitised and mediated world. The barriers that are put up around contact throughout our daily lives have diluted even performance, the immediate fact of a performer and audience.

At a recent performance I watched a man before me enter wearing over-ear headphones. He sat, his headphones still turned on, until the other performer stepped out. He removed the headphones, watching the performance before replacing them, and making his way to the auditorium. He was entirely cocooned, up to the point of contact. His barriers came down to facilitate the consumption of a performance. Before he left, he once again protected himself from uninvited intrusions, spontaneous connections or unwanted contact.

The chance element of being in an audience may not be something that should be so easily smoothed over with technological insulation; those bonding experiences and accidental conversations result in the formation of communities that are so necessary in the development of culture.

Contact can mean many things; touch, collision, caress, conversation, proximity, friends, colleagues or those you have access to, and be used to both describe a state and be a state.

### **Lorraine Wood:**

A labyrinth, a library, a beautiful multi-dimensional route, where one follows their nose. Identifying performance as radical.

The start of a journey or a story that has not yet begun, creating a blank canvas and taking away a sense of intention and giving meaning according to the individual that encounters it, thus creating an essence of something new and multi faceted.

When we blur the lines between the art world and the wider world, they both become less distinctive, creating a force in which the stage or the space explores an extensive view of reality.

A series of gestures, art as a process a spectacle, art of asking for help, appropriating that help and support.

The importance of shared spaces, the importance of encounter and the responsibility that is bestowed preserve and grow.

A durational, genuine engagement

### **Steve Fossey:**

The idea that we can make contact whenever we like

But still we don't

What do I know of contact?

Well

I think of you being fucked in that stairwell

I think of this as I write here

I forget

But still it sits in my head

Unfinished

A contact probably intimate

But alien to me

Thankfully

I write and speak all the time of social space

Place

Performance

Avoiding contact

Scared of the moment but desperate for the time

I use this list as a site to make contact but feel confessional and inappropriate

Why else would I write though if not for this?

In through the backdoor

I saw Ron Athey and I bled him for all he was worth  
I felt that contact  
So strong  
I pled in his blood that my student's take risks  
Ask questions  
Make contact  
I contacted you  
You felt so scared that you bathed in vinegar  
I did my best to communicate with you  
You made contact with professionals

I write this  
The day before my 36th birthday  
Diana had given me a deadline to meet  
To make contact before the deadline  
Before it's too late  
I stumble at this point  
I guess this is fine

It is just another piece of writing  
An architectural play  
My succumbing to logocentric necessity again and again  
I can't pretend  
Like she says, I love language  
I take risks  
I can't afford this  
It costs to make contact  
The nomadic writer flogging his words for all they are worth  
And afraid of being alone  
Excited to make contact  
Happy to spill

5 April 2013

## On Progress

### (or who would Bambi be in period costume?)

By Diana Damian Martin

The Salon Project is a re-enactment of a 19th century Parisian salon; audience members are invited to wear period costumes on loan from a range of Scottish cultural institutions, and the evening comprises of a mix of provocations, interventions and a heavy dose of theatricality. In Splat! the Famous Lauren Barri Holstein juxtaposes, performs, subverts and plays with just about every single female stereotype to mind, from porn star to princess, from pop diva to performance artist. At the intersection between the two, I think of the ways in which experimental practice engages with ideas of history and progress; the way in which context can redefine meaning.

History is thinly sliced in The Salon Project, because it is embedded, unconvincing and flirting with the social and theatrical currencies deployed by the project. The costumes play a double role; in part, they engender a certain performativity of discourse that distances you from any immediate implications- words become freer in this historical circuit. They also provide an embodied social currency which you can't help but feel playful towards: character then becomes a highly theatrical device. This is an interesting proposition deployed within this immersive experience, because of the ways in which it both guides and confuses our gaze. The salon itself places emphasis on its lack of temporal and historical specificity (we're neither here nor there, so we can be anywhere). White-washed and contained, adorned by chandeliers and invaded by their soft, artificial light, it feels like an inhabited set, both abandoned by its original colonisers and acutely unreliable in its current state.

Elements that suggest juxtapositions are present throughout; from the ipad app the pianist uses to read his score to the television screen that extrapolates this microcosm towards the end. Aesthetics, progress, robotics and risk are brought to the table; we take pictures on smartphones and watch speakers read out their speeches on ipads. Technology then, doesn't just become dramaturgical tool, it's also an aesthetic device that begins to weave threads of meaning together. Across these juxtapositions – some incidental, occurring through conversation, and others deliberate, presented as provocations – a certain reluctance towards fixity emerges. It's a site of in between where we might want to consider how we think of notions of time and progress; history for one generation becomes a shipwreck for the other. Perhaps we deconstruct, tear, destroy, in order to build again.

The dualities that guide the evening – embodied/virtual, authentic/synthetic, real/imagined – become frames of reference. It is in the final moments of the performance that the gesture is completed, the ideas are opened: because what the

Salon Project does is tease out a certain portrait of our contemporary society that draws from the past and projects into the future. Progress, here, is non-linear; in fact, it is fictional. There is no spiral, despite there being exponential growth. As we wander casually in this space, suspended in time, wearing someone else's alter ego, identity begins to be delicately, tentatively and subtly called into question, and social practice made visible. As Proust said in his epic *Remembrance of Things Past*, "if a little dreaming is dangerous, the cure for it is not to dream less, but to dream more, to dream all the time".

The Famous Lauren Barri Holstein speaks an altogether different language: hers is one of careful appropriation, playful subversion and visual excess. The Famous doesn't just perform stereotypes, she embodies them wholeheartedly; repetition and excess exhaust their meaning and begin to develop lateral propositions on what being feminine, being a woman, being a feminist, might be now. There is something altogether similar to *The Salon Project* in the amorphous, non-progressive structure of the performance which I found gripping, and which seemed to be testament to the performance's own framing devices.

Holstein draws from a wide range of references that become central characters in this performance of actions that is messy, gripping, exhausting, funny and nuanced - from the work of seminal feminist performance artists like Carolee Schneeman, Yoko Ono and Ann Liv Young, to pop figures like Madonna and Rihanna. She creates juxtapositions and clashes onstage that dilute some of the ethical boundaries implicit within discourses contained by each of these. Working within the remit of the stage performance, Holstein flirts with the spectacular, subjugating its architecture yet relying on its semiotic potential.

The same pop song is repeated over and over again as Holstein hangs from her feet, eating a hamburger, covered in tomato puree, after having urinated onstage to mark her territory, wearing a giant Bambi headpiece, on rollerskates. Holstein speaks to her female on stage assistants, ordering them around, half-bored and disinterested; Christa, dressed in pink, is a wind up doll that vomits egg white every time she stands by the microphone; she is there to serve Holstein. She is there to put together the melon she just splatted on the floor, or reconstruct the wig she just cut into pieces. Lucy, in a white bikini, enacts her death scene in different modes: erotic, playful, animalistic. Lucy catches the tomato puree that comes out of tube from Holstein's vagina. Holstein, with plaited hair, doing the splits, reads the story of the Little Bitch from her giant fairytale book.

Splat! is punctured by plays on power, by explicit references to objecthood and objectification, superimposed until their transparency disappears; qualities are adopted, exhausted and dismissed: the naive, the virginal, the sexual, the erotic, the feminine, the aggressive, navigating a deliberately unclear territory between enactment and parody, between critique and representation - a different kind of performance of dualities, not unlike *The Salon Project's* own navigation of in



betweens. Splat! never quite builds up either, it remains in suspense, though it teases different moments of catharsis, punctured by pop and performed with powerful solidarity. Holstein, a trained dancer, brings skill and endurance, which makes her actions packed with intention and with visible physical repercussions too. This means the body is never one thing: it's never completely desexualised, nor is it convincingly casual- it's a state of liminality.

Splat! also holds an impressive stylistic handbook that navigates excess with surprising commitment – in fact most of its dry humour emerges in these moments of silence, of performed boredom, of excessive repetition and action. When Holstein cuts tomatoes with her vagina, when she reads about the witch bitches that have corrupted Little Bitch's sexuality (perhaps a reference to Angela Carter?), when she dances gracefully en pointe on an eighties power ballad, she's working within metaphors of spectacle – there's elements there of competition found in TV shows, of sharp critique and intellectual rigour that seem to not quite sit with each other, yet are forced to co-exist. This is what gives Splat! its bite: it never accumulates, it never progresses, yet within its contained movements and nuances, it travels an overwhelming amount of territory both conceptual and emotional: despite it all, you're exhausted by the end; entertained and intrigued, travelling confused tropes and feminist paradigms.

In its constant shape-shifting form, Splat! erases normative frames of reference in a similar way to the The Salon Project itself; one of aggressive, playful, invigorating, exhaustive and sharp, and the other immersive, tacit, subtle and discursive. In thinking of experiments, I think of progress as a dramaturgical device: as the promise for addition that never comes; instead, a landscape of in betweens becomes site of discussion. Perhaps a different mode of making visible.

