

SEAM 2013 SYMPOSIUM

AUDIENCE AUTHORSHIP CURATION

Performances
Keynotes
Papers
Workshops

Venue:
Critical Path, Sydney

For more info:
seam2013.wordpress.com

BENEDICT ANDERSON

MARGIE MEDLIN

PAUL GAZZOLA

SEAM 2013

2013 | *Critical Path*

Over three intensive days SEAM2013 mounted a combination of 50 lectures, performances, academic papers and media art works by individuals and groups from across Australia and 12 countries.

SEAM2013 sought to address the shifting context of cultural production, from the independent collectives of the 1970s and 1980s to a current model where institutionalized governance of cultural production dominates, through the following themes:

Authorship – What are our methods of defining and negotiating accreditation between artists and producers, artists and other artists, artists and communities? How do we share ownership and how do we negotiate ground in forming collaborations?

Audience – Who is the audience? How do they relate to the work and to each other? What expectations do they bring? How do they become activated?

Curation – What are curators? What influences do they exert in the production of dance and performance? Are themes important? What are the pressures exerted on artistic production through theme driven festivals?

As the only interdisciplinary performance research symposium dedicated to the enquiry of dance and performance practices in Australia, SEAM2013 Symposium built on the work produced by a national and international community of participants over the last three SEAM Symposia in 2009, 2010 and 2011. Generating an ongoing platform of dialogue for art makers and theoreticians, the SEAM Symposia's unique position within the discourse of arts production bridges both practice and academia. The Symposium was financed and supported by Critical Path, University of Technology, Sydney, Interarts Program, Australia Council for the Arts, Arts NSW and Performance Space. Curated by Benedict Anderson, Margie Medlin and Paul Gazzola.

SEAM 2013 Poster

BENEDICT ANDERSON
MARGIE MEDLIN
PAUL GAZZOLA
SEAM 2013

Benedict Anderson presenting his
work
(Click on screen to activate)



Click on screen to activate

AUTHORSHIP – WHO HAS THE FINAL SAY? WHO IS THE COMMUNITY AROUND THE MAKING OF WORK AND WHAT IS THEIR ROLE? AUDIENCE WHO IS THE AUDIENCE ANYWAY? WHAT EXPECTATIONS DO THEY BRING? HOW CAN WE RETHINK THEIR PLACE AND CONTRIBUTION IN CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES? CURATION HOW DOES CURRENT CURATORIAL PRACTICE INFLUENCE THE PRODUCTION OF DANCE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY PERFORMANCE MAKING? IS THE CURATORIAL ROLE ONE THAT REDEFINES AND SUPPORTS ARTIST AND AUDIENCE RELATIONSHIPS OR DOES IT PRODUCE OTHER EFFECTS? HOW DOES THE LANGUAGE AND FRAMING OF CURATION FROM AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE AFFECT CULTURAL PRODUCTION OF LOCALLY MADE WORKS?

BENEDICT ANDERSON
MARGIE MEDLIN
PAUL GAZZOLA
SEAM 2013

Loiuse Ahl, Intercourse



CONVENORS STATEMENT

Cultural production through collectives, cultural funding initiatives and free education in the 70's and 80's, created idealist environments for arts production. However, by the 90's to the present day, these ideals have shifted increasingly towards institutionalised authorship. On the one hand, arts practitioners are able to operate as entrepreneurial self-producers and on the other are beholden to venues, funding strategies and organisations. Festivals have developed as a marketing force with autonomy and singular curatorial/cultural visions. Dislocations and discourse in arts production intumescence become wrapped within these singular visions with their requirement to generate a balance between capital and entertainment. In-between this play on organised directions of arts production lays the independent 'scene' of makers and performers whose artistic endeavours are often 'shaped' by an array of cultural arts providers.

The focus behind SEAM2013 Symposium is to give a platform for independent artists to formulate their autonomy and direction. Opening up discussions around the cultural production of interdisciplinary performing art practice framed through the Symposium's themes of Authorship, Audience and Curation.

Over two intensive days the combination of 50 lectures, performances, events academic papers and media art works by individuals and groups from across Australia and 12 other countries will address what the impacts of the cultural frameworks we involve ourselves in and create. A series of round-table discussions will expand on notions of collaboration, ownership, participation and spectatorship and to how interdisciplinary practices can produce new perceptions and outcomes.

SEAM2013 builds on work produced by a national and international community of participants over the last three Symposiums in 2009/10 & 2011. Generating an ongoing platform of dialogue for art makers and theoreticians that bridge both practice and academia on the architectures and pillars of authorship, engagement and production. We see the reoccurrence of SEAM as a constructive way to open up discussions within the Australian performing arts community of artists, curators, producers and presenters to reflect on various issues, questions and themes surrounding contemporary performance making in our time.

