



SCHOOL OF MEDIA ARTS

SOMA 2358

TIME BASED ART 3A

Session 2 2009

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Course staff

Course Coordinator & lecturer: John Gillies

Room CG10

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Course Information

Time: 2pm

Room CG17

Units of Credit: 6

Hours per week: 2

Course Aims:

- Develop proficiency in analyzing and discussing work.
- Develop a basic understanding of working in various time based artforms and begin to develop a critical practice within those disciplines.
- Develop an ability to pursue intention in the development of an art work.
- Develop an ability to experiment, but also to produce resolved work.
- Provide an experience and awareness of interdisciplinary practice and specific artistic histories.
- Provide a growing awareness of critical art practice and creative processes within an Australian and International cultural and historical context.

Teaching Strategies:

- A series of performance exercises that lead to the creation of individual work.
- Studio critique and feedback sessions.
- Screenings, seminars and class discussions.
- Organisation of public presentation of artistic work.

Background to the Course

'Increasingly in a technological age, performativity is moving to a central location within contemporary culture. We are seeking to be part of a shared experience by embracing a wide range of experiential interactions that pull us toward the live. Performance creates a strong sense of community enabling the feeling of 'being there' to resonate long after the live event has finished.' Helen Cole, curator, Arnofini UK 2008.

Time Based Art as a discipline area at COFA was set up to combine live works with experimental film and video art, new media, sound and writing. It is important for artists and producers using mediated technology not be mere voyeurs- viewing, experiencing and manipulating from the safety of their computer screen or camera viewfinder. The direct experience of creating work in a less mediated manner can be highly beneficial to the creation of all work, and deepens engagement with context, content, intention, audience and meaning.

The use of the term 'performance' derives from performance art (Goldberg 1982) but has a particular meaning in the Australian context: including experimental theatre, experimental

dance and other hybrid practices (see TBA reader). (other related terms: post-dramatic theatre, live art, theatre of image, intermedia, time based art, etc)

Visual and sound artists in the late 19th century/ early of the 20th century: Symbolist, Futurist, Dadaist, Surrealist and Constructivist developed various performance practices which were often central to these movements. Particular mention should be made also of the work of Gertrude Stein, Antonin Artaud and Stanislaw Witkeiwitz. From the 1920s, artists and avant-garde theatre practitioners began integrating new media (film) into their live work, and tried to develop non-naturalistic forms (see Meyerhold) that could compete with the new medium of the cinema, whereas cinema mostly sought to create more and more convincing forms of 'naturalist' spectacle - a unity of representation of time, place, space and of who, what, when, where, why

Out of Fluxus; the work of American composer John Cage; and from the 1970s the iconic work of individual performance artists such as Joseph Beuys, Mike Parr, Marina Abramovic, Valie Export, Vito Acconci, Stelarc, Tehching Hsieh, etc, developed an important body of work where the solo artist is also the performer. Often the work is received through the form of documentation: in photo, film, and the then emerging genre of video art. Like dance, these works use the body of the artist as the primary material of art making. These practices are often conceived of as an extension of sculptural practice (see Mathew Barney, Joseph Beuys, Anna Mendiata).

From the early 1960s onward, there developed many experimental theatre groups who aimed at making unmediated cathartic experiences (see Grotowski, Living Theatre et al), which often broke down conventions of performer and audience and included elements of ritual. More recently the integration of live and pre-recorded video and interactive media has created semi-mediated work in the performances of Dumb Type and The Builder's Association. (see also Laurie Anderson, Hotel Proforma etc.)

The term post – dramatic theatre (Lehmann 1999) has now come into general usage to differentiate contemporary performance from theatre but also hints at possible relationships to text based theatre and the theatrical tradition from which it comes.

In Australia and Sydney in particular there has developed a quite particular performance history with roots in both performance art and experimental theatre. A strong influence has been asian training regimes, in particular Body Weather (Butoh), Suzuki (Japanese theatre director) and also physical theatre and dance. Important local groups in this development include: the Sydney Front (1986–1994), Gravity Feed (1992-2003), Version 1.0 (1999-) and Branch Nebula (2001-). Central to this development has been the Performance Space and Realtime magazine.

Often developments in performance have been closely allied with developments in experimental music, new media art and dance. Hybrid performance combines some or many of these elements. Many important practitioners have come to performance from the visual arts.

The course will give an introduction to different methods of performance making to allow the participant to develop their own performance practice. Hybrid forms and the integration of sound and electronic technologies are also encouraged. Collaboration is also encouraged.

A series of exercises and training has been devised for the first part of the course. It is expected that each student would present their piece a number of times in an open studio situation to receive feedback and to further workshop the pieces.. A final presentation will take place in a context appropriate to the individual work.

Assessment

Class Participation 30%

Each student is expected to contribute to the organization of the performance event and to participate in other students' projects where needed. Participation also means bumping in and out, technical operation, helping on other student's projects, care and maintenance of equipment and resources. You are meant to be part of a cooperative group.