In writing this, I inhabit these dominant memories, moments that I have turned into events on page: actions which I have stretched, atmospheres I have distorted, references I have juxtaposed and contacts I have made. These constellations might only begin to mean something in relation to you, the reader.

**6 April 2013**

## **Fault lines and echoes**

**(thoughts that move and won't stand still)**

**By Diana Damian Martin**

Writing about performance is more often than not, non-linear. It doesn't seek to build up, but to recall; it derives its character from shipwrecked memories, entrenched in a process of remembrance, posited towards and in response to the page as that which

promises a dialogue (you are on the other side, reader). In writing about an event, process becomes a situation- more grounded and fixed than its live, ephemeral counterpart. As Mieke Bal has said, “any description melts into the narration of the process that makes it possible”.

Writing is inherently a process of description, then, whose referent is slippery, nomadic, constantly chased, entering the site of a text, following its woven threads, piercing together its fragments. This mode of motion, this strategy of enactment has a strong relationship to time, too; moments are expanded and diluted, perception is manipulated and slippery; fragments try and creep up, echoes and ghosts unwanted. In this process of making visible, time slows right down – it becomes malleable and slippery, sketching out the fault lines with distracted curiosity.

I am thinking about these tropes, paradigms and strategies for writing partly in relation to a discussion that emerged during the double bill book launch of *Throwing the Bodies into Flight: A Portrait Raimund Hoghe*, edited by Mary Kate Connolly, and *While You Were Here With Us Tonight*, by Tim Etchells, based on his *Legacy: Thinker in Residence Award*, a collaboration between Tate Research and the Live Art Development Agency. Emerging out of a contrast between writing with bodies and writing with words, and weaving these in and out of the books in question, both teasing out performance and its instance of presence, time became a currency to articulate fault lines and distinctions, echoes between the two, traces and fragments. Navigating the solitary and the collective, difference and language, action seemed to be that which engages these polyphonic modes of thinking (on or about performance). Ritual and action are present in these forms of tracing, of fixing, of letting go; and I am interested in the ways in which writing, description and action recall moments of performance, but also tease them out, inviting the reader, the listener, the witness, into this opening:

Writing is a solid object  
Writing is a solid  
Object  
Writing is  
A solid object  
Writing  
Is a solid object  
Writing  
Is  
A  
Solid  
Object

[in response to Tim Etchells' collage]

I move my arm up and your arm falls down

We hold something together  
My arm goes up and yours stays up too  
My body dances to the movement of the sound  
Not in order  
I write my body into this space  
There's silence and my body writes itself into this space  
I will ask someone else to write my body into this space  
The poetic drama of writing bodies into space

[In response to Bodies in Flight]

In thinking of action and echoes, I think of Tempter Temper's Pain of Desire, recalling and distorting a narrative of the past through a precise mix of aesthetic and sonic language that throws our body in a different site and state. This is inhabiting emotion in all its theatrical imperatives. And the slowness of narrative demise, the recall of an iconography (think of the smoke and glamour of Weimar Germany with the richness and cadence of blues, infused a rock and roll edge) are what displace any sense of precise temporality or historical locatedness. The hypnotic emerges at the space of fissures and ruptures- and Bevan's femme fatale, theatrically embodied, dramatically poised and suitably affected, is the echo at the heart of this journey.

Pain of Desire wraps itself up in layers of meaning, in juxtapositions and suggestions, all derived by the inherently gestic nature of its language: the piano is a character that ruptures, intervenes, and subtly condemns, the femme fatale a ghost of grit and glamour, the projections of dancers, clocks and moving figures a visual landscape moving in front and hiding behind layers of history and emotion. Time here is an effective currency, a relational territory you inhabit, drowning in the heaviness of her voice, in the density of the sound in motion.

I wonder whether this slowness, this allowed and uncontrolled falling into history, this repetition of spirals of affect, this drenching in noise and drama, echoes in my own text; whether there's a possibility that a similar fiction might emerge here too, hiding amongst the torn descriptions and splintered thoughts. In thinking about writing and materiality – about the grounding of a book, about its inherent slowness – I think of the ways in which these layers of seduction and desire woven into the aural landscape might also pull this text apart; might seek to slow it down. In the same way that in Tim's book, annotation is that which pulls apart the text, in the way in which Bodies in Flight engages process and time through the uncertainty of images as incomplete forms of documentation, I wonder how writing can also be more slow, can move across cavernous landscapes of affect like the dense theatricality of Pains of Desire. Who is the slow writer, I ask? Or rather, where?

7 April 2013

## Splat!

By Debbie Guinnane

*Splat! was recorded initially word for word, by ear, at the speed of which it could naturally be heard, translated and written down: a sort of gaping transcript with many holes. Alongside that, visions, ideas and metaphors that struck me during the performance were also noted: the real was thus documented alongside the imagined. Selected words and images emerging from this live transcript are intertwined with responses from pop culture (Baywatch, Pulp Fiction, Cinderella etc), and Lauren Barri Holstein's performance style is appropriated within the text itself. These different layers are present in the text below.*

hair fetus two-strands arms legshanging cunt fall fruit..... I, Bitch of Hands & Sight sat.

*SPLAT!*

Let me introduce myself by way of talking, tell ya something tall: a wet baby from the inside hung low from the ceiling's hallows- meat flaps, it purred, it dabbled in our anticipa-saint silence. It waved its golden tassled body, it fell. Kamikaze! suicide baby... all grown up now, ya hear? It learnt to speak by lip syncing, making sounds upside down, karaoke pistol, and blue-eyed-blond-ribbed rumours. Prettiest gal in town. schmokin' hot; an easy rider. Run, Lolita, run, I thought of crying-two days too late. [i] Two hand handles reach out and grab from the waist, pucker her up, beach LIFE gaurds flyin' swing-swing-swing melon contesting her n©ursing breath, cradle baby rockin'.

*"whateveryourname" Cinderella hooker hears "willyou put that melon back together?"*

(this is dear The famous)

....?? or more like a statement rather than an asskin'- scrrrratch  
sharpsharpsourlemonbitter sharp pull taste sharpen Blue fairy (liquid-does what it says on the bottle(go)figure) lifts weights "fun!" she hollars, and I'm wondering  
choptomatopotlook bend-over (ahhh I see it now), chop tomato pot look bend-over (and again), chop tomatopotlook bend-over (you've got it now huh?). "don't

move a muscle” cho-tomatopotlook bend-over ..... “is this how you like it huh?” chop look, pot look bend-over (: ) chop tomato pot look chop “hold your breath it gets better” (she’s relentless aint she? .... huh, she talking to me?!) pot pot chop-  
“cough”

tomato stab “Lucy practicemydeathscene” [ii] mouthopen scre am a ss up assuup legs akimbo ”ahhhhhh.....” **They met in 2005 and were teenage sweethearts before C B attacked R in 2009, leaving her face beaten and bruised. Mirror online (I decided to read it for myself) recalls.....** scream bikini re – fit. “zoo—ahhh” monkeyhands. “Baa baa baa baa” baa baa black sheep, have you any wool? Yes sir, yes sir, three wags full! One for the master, one for the dame, And one for the “little bitch” “coughcough” who lives down the lane. The zombie whores waaaaaander ooooooover – [The bitches are coming! The bitches are coming!] - at the speed of (whores caving it in/they were asking for it ) and one little pink:

Cinderelly, Cinderelly Night and day it's Cinderelly, Make the fire, fix the breakfast Wash the dishes, do the mopping.... wind up doll, there you go now girl, walk on, walk on **r u alreadyforthis?** knife putvag red liquid splash cut wet wet drip pour drop basket balloon dance chopsplashsplat wet red “ahhh” legwet red huung leg “oooh”(sex voice) “breath hah! hah!” panting squatsquat “ah oh oh God ah” legs squat. They quiver.

[Call me on 0800 69 69 69 if you wana have a good time].

“I’m a dirty girl Daddy.” Little Red Bitch said  
down the horn shaped phone. “Oh this phone is awfully slippy. How would you like me to hold it Daddy?” purred Little Bitch.

little voices speak to me

She swung HI!(on crystal: Ice Ice Baby) on the white painted-picket-lined-porch-swing, a rockin’ back slowly to and fro, with a wet-eyed and a dry-wrinkled-sagging-long-thick-tongue-hanging from the Bambi head below. The head was slanted to the side, and had yellow-puss-hair-falling from the hole underneath his chin like a floating-box-jelly-fish.

Medusa! Medusa!

Let down your fair hair!

onto the stark-crisp-sun-burnt-grass. One Little finger tickling the left-tattered-ear, while the other held a panting-sword in toe-to-toe: A sight for Camel eyes and A Kate Moss jean line - > watch out for the red crotch!

LiLo firecrotch! firecrotch! she has freckles coming

out

of her vagina, and her clitoris is

7 feet long.