Margie Medlin, Benedict Anderson & Paul Gazzola
The SEAM13 Curators

PROGRAM

SATURDAY 16: AUTHORSHIP

9:00 AM

PRELUDE
DIANNE WELLER
THE PASSAGE

How do you write? How do you tell the story? How do you see? How do you get acquainted with the place? How do you read the traces? How do you go there . . . Georges Perec.

The Passage is an installation/performance for a singular audience, centred on the voice and text in performance to create a sensorial sound-scape journey. Its central themes deal with displacement, loneliness and solitude in our everyday life. The exploration of the sensorial body is through music and text and each space has its focus on a particular audio colour or lack thereof. The Passage is the product of a one year research project on finding ways of writing for contemporary voice.

Performers: Paul Wilson, Amanda Wylde and Rebecca Youdell

PROGRAM

SUNDAY 17: AUDIENCE

9:45 AM

FRAMING TALK: PAUL GAZZOLA

10:00 AM

SESSION ONE: HUMAN SCALE AND PLACE
Chair: Paul Gazzola

PETER BANKI
Exploring Xplore: Authorship, Audience and Curation in the Context of Sexual Exploration

This paper examines questions of authorship, audience and curation in relation to Xplore: The Festival on the Art of Lust, which has taken place annually in Sydney since 2011 and in Berlin since 2004. Xplore is a 3-day festival, including over 40 workshops and performances focused generally on sexual exploration. While the event has its origins in dance and choreographic practice, it is not a dance or art event as such, nor is it simply a commercial festival. The festival seeks to cultivate the performance and artistic potential of the erotic field, (particularly the ensemble of practices gathered under the title BDSM). It also invites members of the public, those who are interested in sexual exploration, to learn how their erotic lives can benefit from tools lent from choreographic research as well as skills drawn from disciplines such as yoga, dance and the martial arts.

THEA BREJZEK
What does the Audience actually do, or: On Malevolent Practices of Spectating

Drawing on Freud who had called the psychoanalyst the "benevolent spectator", Slavoj Žižek elaborated in his 2004 Braunschweig talk, The Spectators Malevolent Neutrality on what he saw to constitute recent malevolent practices of spectating. There, Žižek stated the torturers of Abu Ghraib who documented themselves in the act of torture. The abyss of Abu Ghraib demonstrates the dark side of a spectatorship where the spectator acts as accomplice to the material performed and performs as a co-producer of the mise en scene. I argue that between Rancière's 2004 refusal to align non-participatory spectatorship with passivity (against Althusser) and Žižek's reading of the spectator lies the vast landscape of a 'theatre of operations rather than of representation' (Tim Etchell) with the continued need for a negotiation between the space of action and the space of reaction.

PERFORMANCES

7:30 PM

MICHAELA DAVIES

Attention is a Scarce Resource

A dinner party is subject to the whims of invisible forces as electric muscle stimulation (EMS) technology forcibly controls the movements of guests. An anthropological look at the impact of mediated interruption on the everyday, the work explores the ways in which data translates onto a performers' body through the application of EMS how this can radicalise accepted notions of creative agency in performance. The dissolution of the boundaries of self and environment created in the work makes room for new construction of meaning by questioning metaphysical assumptions affirming the existence of an intentional inner self, and the physical realm as an expression and reflection of this.

NADIA CUSIMANO

The Invisible Game

The Invisible Game is an investigation into the dramaturgy of expectation that we have as an audience member. A work about how we fill in the gaps through our urge to complete the incomplete. Using hide and seek as the strategy of engagement and the playfulness of the public to produce the performative space, The Invisible Game invites the audience into searching for the performer while actively questioning: What is the performance? What am I looking for as an audience member? What is my agency? This three minute piece set within a blackened space (where each audience member is given a small torch) addresses how the audiences' participation, and their potential agency, is increasingly transforming the role of authorship within the inherent field of their expectation and desire.

METTE EDVARDSEN

Black

Black is a slow performance about making things appear in an empty space. Through spoken words and movements in space, a world becomes visible where the performer is the mediator between the audience and what is there.

SCREEN WORKS

AŃA WOJAK

songline (tkane)

songline (tkane) is an act of remembrance performed on the grounds of the Scheibler Factory in Lodz, Poland. 100 metres of rope unravels from her body as the artist traverses this vast fabric mill where her grandfather was paymaster at the outbreak of WWII until his arrest & imprisonment in Stuthoff Concentration Camp. He survived the war, but was never seen again by his son (my father), who was transported into forced labour at the age of 14. The 'tkane' in the title is an onomatopoeic Polish word for weaving, echoing the sound of the factory looms, also heard in the soundtrack.