Live Project progress mark, due week 8 20%

Live Project final presentation due first week on November 50%

Each class member will produce a contemporary performance or performance art piece or experimental live music to be presented at a class organised event. Various technologies including sound, interactive and visual media including projections may also be used within the work. The use of the body and voice as expressive tools may also be explored. Live experimental music and live new media art projects are encouraged.

Criteria for assessment.

1. Concept (content, originality, vision, resonances, poetics, cultural value etc)
2. Realisation (presentation, resolution, depth of inquiry, appropriateness and handling of craft/technique, level of commitment and motivation, evidence of critical and questioning process)
3. Progress (shows development of artistic practice and research)
4. The work presented shows that it is part of a larger and deeper artistic research by the student.

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Penalties for academic dishonesty or plagiarism can be severe, and range from reduced marks, through failing the course, to exclusion from the University. Your responsibility is to understand what plagiarism is and take steps to avoid plagiarism in your assignments.

Plagiarism is the presentation of the thoughts or work of another as one's own.*

Examples include:

- direct duplication of the thoughts or work of another, including by copying work, or knowingly permitting it to be copied. This includes copying material, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document (whether published or unpublished), composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, web site, Internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- paraphrasing another person's work with very minor changes keeping the meaning, form and/or progression of ideas of the original;
- piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole;
- presenting an assessment item as independent work when it has been produced in whole or part in collusion with other people, for example, another student or a tutor; and,
- claiming credit for a proportion a work contributed to a group assessment item that is greater than that actually contributed.†

Submitting an assessment item that has already been submitted for academic credit elsewhere may also be considered plagiarism.

The inclusion of the thoughts or work of another with attribution appropriate to the academic discipline does *not* amount to plagiarism.

Students are reminded of their Rights and Responsibilities in respect of plagiarism, as set out in the University Undergraduate and Postgraduate Handbooks, and are encouraged to seek advice from academic staff whenever necessary to ensure they avoid plagiarism in all its forms.

The Learning Centre website is the central University online resource for staff and student information on plagiarism and academic honesty. It can be located at:

www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism

The Learning Centre also provides substantial educational written materials, workshops, and tutorials to aid students, for example, in:

- correct referencing practices;
- paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing, and time management;
- appropriate use of, and attribution for, a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre.

Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting, and the proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

* Based on that proposed to the University of Newcastle by the St James Ethics Centre. Used with kind permission from the University of Newcastle.

† Adapted with kind permission from the University of Melbourne.

Course schedule

Most of the exercises below rely on the whole group being there right at the beginning of the class. Do not be late otherwise it will hold up the whole group.

Week 1 Date 21/7

Introduction to the course.

Tableaux exercise: Group work with tableaux derived from pre-existing images

Montage exercise: Durational movement juxtapositions

NB please wear loose fitting clothing and bring your library card. If you have a physical problem that does not allow you to do these exercises make sure you let the lecturer know immediately.

Week 2 Date 28/7

Walking Exercise: please wear loose fitting clothing

Discussion of In Situ Tableaux exercise

Screening and discussion: Forced Entertainment: *Interactions: Making Performance*

Week 3 Date 4/8

Presentation of the In Situ Tableaux exercise

Presentation with examples: The elements of live work, some possibilities: props, sculptural objects, environments, installation, dance, duration, movement, new media, interactivity, lighting, site specific, live sound, gesumtkunstwerk, improvisation, scoring, script, video, film, projection, audience placement, ritual, butoh, dance theatre, multi-media, experimental music, opera, non character, tableaux, museum of attractions, circus, monologue, virtual, real-time, expanded cinema, aleatoric music, ambient music, minimalism, performance art, process music, live art, invisible theatre, post-dramatic theatre, concrete poetry, sound poetry, audience participation etc

Discussion: Project Proposals due week 5 (see note on self initiated projects)

Week 4 Date 11/8

Introduction to Grid 2 VJ software

Patching and connecting audio-visual devices: basic stage craft.

Working with live sound, microphones, laptop, audio mixers.

OHS issues with live performance.

Proficiency: Edirol V4 video mixer (manual: www.edirol.net/products/en/V-4/index.html)

Seminar: scoring.

Week 5 Date 18/8

Vocal/sound exercises.

Class sound performance: *She Was a Visitor*, Robert Ashley

Class reading: *Offending the Audience*, Peter Handke.

Approaching narrative and story telling, works discussed: *Monster in a Box*, Spalding Gray; Sadness, *William Yang*; *I Hate Yellow*, Karen Finley

Project proposals due:

Describe and outline your Performance Project. Create a score or plan of the work. Leave in my pigeon hole in C Block. Do not email.

Week 6 Date 24/8

Project consultations: Talking through your work
Bring additional material if needed. You may show through demonstration.

Week 7 Date 31/8 Research Week No Class

Date 8/9 Mid – semester break No Class

Week 8 Date 15/9

Mid session assessment: all students will present their work in progress. 20%

Be prepared: have all equipment and spaces you need booked. Get in early if you can and have the presentation prepared.