Fee-fi-fo-fum I smell the blood of a Little Bitch.... or is that "ketchup"?! So... anyway like there was these

three **tomatoes** are walking down the street- a poppa **tomato**, a momma **tomato**, and a Little Bitch tomato. Little Bitch tomato starts lagging behind. Poppa tomato gets really angry, goes over to the baby tomato, and squishes

him... and says, catch up..... catch up. [iii]

Wait, lets recount a minute in real time:

*"blockingdrippingtornbathewoundsarmsteethbutbitchfatherhomeeverythiskissed daily arduous found dreaming world lived one home outside super not single day inside tucked bitch ill (BRAIDED) lost Happily she'd huntup stew tasty tender fork chunk morsel chunk appear stew striated meat flaps smaller shallow centre deep in ('vagina' whisper) familiar moment shoulders meat morning choresearly allowed wandered livedforesthomesoft distancebitch bare treeswondershocking unmarriedlaughing women cleaning house precious behaving shrieked home returned bed shock off betterwenton sleep devising"... music zombie "audiencefeelingemotionally"*

vomit.

*"Krista reading great"... [iv]*

ok. Pause.

GO! -----à

*off apron "freelyshave indisguise bitch watch pervertedly steed circle sword pounced O on eachotherfrenzy razor torn bit clod penis mouth teeth sling shot claws penis bone red + bigger father hollering painbearwider" fall hairfell hair fell Z "teeth vaginal c – avities" hairfell jellyfish throw air air is aquAmarine wet wet wet deathly jelly fish "he unknowingly better explaintrees dust air vagina first shrieking squatting thrashed+squealedbitch head back flesh off fangs bloody fucking" collapsed where grewbecome hair fish hairfish hairfish*

## Act 2; Scene 1

China

2

NY

(4eva)

3/4/14

*"touch you" legs shake. future togethertook distance knees toe point leg bend armup spin bend-over*

*"lost in mexico"*

*"hear me" "distance"*

*"grow"*

*"sometimes"*

*chestoutback inwardout arch*

*"you" neck swing legs point butt+cheek tight top off walk off "close!" audiencenose blow\_\_\_ pink Kristawalk microphone +off brokengreen melon [v]*

*chest gyrate backwards V tits ontv screen backwards arch shake shake "ahh! huh! ahh! wow! ahhhhhh....." legs up out hair sprung*

*loose*

*breath-out*

*dance face-to-camera "holy fuck! playitagain" pick upexhausted lump bum baby toddler upside down "ahhh" sex noise leap thrown ahhhha "poison"*

"Igotthatpoison".... slip barely bikiniwhiteon microphone sings to camera microphone  
badvoicedeep+intocamera "I got that poison" "I got that poison"...

Naked dancers pube condom falls out wet bends over clips dog ( A Bambi-Dog)-toy  
dogging in her vagina? disco toy ~~doggie~~ disco to ~~doggie~~~~doggie~~~~doggie~~~~doggie~~  
~~doggie~~~~doggie~~~~doggie~~~~doggie~~~~doggie~~~~doggie~~ redblue

reblueredredbluelightsssss

clean up ass shake cleanupwalk woddle step trepid (timorous little mouse) back  
walk

10, 10 9,9 8,8 7,7 6,6 5,5 4,4 3,3 2,2 1,1

BLAST OFF!

??!! was it a bird?!

was it a plane?!

???was it a superman?!?!???

.....my oh my oh my!!!!

???????Oh! No! Wait??. It was (wait for it)

.....a vagina.

??? with Bambi?! was the vagina with Bambi? is he alive?!

no it was only?"

wind mop swipe

..... vagina.



and the deer, the little cute innocent deer?

yes there was a head..... and it was a Bambi head..... but..... it was ontop of..... a

vagina.....

but!

**Bambi's Dead?!**

**Bambi's Dead.**

**Long live the prodigal son**

**the king is dead**

....it aint nothing but a hound dog

bitch piss bitch piss bitch piss bitch piss (that boy is mine) bitch piss bitch piss bitch  
piss (that toy is mine) bitch piss bitch piss bitch piss bitch piss ("*dickface broke my  
heart*").

"I © u bitch face" [vi]

{where'd u get those Calvin Klein's?) PARTY ROCKERS!

*"play it again"*

"someone once told me you have to choose "

drag the sl(d)augther out for the kill

*"I'm hungry!"*

- [i] Some people stand in the darknes/Afraid to step into the light/Some people need to help somebody/When the edge of surrender's in sight../Don't you worry!/Its gonna be alright
- [ii] I won't let you out of my sight./ I'll be ready (I'll be ready)/ Never you fear (no don't you fear)/I'll be ready / Forever and always/I'm always here
- [iii] In us we all have the power/But sometimes its so hard to see/ And instinct is stronger than reason/It's just human nature to me.
- [iv] Don't you worry!/ Its gonna be alright/ 'cause I'm always ready,/ I won't let you out of my sight./ I'll be ready (I'll be ready)
- [v] (Instrumental)
- [vi] 'Cause I'm always ready/ I won't let you out of my sight!/ I'll be ready (I'll be ready)/ Never you fear (no don't you y fear)/ I'll be ready/ Forever and always/ I'm always here. (**Mitch the Bitch Buchannon- The Hoff Song, Vag-Watch**)

**8 April 2013**

## Let's Get It On

**By Debbie Guinnane**

**Go Ahead, Make My Day [!]**

*Performance by Entertainment Island, OBLIVIA (Finland) as seen as part of SPILL Festival of Performance at Soho Theatre, Sunday 7th April 2013.*

big papier-mâché stiletto heels big papier-mâché action big papier-mâché party mess big papier-mâché grill big papier-mâché steel big papier-mâché shoulders big papier-mâché time big papier-mâché 6 pack big papier-mâché strolling big papier-mâché eyes big papier-mâché important, timo? big papier-mâché pat big papier-mâché friends big papier-mâché lifestyle big papier-mâché leg big papier-mâché room big papier-mâché pockets big papier-mâché money big papier-mâché hands big papier-mâché sunglasses big papier-mâché cancer fear big papier-mâché swinging big papier-mâché happy party big papier-mâché taxman big papier-mâché hawaiian big papier-mâché hippy helen big papier-mâché hippy flip flops big papier-

mâché rhythm big papier-mâché sue big papier-mâché set big papier-mâché free big papier-mâché panic attack big papier-mâché local bloke big papier-mâché dump big papier-mâché waste plant big papier-mâché marcel! big papier-mâché riot! big papier-mâché workers union big papier-mâché french fries big papier-mâché lettuce big papier-mâché sugar big papier-mâché love fluff big papier-mâché love roll big papier-mâché method acting big papier-mâché action figures big papier-mâché chinese fire ball big papier-mâché dead big papier-mâché imagination

*stop writing. look. listen. there it is. there you see it. make my day. the big papier-mâché world. and the big papier-mâché people. holding their big papier-mâché hands. smiling with their big papier-mâché heads. eating with their big papier-mâché mouths. the world is defined through their words, their actions, our minds*

anna, your naked you look so vulnerable. timo could you tie me up with rope really tight cut flesh hang upside down blood rush to head up side down big red balloon? Oh. OH! oh! wo wow phoar! PHOAR! oh oh oh timo can you see the blood rushing down? Oh! OH! can you make yourself swing? Oh! OH! now run behind a bush to have a good look. Oh! OH! how do I look? like a big ham. Oh! OH! running in circles oh oh!! phoar! pHOAr! PHOAr OOoOOOOOooooooooOOOOOOOo OooooooooOOOOO ooooooooo could you come out from behind the bush tie me up with leather straps gag me black stocking on my head stuff me into small leather bags kick me down stairs into cellar oooHO ooohhhh!!! ahh aha haha run behind bush have a good look oohhh ahhhhh oooarr

*monkey cackle sounds , glee! silence.....*

annika you stay down there while I run behind a bush and have a look. are you still looking at me? how do I look? like a big ham swinging up there oooaaaarrrrrr ooohhhhhh aaahhhhhhaaaaa

*wheezing breaths cries, wheezing ooohhhh! looking up looking down hands shaped in binocular shaped positions looking up breathing out wheezing ooohhhhaaaarrrrrr*

cut me down so I come crashing down and break all my bones cut anna with big knife great idea run back to cellar hold it screaming oh OH! good idea run behind bush look

*rubs self on arm "fall" screaming limbs stretch out into star fish sprawl reaching*

basement grin. how was that? that was great! can you come out of the cellar? show you! see all smashed to pieces. big hole.

*they commence to have a series of fits and make Donald Duck sucking sounds.*

are you having a good look?