This is the 8th songline in a series of site specific performances started in 2007, each tracing a different story, linked by the white line of rope - some have been witnessed by festival audiences, others by only a handful of people. This is the only one specifically filmed.

Performance duration: 90 minutes.

Film duration: 25 minutes.

Camera, sound, editing: Jacek Koslowski

JAMES CUNNINGHAM AND SUZON FUKS

Waterwheel Patch

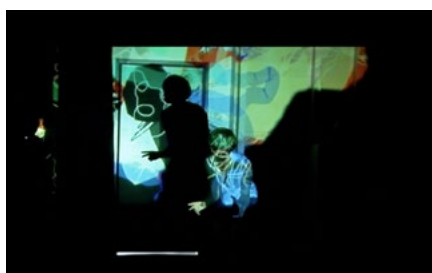
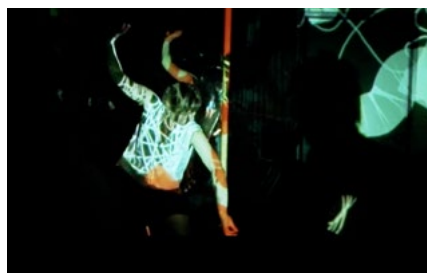
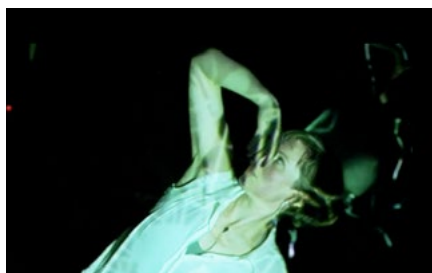
Documentation of the artists' current research into using mobile devices to integrate remote physical movement and sound into the online structure of Waterwheel's Tap, allowing participation away from keyboard/mouse-based computers. Phones carried by or attached to remote participants collect sensor information on their movements, and audio is used as content and feedback source, while they are exploring their local waterways. Two periods of development occurred in 2013: at Earthdance, Massachusetts (Jan-Feb) and for ISEA, Sydney (May-June). Results included physical scores for interaction using mobile devices, prototyping visualisation and sonification of data using Isadora patch's, connectivity between remote participants via sound feedback, and conceiving the implementation of data feeds into the Tap.

Main artists: Ian Winters, James Cunningham and Suzon Fuchs

Remote participants: Russell Milledge, Rebecca Youdell (Cairns); Mary Armentrout, Marcia Scott (San Francisco); Kate Genevieve, Evelyn Ficarra (Brighton, UK); Adhari Donora (Riau, Sumatra); Brisa MP (ISEA delegate).

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Tanya Voges, *Retracing Steps*,
SEAM 2013



Sometimes a seam, sometimes a disconnect

Julie-Anne Long: Critical Path, SEAM2013



Smitha Cariappa, Lying on the floor, flourec performance
photo Yeehwan Yeoh

The word 'seam' makes me think of a repetitive action, stitching threads by hand crisscrossing a line, or by machine sewing up and down, in and out, most often along a linear trail. At this time of the year it makes me think of another action, of bowling a cricket ball along a prescribed path with the end direction being unpredictable. The objective of a seam suggests bringing together, lapping over and abutting different materials, sometimes creating a crack or fissure.

In November 2013 choreographic research and development centre Critical Path, in partnership with the Centre for Contemporary Design Practices and the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building, University of Technology, Sydney, produced SEAM13. Since 2009 this partnership has facilitated four symposia, each SEAM containing an open invitation to artist practitioners, academics and the public, with an inherent orientation toward interdisciplinary exchange.

The body has been central to the multiple themes of the SEAM series, spawning conversations and convergences within and outside dance and movement alongside numerous other practices including architecture and interactive technologies. Convenors of previous SEAM symposia, Margie Medlin (Director of Critical Path) and Benedict Anderson (Director of CCDP, UTS), were joined for SEAM13 by live art practitioner Paul Gazzola, Critical Path's inaugural Associate Artist (2012-13). They proposed the topical themes of Authorship, Curation and Audience.

SEAM13 opened at Critical Path's harbourside home in The Drill Hall at Rushcutters Bay with three engaging keynotes. Artist David Capra, known for his public dance and banner waving works, set the tone for the weekend with a curious, often hilarious chat, accompanied and at times upstaged by his dog Teena. Former professional dancer Deborah Ascher Barnstone, currently a Professor of Architecture, delivered a thoughtful meditation on forgery in the capital A Art world. The incitement of the evening for me came from intermedia artist David Pledger. His provocation on the role and responsibility artists have in the curation of society bordered with the Convenor's

Statement which located arts production ideals of the 70s and 80s as shifting towards increasing "institutionalised authorship" [the usurpation of artists by producers and managers described by Pledger in his Currency House Platform Paper No 37, "Re-Valuing the Artist in The New World Order," 2013. Eds]

Continuing through the weekend with a dense and diverse program of performative lectures, academic papers, conversations and performances, SEAM13 generated an atmosphere in which people from different disciplines and with varied interests created many junctions. For me, this triggered reflection on how dance and choreographic practices have changed radically over the past decade, especially in relation to other art practices and how they engage with dance, where dance turns into and folds together with other art forms and how such moves are initiated.