*it resembles a small theatre rectangular crotch outline with her hands drawing over*

for action. I'll look. real professional. with impeccable timing. oh look! curtains are coming down I know where the actors are. back stage. Oh! look! back stage shaking with excitement at the backstage party. lining up. back black tunnel curtains up up ..... now that was a disappointment. Phoar! PHOAR! PHOAR! phOAR phoar PhOAr Phoar phoar are you having a good feel? are you having a really good feel? hmmm hmmm a good feel? hhhmmmm soft good feel round big phoar PHOAR good suck big blow

*mouths blow – fart-like sounds, bubbles, spit, blowing blowing blowing blow stretch out hands red faced moving arms wide fingers splayed open blowing lips wheeze*

come on big parade blow up hello hello boys and girls welcome to the parade! the big parade balloons passing by have some fun drink some coca-cola big parade balloons lost all his air a really big pump oh yea big pump stick it up his ass pump high up real hard full of air like that. boys and girls are you having fun? oh no she lost all her air that's right i got my BBBIIIIGGG pump i'm gona stick it up her ass pump it up real hard like that. you know what i'd like most of all boys and girls? why don't you pump me up stick it up my ass and pump me up real hard give me a good pumping

annika are you still naked? of course I am still naked. are you still naked? oh yes I am. are you holding up your head for theatre purposes?

have you been a good boy timo? YES! i am ready. i don't believe you. now, have you been a very very good boy? YES! very very good boy? no sorry don't believe you. i'm ready. have you been a very very very good boy? YES!!! ok good boy here you go! catch. now gently swing ooooooh! ooOOHHHH! hhhheeeeeeeeeee  
wwwaaaaaaaaoooooooooooo

what are you doing? standing naked on pedestal demonstrating star quality. yes big head big eyes tiny body star quality very vulnerable demonstrating star quality ok very good see she has big head big eyes extremely small body VULNERABLE something missing small voice missing run behind bush have good look tiny voice listen to that little voice oooohhhhhHHHHH PHOAR!!! phooaarr. big eyes big head small body big eyes big head small body ooooooaaaaarrrr

*sleazy hands rubbing inside of her leg over and over and over hunchback walk step step steps over creeping creep looking and slowly crawling over rubbing the insides of her legs*

phone oh yes! babybabybabyoh yeah! ohyeah! ohbaby! yeah! oh! yeah! oh baby! yeah! yeah! oh baby oh! what was that? phone sex. phone sex? punish hit the perve! HIT THE PERVE! you perve! i wet myself in all that excitement standing in own pee hit the perve! you perve! look at that that's a big perve! i love pain. rub big balloon rub on naked body oh yea? that's disgusting. hit the perve! HIT THE PERVE! hit the perve. are you having a good look at the perve? oh yea? hit the perve! hit the perve! HIT! that'll teach you perve. doing nothing. disgusting, hit the perve! you time wasting perve wasting my time ah ohhhh ahhh ooh you too perve!

*stage turns sinister carries a violent atmosphere.*

*silence.*

well i'll sit down armchair t.v on watch porn....

**Lets Get It On! [ii]**

[i] Harry Callahan, Clint Eastwood, Sudden Impact (1983)  
[author's own addition, not featured in performance].

[ii] Mills Lane, Celebrity Deathmatch, or, Marvin Gaye (1973)  
[author's own addition, not featured in performance].

9 April 2013

## Action/ing and the Skeleton (Verk Produksjoner / Oblivia)

By Diana Damian Martin

When all is bare, the skeleton is revealed- and when we can see it, all stripped down and cobbled together, we begin to notice the gaps. We begin to see the voids between the bones, the illusion of height and direction, the malleability of this structure that holds things together. It seems no longer a coherent structure; it's an anatomical mass of odd parts that don't quite fit together. In this way, structure and form intertwine, destroying the potential of each other to mean; when the skeleton is revealed, the illusion begins to fall apart, and we have to make do with its composite fragments. Both Verk Produksjoner's *The Eternal Smile* and Oblivia's *Entertainment Island* do just that for theatre; they play with its structure, destroy and isolate its language, reflecting not only on what the site of the stage might be, but the ways in which we might relate to meaning. We speak a lot about the role of politics within theatre; of interventions and disruptions that constitute meaning, holding the potential to activate and reinvigorate. It's rarer to see politics deployed onstage- to notice the skeleton to such an extent that those gaps become obvious, as if we've been staring at them for eternity. What is action onstage if not a gesture of resistance?

*The Eternal Smile* and *Entertainment Island* both tease out a complex relationship with theatrical metaphysics that results in sharp deconstructions of our relationship to meaning, authenticity and collective action. This poetics of resistance is formed through a stripping down of language across several layers that slowly become evident; in this containment, excess is effectively a mode of re-engagement, a process of flirting with attempting to see the whole skeleton, aware of our inability to do so. Both productions seek to construct portraits of aspects of our contemporary condition without making reference to anything external to what they are able to toy with onstage- and this interrogation of form and its spectatorship is what becomes the portrait itself, proposed as a series of questions about the ways in which we search for meaning, authenticity and validation.

One might say, particularly in the case of *The Eternal Smile*, that there are clear strategies of the postdramatic at play; the engagement with constructing oppositions onstage, the teasing out of failure within strategies of mimesis and representation, and the infectious humour of these processes of visibility. What is particularly potent about both productions are the ways in which they disengage the aesthetic and the textual, instead interested in playing with the skeleton of their own piece, with form as it becomes onstage, with our expectations of its meaning. It's a process of uprising and revolt, stripped down and minimal. Repetition, slapstick, disruption,

duration become key devices that constitute onstage that which we might otherwise be more reluctant to see or notice.

"There once were some dead people, they sat together somewhere in the darkness, they knew not where, perhaps nowhere, they sat and conversed to pass the time"

The Eternal Smile is based on the novel with the same name by Swedish born and Nobel Prize winner Pär Lagerkvist, whose practice encompasses prose, plays and poetry, arguing for the failure of naturalism to engage with the modern, interested instead in "the fever rush and madness that constitute it". Keen to disrupt the focus on expression and instead looking at the theatre's potential for multiplicity, Lagerkvist's work engaged with religion, philosophy and morality, examined through historical and biblical figures (the wandering Jew, Barabbas or the red hooded hangman). The Eternal Smile was written as a novella in 1920; set in eternity, it sees a group of characters join in the search for God after their endless search for meaning.

Verk's production engages with the literary elements of the story, enacting some of the stories it contains whilst also engaging with its absolute rejection of totalitarianism, yet it also draws heavily from vaudeville, slapstick, improvisation and puppetry to construct something all together different, in which the interplay between physical action and gestures of intent of meaning are constantly reflecting and deconstructing each other. Here the skeleton is both structure and recurring motif; trapped in eternity, currencies become different, emotions void, distance redundant. What does this afterlife have to do with actual life? Constructing a conception or portrait of life itself is not a negation of its existence, but a pointing towards relativity of meaning, and its loss through these cracks- perception is an essential, defining currency.

A 19th century proscenium lines the otherwise empty stage, heavy red velvet curtains adorned by suspended rows of paper mache skeletons, bowls of fake fruit. The company are stood on chairs in front of the proscenium, smiling in tedium, waiting for silence, their faces smeared with white, their eyebrows heavy and dark. The darkness of the stage is the emptiness of this afterlife, mundane and devoid of illusion. They begin to tell the stories of men and women who have died here, of the lives of the locksmith, the butcher, the grocer; the acting is sparse, swallowing the words, fleshing out their specificity at an interplay between character and persona. These are ghosts, not people; they are everyone and no one in particular.

What starts off as a tightly controlled play with narrative layers and deconstruction of fiction quickly escalates with the held of disruptive interludes, in which the curtains open to reveal a true festival of the dead. We are watching us in this miniature theatre, at the other side of which glares a dead audience, enraptured in spectacle. A woman with a gorilla mask dances onstage. A skeleton attempts to perform a

song, only to be shot. Smoke engulfs this afterlife scenario, and we return to our waiting room, which now feels emptier than before.

In its constant rejection of human matter, of character and frames of reference that might render these seemingly mediocre stories meaningful, *The Eternal Smile* moves past image-making through text, and delves into the problematic layers of meaning in language. In this site of nowhere and anywhere, these ghosts, copies of each other and no one in particular, begin the search for god- and what they find in their quest is a woodcutter who just tried his best. Men and puppets lie onstage, all fallen to bits, scattered throughout. The *Doors* play in the background; there's glitter and fake fruit being thrown around. The void is thus beginning to take shape. Slapstick meets pop; improve is allowing one of the actors to tell us about *Life of Brian* and god in Norway. There is lots of running, commotion, and in this mess of a stage, the skeleton becomes apparent: it's shredded, all bits and pieces, and we're singing along to *The Crystal Ship*.

“Before you slip into unconsciousness  
I'd like to have another kiss  
Another flashing chance at bliss  
Another kiss, another kiss.”

There's a moment which I'd like to leave here, for a while, with you, before I exhaust the meaning out of this event myself, attempting to pierce together these shards and threads (what landscape have they left behind in my mind? I wonder why I keep these pieces apart and refuse to put them back together). In this debris, velvet curtains on the floor, paper torn, gold leggings on show, smeared make up, skeleton puppets on the floor, four people are standing. They move their hand to the right, holding it straight up. They bring it back to the chest, where a cross is drawn; the finger moves to their mouth, which remains silent. They draw a circle about their heads and point upwards.

This image, taken from Lagerkvist's novel and rendered onstage in these fallen fragments, renders its placelessness present (are we not always glaring at the empty, the void, that where meaning is always temporary). Religion, politics and the individual are all waiting in front of us for something to make sense.

Becoming is a verb with a consistency all of its own.

Let me pick up the torn paper mache skeletons that line the stage at the end of *The Eternal Smile*, and place them here, as they return so elegantly in *Oblivia's* three part work in the form of an entire community overcoming disaster and trauma.

Devised between 2008 and 2010, *Oblivia's Entertainment Island* is an exercise in theatrical minimalism that conflates meaning making processes onstage with bodies,



language and sound, intertwining the three in a sharp critique of our obsession with aesthetic production. Split in three parts, the trilogy deals with notions of excess, drawing on the potential of theatrical language to refract rather than reflect, purposely deploying every day structures as the skeletons of these shorts- from the mechanics of popular culture to soap opera and the exhaustive politics of entertainment.

In a similar way to *The Eternal Smile*, in *Entertainment Island* we're reliant on the gestic potential of action; repetition and slapstick are also deployed, yet the direction is somewhat different. If Verk's scenography plays an important part in their metaphysics, Oblivia engage with structure from the onset; the bones are held together by tape and we keep shuffling them in different shapes, attempting to see if we can piece the whole thing together again: a theatre without theatre.

Oblivia take a surprisingly formalist approach in the construction of their theatrical landscape, which is never located on stage per say, always keenly inhabiting our own consciousness. We're in dark territory here, exploring an eeriness and distinct exhaustion of meaning not unlike Verk or even *Temper Temper*, with their gargoyle sounds of desire. As the company itself mentions, this is the subregions of popular culture, the hinterlands. Through this distilled repetition, we have no refuge: it's all starting at us, punching us in the face. The violence doesn't have to be enacted, because it's there already, all bloodstained and gruesome.

Two people are running on stage. "You look good! You're looking real good", one says. "I feel good. I feel really good", the other responds. The moment is sustained with no sympathy for what we cling on to- in the smiles and the puns, the physical exhaustion begins to mean something else. Navigating action in *Entertainment Island* is a different form of metaphor, one less concerned with representation, but more with fleshing out our own negation.

"Tie me up, Timo. Tie me up, and maybe suspend me, and then wrap me in leather rope so it begins to bruise my body". Oblivia contrast the scope and inferred meaning of language with the potential for action onstage- this becomes a process of transferral in which the utterance itself is the theatrical gesture, and the physical resistance its dramaturgy.

In part, *Entertainment Island* is an essay on the importance of remembering; it seeks to enact, deconstruct and engage with conditions made evident in the enactment and dispersal of the constituent parts of the referent; thus becoming is a form of suspension, and suspension, a form of remembrance. The bite in *Entertainment Island* is released progressively, slowly, creeping its way through and across the stage swallowed in darkness, waiting on spectacle.

We can think of that which is pervading contemporary life, undistinguishable and amorphous; in these hidden caverns, these vestiges of meaning, these processes of

visibility so theatrically rendered by both companies might be inferring a portrait whose almost gothic interest in meaning and authenticity is a reveal rather than solely a critique, but one with potential touching across different dimensions. Otherwise, we might all be sat there in eternity to find the axe and chop the wood, looking for the shards and splinters. The re-investment of language and action speaks of a different relationship to signs both on and offstage- a breaking apart, a deregulation: we might want to search for the skeleton, perhaps.

**10 April 2013**

## Escher-stairs and concrete-corners

**By Laura Burns**

In the foyer of the Barbican post-Salon Project, post-The Famous, post-Q+A: my thoughts are moulded by Escher-stairs and concrete-corners, rebounding off walls: discussion and compression, shows in succession, coffees on tubes, confrontation and contact with you and them and others I've not known but recognise. I go underground, emerge and navigate, come into contact with doors, traffic, streets that force me to change direction, re-consider. Tunnelling through the Barbican's concrete maze I find my way into other minds, other ideas, people that make me re-navigate, re-think. This contact shapes me. It shapes my language. Short thoughts, sharp words. Making contact condenses me, but my inner world expands as the conceptual reigns spacious inside.

There is distance within this contact too. Spill London: six months after my first encounter with Spill in Ipswich. How would this previous experience colour my current one? Repetition makes for difference. We are not one body this time, but sprawling ourselves out across the city, seeping into the pavement cracks, spilling out over twelve days. Memories are embedded in my body; I carry residue of last time around with me, but bring different ways of looking this time also. Assumptions are speckling my foothold in the past. Anticipation is hurtling me forward. I am in liminal ground. Liminal. Animal. Limb. Nil.

Undressed and straight in to Salon Decadence: expectations arise – hopes to be transported into change. Conversation is the discourse of the dialogue of The Salon. I don't remember many faces from this time.

I was looking at lace instead -

pampered and pumped into  
stings of look look looking

(fucking: *no this is a memory from The Famous; it just snuck in*)

at the dresses, everyone but not

their faces - butterfly wings,  
blush-blunt-rose, a sight for sound

or conversation. Dialogue. Duo. Log it in  
the archive stirring connections, contact.

Salon conversation restricted, what  
do we speak of here? What can we speak of

but how we look (and what is next)?

In The Salon, we are preoccupied by future and past, so the present - this very moment of contact - feels elusive. There are so many cameras and iphones for recording it, that we sit back, relax, drink champagne; something else is memorising this. Our dresses are like the screens of cameras – distancing the body with an image so that it becomes something to ponder over, rather than crash up against. A screen shows young girls desecrating the generation before them, destroying in order to create. Nudes are murdered, purpled and stunned into silence. (They always were silent). We like the screens for reinforcing this. They shield us from shock.

wearing this wearing myself thin  
thoughts and no body-talk. We talk about

the body, we dress it so that we can  
talk around the body, we put nudes in

so we can feel like we accept and address the body

but we don't           listen           to           it           speaking

The speeches in The Salon Project enhance this evasion of the bodily, hurtling us into future risk, past success, future robotics, convincing us in the inevitability of progress, of movement forward. I listen, wearing a 1890s dress that was actually designed and made in the 70s; I am not so sure about this linearity, and visualise us on a spiral instead, travelling into past and future simultaneously. My inner process of thought-making mirrors this and will continue to do so throughout the first two days: The young girls dressed in tracksuits and wielding samurai swords, remind me of something ancient and Japanese, before an image of Uma Thurman in Kill Bill takes over, the two merging together. Later in the day, I will watch The Famous Lauren Barri Holstein push a Fairy Godmother around the stage, invoking Disney and the oldest fairy tale I have ever read. The archetypal and hyperreal, tradition and pop-culture association, layer on top of each other over the course of the performances like the levels of the Barbican, forming a structure to reside within; a structure that seems poised on the spiral, constantly recycling itself and the images that inhabit it.

Yet this contact between the outer compact landscape – be it the concrete jungle, decadent dance hall, or Launch party conversations – and an inner thought process, is a relationship that challenges me. In The Salon Project it's not the contact of different eras that jolts – this feels almost familiar – but rather an acceptance of this speed of amalgamating images and information, that makes me feel uncomfortably blasé. This is highlighted as I watch a conversation take place between two performers. I feel distant, the substance of their talk elusive; our outer landscape is so splendid, that our inner dialogue gets distracted, trails off. We are so beautiful, that nothing is too disturbing. It is only in retrospect that I can reflect, I am disturbed

by the (questionable) inevitability of technology

I have a disbelief in the assumption

that it is A Good Thing

to be in contact with this many strangers

to be used to this speed of thought - faster, maybe

than thoughtfulness

I have a disbelief

in the assumption that This Is Progress.

Assumptions are left hanging, and I'm left wondering if this salon space is indeed set up for delving into them, or for letting them hang, sully the thick heat, clogging the stage-glow. Perhaps this ambiguity is where the crux of the performance lies.

The Salon makes an ambiguous space, a platform initiating and closing as soon as it starts, setting up a static spiralling, an oxymoron of timelessness. My distance from the nudes, the violent imagery and sound-scapes as a result is unnerving; nothing seems to make contact. We are dressed, made-up, entertained, kept distant, so distant the implications are cushioned, the inevitability of looking away is enhanced. Each thing that is created becomes something available for destruction. What is this urge to create and make new understandings, progress? It drives Spill, it drives the artists, it drives me, it drives technology, it drives sex, it drives Lauren Barri Holstein, it drives banks, it drives Greenpeace, it drives Picasso looking back at 'primitive art', and yet I sit in The Salon, unwilling to commit to this idea of ourselves. Making contact, making culture, making making making -

the love of it or the desire - what would it be like if we were  
to stand alone in the garden room and  
lend our longing

to the space between conversations? The space  
between dialogue and idea?