This turning and folding was apparent during the in-between of the symposium: talking when climbing the stairs from one session to another with a 'trans-disciplinary artist researcher,' queuing for the site-specific installation that was the delicious catering, or debating the role of audiences with colleagues who 'fabricate interventions' and 'work across boundaries.' After engaging in a conversation with an architect, an academic and a 'keen researcher of the emergent and the unforeseen,' a furrow appeared for me.

At many times during the three-day SEAM13 symposium, The Carpenters' strange 70s song "Calling Occupants of Interplanetary Craft..." came into my head. I was in a room bubbling with multi-disciplinary, cross-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, trans-disciplinary, inter-media practitioners. Working within, between, across and at the intersections and junctions were participants who identified as performing artists, architects, philosophers, producers, curators, academics, researchers, teachers, performative creative practitioners, experimental artists... and among them a few who identified as "dancer and choreographer."

Dance has always been considered inherently interdisciplinary, so the notion of choreographic ideas and concepts translating to other disciplines is not new. Choreographic ideas threaded through SEAM13 presentations, mostly implicitly, but when explicitly referenced seemed slightly out of place. The two-week-long workshops that bookended the symposium provided local dance artists with explicit practical experience. Workshop facilitators Mette Edvardsen and Kate McIntosh both make performance work within a European context. Each artist comes from a traditional dance training background, although their current interests are often independent of the body, albeit still drawing on and expanding dance and choreographic principles. In conversation with some of the dance artist participants it seems that both workshops provided an opportunity to experiment with engaging individual movement and dance practices within a broader disciplinary conversation.

The focus for SEAM13, as expressed in the convenors' statement, was "to give a platform for independent artists to formulate their autonomy and direction." Interestingly, the majority of participants had some sort of affiliation with academic institutions while independent artists, specifically from the dance sector that Critical Path supports, were under-represented. Why this was so is not entirely clear as SEAM provides a forum for communication around expanded notions of dance and choreography, and the potential for complex interactions and processes to occur about the radically changed discipline of dance is great.

This underrepresentation of dance-in-dance is also apparent in the wider context. The Carriageworks, Dance House and Keir Foundation biennial Keir Choreographic Award dedicated to the commissioning of new choreographic work and promoting innovation in contemporary dance has recently been announced. It is timely and welcomed by most in the Australian dance sector, despite the debate around the 'competition' context. An interesting aspect of this new award in relation to "promoting innovation in contemporary dance" lies in the call for entrants: "professional artists with an established practice in other art forms are invited to propose a new choreographic

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PAUL GAZZOLA

SEAM 2013

Supporting evidence

Julie-Anne Long, *Sometimes a seam, sometimes a disconnect*, RealTime Arts Magazine, Issue 119

idea." Once again there is a crack where it appears that the gap between choreographic ideas and choreographic craft has widened.

Full of extraordinary diversity, albeit somehow strangely similar, SEAM13 provoked thoughts about the discomfort that comes when the border between forms is dissolved and the dilemmas that have to be faced by the discrete discipline of dance in this new world order of interdisciplinarity. Situated somewhere between brave and indulgent, SEAM was an audacious project exposing an opening which revealed a disconnect between dance and other disciplines outside the performing arts.

SEAM2013 Symposium and Workshop Series, Critical Path, Sydney, Nov 15-17, 2013

Julie Anne Long is a Sydney-based dancer, choreographer who lectures in dance at Macquarie University.

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SEAM
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PROGRAM
BOOKLET

The SEAM2013 program
booklet will be available
as a hard copy over the
symposium weekend. To
access the electronic
version

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SEAM
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PROGRAM
OUT NOW

The SEAM2013 3-page
weekend program
schedule is now
available and is
downloadable as a PDF.

LAUNCH &
PREVIEW

Spanning theoretic and
practice-based research
the Symposium will
present a combination of
35 lectures,
performances, academic
papers and media art

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SEAM
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MCINTOSH ON
WRITING

NSW choreographer
Jane McKernan
interviews Kate McIntosh
on using writing in her
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PRESENTATIONS

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Supporting evidence

(cont.) Julie-Anne Long, *Sometimes a seam, sometimes a disconnect*, RealTime Arts Magazine, Issue 119 <http://www.realtimearts.net/article/issue119/11464>

Weblinks:
<http://seam2013.wordpress.com>

<http://www.realtimearts.net/article/issue119/11464>

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