What would it sound like  
to want for nothing but that place

the garden room, with its gold-linked fish

what would it sound like to pay as much attention  
to that as this?

SPLAT! No time for that...

The Famous is first and foremost a wig, hanging from a rope – could be suicide, could be the last witch hanging from the rafters, could be a peroxide prop. It split and SPLAT! is not quite the sound it made.

The Famous Lauren Barri Holstein transfixes me. There is something in the repetition, the exhaustion and boredom of her Cinderella, Pamela, Fairy Godmother. A sequence of perfect and grotesque images, ready-made for our consumption:

1) you splitting the watermelon,  
its pregnant drum  
leaking floor-bound and pick it up-  
put it in lick it up spit it out again.

I am first and foremost: watching watching watching. The joke's on me. You could be across from me in The Salon, wearing a 1850s number. I've been doing this all day, and getting good at it, too.

2) you slicing tomatoes - legs splayed  
knife-searing cunt  
splashing out the insides.

I'm transported to a Maori creation myth - (vagina dentata) - my oldest reference, but before I've finished remembering this you are already The Next Big Thing, already a new McDonald's Disney character. Forward and back, forward and back.

3) You upside down: a bulk  
of butchered meat, bloodied  
and hung - the sound  
of your tongue masticating  
the burger; I can almost feel  
how it sticks to the roof of your mouth

Watermelons, wigs, personas become so fragmented they cannot be put back together again. A pastiche and parody that is at once a confrontational contact, yet so familiar even for all its irony, that I am again drawn in and simultaneously distant. Tug, tug, in two directions. Control over the other women on stage is like watching the oppressed become the oppressor. Are you Little Bitch, or the Big Bad Witch? The

Famous seems to embody my thoughts so far: she is so constructed from society, layered with reference upon reference upon mimicry upon memory upon archetype upon porn-template upon dualisms, that we cannot see her anymore, and the performance itself becomes superficial and complex at the same time. It reflects how I feel navigating the buildings: there is so much contact, that the conceptual inner landscape both takes shape and loses shape in the speed of contact. Trickster or tricked?

The trickster presents a third way; the trickster breaks a cycle of one or the other, intervenes to re-write the rules. Pacitti company seem to have survived with a lot of this knack for thinking and working laterally. Spill seems to maintain its artistic direction, its independence, its inner community whilst opening its arms to new audiences and experiences also. Hearing about its trajectory brings this into sharper contact with the works that exist here, and the way they exist alongside each other. Initiating Spill as a result of a need, a movement in a static absence, and a platform for other artists, by artists, remains core to its essence now, five years on. Robert Pacitti spoke of the juggling act of being an artist and running a company, in the Q+A: carving out a space for the former – 'shed Wednesdays' - and then wanting that exchange, dialogue and juxtaposition of the latter to bounce off again. The tug of stillness and speed; movement and pause; looking back and building forward; nostalgia and progress; distance and proximity, space and compression. The sentiment resonates with the festival's theme.

Thoughts from my first few days at Spill are completed 543 miles away, on the Isle of Mull in Scotland. I left London on Friday 5th April, 09.14, arriving in Mull at 23.45, 14 hours and 31 minutes later. When I got out of the car I noticed

the smell of hazel trees, sheep and heather

the stars, (so bright at first I thought it was light from the moon)

warmth of the evening, almost summer

What did this mean? To be suddenly so far away, having been in such compression against walls of the city, such close proximity and density to others, their thoughts and visions? And now here,

the moors endlessly running away from me

the horizon always a part of

the present, the future - only what you can see on the horizon

always connected by land and your footsteps

the heath unspooling thoughts from me

thoughts that began in rooms, with others,

in contact -

Perhaps it is a question of the contact and relationship between inner and outer horizons. The physical space that Spillembodied in London was compact and sprawling at the same time; spaciousness found within that physical environment was a cerebral one, where the visceral further explored concepts and their movement. How far could the Pacitti Company take Spill, always moving in its process and fulfilment; how far could The Famous take us before we hit a boundary of comfort? The bodily sat at the heart of these conceptual horizons, be it in the form of digging through people's gardens that Pacitti company did during research for On Languard Point, or the touch and feel of a 19th Century dress, or the eating, shitting, fucking of The Famous. The material and conceptual are in contact at Spill. It is an inescapable contact that causes ambiguities and tensions that need to be worked out, contact that drives us necessarily forward and back. Out of this movement events are happening. The next weekend at Spill looms on my inner horizon, framing the between week's distance and space. I look forward to the contact, whilst unspooling in the present: the journey mirrors each performance, mirrors the festival's balancing act.

**12 April 2013**

## Brief thoughts on discourse and community

(a recent set of arrivals)

**By Diana Damian Martin**

“Counter publics are counter only to the extent that they try to supply different ways of imagining stranger sociability and its reflexivity; as publics, they remain oriented to stranger circulation in a way that is not just strategic, but constitutive of membership and its affects” Michael Warner

I leave these thoughts here, hanging mid-air, to wrestle. I return to the poetics of debris, and wonder what fragments might constitute a whole, might piece together a different landscape.



I have been thinking about the ways in which performance constructs sites of discourses, and the relationship that has to what we understand to be the public sphere- as fragmented and multiple as it might now present itself. Inferred in this is the proposition that visibility is inherently tied to various processes that, as mentioned earlier in relation to productions like Entertainment Island and The Eternal Smile, might become apparent in the ways in which artistic practice re-invests meaning and potential to language and action. [Brief call to Franco Bifo Berardi here who speaks about poetry as that which is removed from economic currency of meaning, and more powerful for it].

We speak of: community, challenge, participation; what we infer by these might be different, constituted across publics, in direct confrontation with forces that might be pulling that apart [in the same way that this text is always pulled apart from its seams, from within; meaning is running away, hinged on consensus]. So, as it emerged over the two days at Spill Folk Academy, what can the queering of these words infer? What are the ways in which models can be reshaped to constitute different, collective forms of meaning that accentuate a different implication in the language that travels like an unlegislated currency? Participe/ation. Comme/unity. Experiment/al.

We can assume that what might be problematic within the realm of cultural production is not isolated from the wider societal landscape – in other words, we can assume that there is a correlation between socio-political movements, between what is made visible through and within pop culture, and how these might intersect, dictate or suggest the identity of cultural value.

It is this question of cultural value that has become so problematic when thinking about experimental practice, the infrastructure and conditions that might enable it to develop and hold a presence within the public sphere. Experimental practice as that which constitutes a temporary situation that might propose different modes of engaging with societal practices, legislative or normative. Quite specifically, performance as that locus of investigation; performance as a poetics of resistance.

Perhaps we live less in a cultural climate of asides and in between; the conditions that might impose, restrict and render such practices invisible are tied to a more nuanced set of systems that invite a different form of action, activism and re-valuation. What dictates positioning, infrastructure and sustainability is a requirement of different forms of exchange, and performance is certainly equipped to provide those currencies. The indefinite, uncertain, skeletal, fragmented might hold collective potential.

[pause]

Where I grew up, there are streets paved with heavy blocks of concrete; each window peers into a different instance, like a landscape of dreams and skewed cobbled fragments of life. The routes between outline voids: the empty staircase, the deserted parking lot at the back, the ghost neighbourhood on top of which these blocks stand tall, the broken traffic sign. There's a tree that grew in the middle, scratching on someone's window. The sound of the heavy carpet, dust beaten out of it at regular intervals, punching through this tall silence. Nearby, the market, closed for the day, smelling of melted plastic, herbs and fish and Chinese imports. Intersections that seem self-regulated. Neon signs from shops long gone, still enacting their presence. Music on the street, the sound of broken guitar strings. The ruins in the park. The lake, now being filled for spring. The book on the floor, dusty and rooted. There's a great view from up high, just by the People's Palace, eating away into the ground on the site where my Grandfather's house used to be. There's endless tunnels leading nowhere; just back out into the street.

**13 April 2013**

## Unpacking

**By Laura Burns**

Saturday at the National Theatre Studios, and the writers are out for exposure. We usually maintain a somewhat hidden presence throughout festivals or performances, sometimes visibly note-taking, but certainly for me the final writing process is one best done in solitude, quietness and closed doors, away from the festival or performances. On Saturday, we had a more visible presence throughout the day, an act that affected the idea of 'being present' for actual performances, as well as foreshadowing a theme that would arise throughout the performances that day: how do we locate a body, an image, a work? My awareness of my own body forming a sort of 'tableau' of writing, reflected the presence of the body and its mark-making processes in the notably all-female performances that day.

Pat It and Prick It and Mark It With 'B' was Selina Thompson's durational piece that involved the baking, consuming, making of a giant cake-dress, a sweet-pudding-trap in which the artist placed herself. Loud disco tunes and female-sung ballads poured through the sugar-thick room, coating our ears as nattering pervaded: cups of tea, laughing, baking – the domestic sphere meeting the performance space. With it, the private and intimate dialogue of familiar relations became performed, gender stereotypes fulfilled almost to a caricature, yet whether this was genuine or not was almost impossible to tell. In this sense the piece was transparent; the artists were open and non-performative, whilst at the same time oddly opaque in its fulfilment of an image: the perfect 1950s housewife, the girlie fashions and voluptuous femininity that fulfilled an aesthetic, feeding us with an image. The strewn magazines were innocent comfort-making props, and poisonous image-feeders also.

I saw kilos of sugar, icing and cake mixture. I heard the story behind Selina's relationship with her body, her weight, her mother. This ritual baking could be harmful or comforting, self-destructive or empowering. When I thought about the pounds of sugar going into the cake mix and icing, I felt as though I was watching the body being sculpted from the inside out, marked by its consumption. The possibility for this inner mark-making to be read as harmful as well as comforting or commendable in its overriding of society's pressure to 'look' a certain way, meant the piece refused to commit to its caricature. I felt implicated; as an audience member and writer I was consuming the performance, Selina and her embodied memories and histories. I would experience a sense of déjà-vu the next day, listening to Heather Cassils talking about her training regime and the amount she had to consume; which process was harmful, which one helpful? Both processes made a mark on a body – one producing fat, one producing muscle, but both bodies would then be read with a series of lenses, and no doubt judgement also: respect, awe, freedom, disgust, attraction, impressiveness, surprise, but perhaps their processes were not entirely dissimilar.

[ pause in the foyer / me putting up papers with ideas about contact / then finding there was no way in for the public / I had written them badly / everyone would see how badly I had written them / failure exposed / no way in / I spoke to my mother in this time / she felt less intimidated than last weekend / there was a way in for her this time / female performers / healing nurturers / she was able to let go of anxieties of 'how should I be in this place' / a reminder it can be a closed world / visible but shut off / If we are not part of it If we Are Apart how visible is it all? ]

I positioned myself in view, in the foyer of the National Theatre Studios. I spoke on SPILL TV: my writer thoughts attached to my voice and my body again, a visible presence. I moved upstairs to Julie Vulcan's work, I Stand In. Vulcan ritually washed, oiled, massaged, and dried individuals' bodies, imprinting their shape on muslin. The muslin prints hung about the room like shrouds. The atmosphere was sacred, sombre, oppressive, nurturing, religious, maternal, healing. Julie's hands held each crease that was a line of tension, each muscle-held history and memory. In turn those stories lined the space of the performance on the muslins, each one marked by a word Vulcan had written. The muslin spoke of bodies outside the usual parameters where we would encounter sensuous or intimate touch from another individual; outside economic transactions, or sexual ones, the muslin prints told the story of the transitory space between two bodies and in particular the negotiated space of this transfer in performance.

The relationship witnessed was one in which some weight felt like it was passed from one body to another; tension, pain, suffering, was passed and held by another. Existing between death and cleansing, re-birth, like Thompson's, the piece refused

to commit to one coherent image, leaving us instead in a place of desire for contact. The imprint of the body was the lasting record of this. Religious, sacred, the Mary Magdalene, Vulcan sculpted the stories out of the bodies; skin and flesh became oiled and ultimately the active presence in the room, leaving the final mark, far beyond the duration of the six hours' performance.

Clouds            white flash!

Low bang!

Lightning

Mama

Content

[Vulcans' traces in red marker blood pigment pen on muslin – now my writing is the documentation that is lasting in parallel with these words that will still be there, somewhere, far away from their bodies]

clouds hanging from the ceiling / cloths that the women used to use, widwives, embalmers

“Embalm me, calm me”            -

[somebody else's words offered to our visible writing process, written c. 2pm, National Theatre Studios level 2, Saturday 13th April]

This kind of touch usually happens in closed rooms, but everything is opened out today. I walk downstairs, take up my post at the laptop we have now plugged into a projector, so anyone can witness my stream-of-consciousness, my immediate thoughts, the immediacy of my processing. I am performing. I let go of this gradually. I have a visitor. Should I speak to her? She is my witness. I am validated by this. She is here with me. My reader. I delete a passage. She has seen it though. I wonder if she will remember it. She has seen me delete it, she has seen me pause, but she cannot see that this is why. I wonder if she is making up her own reason. I wonder if I should write this. I wonder if I should start a conversation with her just by writing here. I drift again; presence as a writer once more distracting me from presence as a viewer, present in performance. I leave my post, return to another work.

The line between harmfulness and nurturing was made more visible in Elena Molinaro's *In Be Tween*. Here I watched pins pricking feet, clothes pegs pinching skin; echoes of the domestic returned, gender sexualised and performed, but resisted also. Elena's gaze was not flirtatious; she watched us and looked through us

simultaneously. She gave her body up to the brink of abuse, but closed it off from that also. The violence implicit behind the imagery and text of the performance -

“one day I'll penetrate you without a condom

with your permission”

complicated our presence as an audience also asked to view Molinaro in a sexualised way, whilst also condemned for doing so by seeing the potential harm as well as the playfulness. The result was an ambiguity on our side of the lens. Was I embodying a male gaze, a lesbian gaze, a maternal gaze, a willing sisterhood? I kept coming in and out of the performance, and I left wondering if it was because the piece did that – kept us coming and going, distant and invited – unsure how to proceed, unsure of the negotiations. The next day, Dominic Johnson would mention the contact of sexual encounters as either networking or connecting; what kind of performance contact were we making here? The answer that presented itself on a huge mirror at the end of the performance gave me a clue:

YOU ARE STILL HERE

shocking me into presence again. I am still here, still watching, still witnessing. You are made by me being here, being present. I am making you, in my image.

“The little sea-maid is skinning a fish, scaling a fish and plopping it into a massive tank of water. She's drowning herself, breathing the hard water in, on a video monitor like Chris Burden, slashing at her gaffa tape tail with a little knife, breaking free and straddling the chair. She's dragged herself across the illuminated corridor that parts the crowd and pushes them aside. She smeared and oily, with patchy scales that line her route. A drowning blonde wig in a plastic container”

- anon, written anytime between 6.30pm and 8pm, National Theatre Studios, Saturday 13th April.

Season Butler split open her mermaid tale, dragged one flippered-foot out the door with her. She became sexless before this moment, taping her legs, her gender together. The splitting back into two was a transformation rather than a return. She seemed to play out the desire the other pieces had embodied. The desire for change: for morphing between human and animal. It made me reflect on the previous pieces I had seen that day, how they played around being gender

stereotypes: girl-next-door, healer, sexual woman, and now this: the transformation, as Season strapped her legs together, negating her sexuality whilst exaggerating it at the same time, now naked and wearing a blonde wig. A phrase Heather Cassils would use the next day rings in my head when I remember this: “the signifiers don't match up”. It is applicable to the performances today, their straddling these boxes, and resisting them whilst fulfilling them also. The power of being able to do both is profound.

Heather Cassils would intensify this in less than an hour.

The performances over the day seemed to stack themselves on top of each other, each one adding to ways of seeing, or not seeing, an attempt to locate but be increasingly refused the possibility of locating. Heather Cassils' seminal work pounded its way into our vision, our consciousness, our ears, our understanding. We could not see her, could not catch up with her; the image solidified but elusive and escaping our attempt to capture it. Sexualised one minute, mounting a clay obelisk, then pounding it into brutal submission, a male physique conquering – we could not locate Cassils, her gender, her body.

The day afterwards she would talk about the body as a mark-maker, referencing even artists such as Jackson Pollock. Whilst she marked the clay, the steroids she had taken months ago, the calories she had consumed, fulfilled their training by marking her body as an image for this moment. This moment, that was, now.. gone. She was a distillation, a tableau, behind which we could not see. It highlighted all the other performances, that they too were tableaus, as was my writing that day, tableaus in which the body left its mark, internally and externally; the image was a moment of this process. Behind the tableau was a world of possibility, of violence, of non-dualistic openings. Looking afterwards at the traces of her on the clay – did we want contact with Cassils as a body? As a man or a woman? Or did we want to make our own mark on the clay, leave our own imprint? For me some of this desire was a need for more – to see more, to understand more, to touch and have contact with more of someone, more of a work. It was strange to be left with this feeling whilst knowing I couldn't have taken any more of it, had there been more. Balancing on this limit – the body's, the audience's – revealed to me the poignancy behind all the works, and the process of writing about them as well. The pieces that day inhabited the limit of wanting more contact, seeking contact and being intimidated by contact, this ambiguous meeting place, where to see is to catch a glimpse, be it of the writing process, the training process, the ideas behind the performance, a person or a page. This is the language of the body, for the body manifests these ambiguities, can be all things at once: open and sexual, closed and trapped, promiscuous and direct. It is no wonder the last day of SPILL performances played out the body's contact itself, its limits, boundaries, desires, closures: its endlessly writing itself in and around the performances.

14 April 2013

## Writers Unpacked

By the 2013 SPILL Writers

Diana: This text belongs to everyone, authored by no particular person, the connected and connective thoughts of those audience members and writers present on the final Saturday of Spill Festival at National Theatre Studios. Some voices were eager collaborators, others posed interventions authored and documented by the Spill Writing Team. Writing here is an act of temporal inscription, representing the collectivity of that invisible community we temporarily locate within a festival, within this festival. Questions and meaning were being exhausted and toyed with as part of Forced Entertainment's 24-hour Quizoola, Julie Vulcan was bathing bodies in oil and muslin, and Selina Thompson was cloathing her body with cake made by others. Time, you see, became action, and resistance found its way into this constellation.

Pat it....,

I haven't shaved my legs for five years it just doesn't grow mine neither it's quite nice the other one eats some lovely jubbly something comfy and squishy and ultimate comfort and comfort want to dive in the land of plenty fifties dressing gowns chat the women chat the domestic we are making this space our space the space of what we know the cups of tea the nurture hearts and flipflop

pat it down

lick our fingers

jam my mum used to work in a jammy dodger biscuit factory, putting the jammy dodgers in their place in the pack

contact with the food that we eat

makes me think of raven boy eating eating eating and the hunger

the story about the man who ate himself. He cut down a sacred grove and was met by SHE the goddess who PROVIDETH. She cursed him, made hunger hunger that made him mad and he ate and ate and ate and when he had eaten everything he sold his daughter to an old fisherman for a net full of raw fish, but she changed herself and escaped, came back to her father, changed herself into a different animal every day so he could sell her at market, then each time she'd change again and come back to him. Except one day she changed herself into an oxen and he watched her rump sway from side to side as he walked to market, thought fuck it, why am I selling off such good meat why not just.... and he ate her, clawed her down devoured her teeth to raw meat. Then there was nothing left to eat so he licked his own salty sweat and blood. It tasted good. He kept licking and then... a bite. Just one. Then a scrape of flesh from the thigh with a knife, then a dig of calf and a grab of flesh and

he had eaten himself. Know who your food comes from, pay homage to that the provideth, before you take take take eat eat eat

it's saturday night night niggth

cling film

girlies come together we have to make the structure more solid maybe cut a wedge out so it doesn't all fall in

chicken wire like a cage a cage around this preconceptions because I saw this before

intricate sponge being baked right

now suddenly this space is a different one

A coil of metal netting, bricks of cake, jam, cream, floor, sofa, women building, what kind of architecture will this become, pop music playing on the radio, a woman in a polka dot swim suit, generational differences combining, a ritual slicing of cake – the potential of meat joy – pink light falls, amy winehouse is now singing – a 50s image that never was – an offer to help, an offer to eat or to build. The writer is called to action and begins to build the giant cake. A break from writing.

Thoughts on the performances that stack together in these buildings...I was making a cake; the space was thick with something like comfort and familiarity, although I have never done this before, been 'such a girl'. Strange that such a stereotype opens us up in this way, makes us feel we can walk in and connect, talk as though she's not performing. What relief, to be invited over boundaries. The kitchen space, the domestic space vs. the performance space – this is usually done behind the scenes, like this writing and thinking too, but now it is projected, opened up sliced apart for the gaze, watching and being watched. (This reminds me of In-Be-Tween)... Steve said when he went back something had shifted from those first few hours when it was just us, a handful asking tentatively what to do, chatting as though we didn't have to be anything but.. thankful for this mundane task that we could all fulfil in some way or other, and my mother who felt she could go straight up and talk about what it was, this thing to grow up feeling like a mother had been different, making a cake out of it – I asked her if her mother made cakes and she said no, she wouldn't have if she hadn't had to – what would we all be doing if we didn't have to? Did the men feel different in there? I didn't ask. Girls

just wanna have fun

oh oh girls just wanna have

fun

that's what they really want



I keep holding the residue of In Be Tween around with me, even writing this now. It hangs in front of my older memory of this morning – the symbols feel too distinct but they stick I can't shed them – bride, flirt, plastic surgery; they cloud my vision of another woman, a woman being washed and oiled, black skin smoothed by white hands, an elbow cradling that crook in her neck where we hold all the things we keep silent, all the regret, we tighten it into a knot and keep it in those nooks and crannies of the body. She held it and I watched and wished I was there instead, on the table, on the altar, a human sacrifice to the smoothing away of something. What is this taboo to have only one person be able to touch you so intimately, so sensually? Why can we break this only in another currency of performance, or economy, or profession, or the ultimate intimacy? Why can't we all hold each other in this way, from time to time? I feel sure that everyone else watching wants it too... do they? I can't ask. It feels like we're in church. Each shroud with an imprint, each shroud named cloud white flash! Low bang! Lightning Mama, - and a trace of a body; this sculpture before me becomes its own casing, holding all of what I want my own to hold. The imprint red marker blood words language will it stay more visible than the oil skin sweat moisture of the body, that gives itself up to the material. Clouds hanging from the ceiling. Cloths that the women used to use. Embalm me, calm me. Embalming used to be done by the women in the village who were also the midwives. This kind of touch usually happens in closed rooms

everything opened

out today

writing, baking, touching,

now suddenly the silence is broken and hey! I have visitors, isn't it huh something (?) to have sudden intimacy because of this transparent writing whatever to call it -

we're talking about why he makes work that asks a kind of intimacy from the audience, what is this and how does it bleed in or out of the need to be intimate with more than one person outside of us?

Ethics of one-to-one performances

now I'm documenting the conversation that has stemmed out of us being here and writing like this, like a performance

when the intimacy is shared from the one to one out to the audience, suddenly a degree of the intimacy is lost

sitting next to falling in love with the person you're

but that changes

strange to hear all of this with the residue of the other performances still ringing in vision imagination memory tangibility I know some of them are still happening beyond above in the building

now we're talking about what desire means, all this in light of having seen Julie taking easing the pain out of people, how much I desired this

They are talking about Live Art Dogging, moments of intimacy and hilarity, and suddenly this private space of trying to form thoughts about the performances, the spaces we inhabit, are split open and in my consciousness as well as my visual and audible periphery are soundbites thoughts from others. In not so long a time this has happened. Has my writing become an interactive, collaborative performance? I'm writing their words some of the time, so it maybe is not even mine anymore at all.

The one-to-one work and themes of intimacy coming up feels like a desire to be intimate with people, he says. I wonder if it's an extension of the ritual contact we maybe don't have any more. Performance maybe is a ritual space where these boundaries are challenged and taboos are given a frame work so they are able to be explored. What kind of closeness can you get through this framework?

Text email contact but distance at the same time  
What do you mean by meaningful?

(There's a philosopher who talks about meaningful relationships... Alan Holland... )

physicality and spatial disconnection, but what about the speed of writing letters and writing texts and leaving it hanging in the ether somehow.

Something similar happens to me even within these direct performances that are happening today. The residue that settles from them doesn't resolve itself until I am far away, distanced and with space between the thing and myself. I want to go back and make contact with Selina, Julie, Elena, - all women today, I wonder if that was intentional. And now I'm listening to a group of men talking about intimacy and I'm an eaves-dropper, a fly on the wall, or am I part of this conversation too? Not sure...

confessional writing  
disclosing deep dark secrets

was Elena doing that? It felt like that on the surface, but there was a distance there too; I felt myself leaving and coming back again, feeling far away, as though she was going through the motions and I was watching do you want me?

Do you want me?

Say that you want me

These human needs drive us in funny ways. What kind of contact is this do you want me? Say that you want me

do you want me

what do you want from this?

She stood on pins and pricked the skin  
before the table crashed. I wasn't sure if this was intentional or not.

you will keep returning to the same questions again and again  
as you leave here you will think about this and still decide that it is about you  
wanting to be close to somebody

you might want to fuck them

but you might not

you might want to hold them

you might not

perhaps you don't need to know why this is

just

just

just

you are not really friends

its like a wedding

you are away

its like a wedding

and it

it is hard to find time and space to think like this

the stairwell is the place we find when we no longer go to parties and talk like this  
after taking drugs

perhaps

I agree

but when you leave you will think of this

think of when we were last together

when we were last together

we were last together

its funny how the stairwell has just arrived back in the writing

I thought that that had gone

it seems that intimacy is possible here

it seems intimately

intentional

in

as things go on it becomes local, less foreign....

In Be Tween where the mode of contact is distanced, we are separated by some boundary that feels like it is made of eyes and mirrors. The vision is separating us. She is looking to me or through me; my writing is going through or bouncing straight off again.

The little sea-maid is skinning a fish, scaling a fish and plopping it into a massive tank of water. She's drowning herself, breathing the hard water in, on a video monitor like Chris Burden, slashing at her gaffa tape tail with a little knife, breaking free and straddling the chair. She's dragged herself across the illuminated corridor that parts the crowd and pushes them aside. She smeared and oily, with patchy scales that line her route. A drowning blonde wig in a plastic container.

Weapons and water.