Week 9 Date 22/9

Rehearsals & Feedback

Week 10 Date 29/9

Rehearsals & Feedback

Publicity organization for event

Delegation of roles for the live event

Week 11 Date 6/9

Rehearsals & Feedback

Publicity finalized

Week 12 Date 13/9

Technical 'walk through' at Serial Space.

33 Wellington St, Chippendale

(off Regent St. 1min from Central Station)

Week 13 Date 20/9

Final rehearsals and project consultations

**Date 3 November (NB this date will be confirmed during the session) 3pm – 11pm
approx 50%**

Final presentation of live works at Serial Space, extra time will be taken up with bump in, any rehearsal and bump out. We will be presenting at nighttime.

33 Wellington St, Chippendale
(off Regent St. 1min from Central Station)

Resources for students

Reading List

Aronson, Arnold, *American Avant-garde Theatre: a history*, Routledge, London & New York 2000.

Auslander, Philip, *From Acting to Performance: essays in modernism and postmodernism*, Routledge, London, 1997.

Auslander, Philip, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, London & New York, 1999.

Boal, Augusto. *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Theatre Communications Group 1985.

Cage, John. *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, Marion Boyars Publishers, London 1978.

Cox, Christoph and Warner, Daniel, *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*, Continuum Publishing 2004.

Etchells, Tim. *Certain Fragments: Contemporary Performance and Forced Entertainment*, Routledge, London, 1999.

Gotowski, Jerzy, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Methuen, London 1975.

Henri, Adrian. *Total Art: Enviroments, Happenings, and Performance*. Praeger Publishers, New York, 1974.

Huxley, Michael & Witts, Noel, Eds. *Twentieth Century Performance Reader*, Routledge, London, 1996.

Lehmann, Hans-Thies *Postdramatisches Theater*, Verlag der Autoren, Frankfurt am Main 1999 (currently being translated as *Post-Dramatic Theatre* for English edition)

Kahn, Douglas, *Noise, Water, Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, Boston, 1999.

Marsh, Anne, *Body and Self: Performance Art in Australia 1962-92*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne 1993.

Nyman, Michael, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999.

RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: from Futurism to the Present*, Thames & Hudson, 1988.

Time Based Art Reader, College of Fine Arts 2007 (available in the library)

Vergine, Lea, *Body Art & Performance: the body as language*, Thames and Hudson, London

2000.

Selected Links

Sound Art etc:

<http://www.abc.net.au/arts/adlib/>

<http://www.kunstradio.at/>

<http://www.liquidarchitecture.org.au/articles.html>

<http://www.sounddesign.unimelb.edu.au/site/index1.html>

<http://www.ubu.com/>

Performance, Time Based Art etc:

<http://www.performanceparadigm.net/>

<http://www.asa.de/performance/artists.htm>

Continual course improvement

Periodically student evaluative feedback on the course is gathered, using among other means, UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) Process. Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements are made to the course based in part on such feedback. Significant changes to the course will be communicated to subsequent cohorts of students taking the course

Administrative Matters

Contacts

For program advice and assistance, contact the **BFA** Coordinator, John Gillies

For assistance when other avenues have been unsatisfactory, contact the Head of School, Ross Harley

For administrative inquiries and assistance (relating to enrolment, class lists, timetables etc.), contact the Faculty Student Centre [ground floor 'B' Block] (9385 0684)

Course Requirements

Attendance

The minimum attendance requirement is 80% of all classes, including lectures and tutorials. You are liable to fail the course if you miss 3 classes [see remarks on Special Consideration below].

Participation

You are required to prepare for, and actively participate in all class activities.

Completion Of Set Work

You must complete all set work. You may fail the subject if you do not submit all set work.

Notes on Assessment

Please keep a copy of all your project work. Backup all digital files.

1. Extensions

Students who are late with assignments may apply to their lecturer or tutor for an extension. You must apply for an extension before the due date. Extensions may be refused if you do not present documented medical or other evidence of illness or misadventure. An extension is only for a short period, usually no more than a week.

2. Special Consideration

Where a longer period is needed, you should apply for Special Consideration. For details about Special Consideration please go to this site <http://www.student.unsw.edu.au/atoz/atoz-Special.shtml> Please note that the application must be submitted no later than 3 days after the affected assessment is due. Also, where the web page talks about NewSouth Q, you should use the COFA Student Centre, Ground Floor B Block.

3. Review of results

For details about requesting a review of result see <http://www.student.unsw.edu.au/atoz/atoz-Review.shtml> Please note that the application must be submitted no later than 15 days after the work has been returned. Also, where the web page talks about NewSouth Q, you should use the COFA Student Centre, Ground Floor B Block.

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS—TROUBLE-SHOOTERS

The Learning Centre

The Learning Centre provides assistance for study-related problems. The COFA Learning Centre is staffed Monday 11am-3pm, Tuesday 10am-2pm, Thursday 12pm-4pm and Friday 11am-5pm. Call in for an appointment or phone 9385 0739. Check their web site on <http://www.cofa.unsw.edu.au/start/currentstudents/services/default.php?n=141>

Student Counsellor

The COFA Counseling Service offers counseling on any problems causing distress or concern. For an appointment, ring 9385 0733. (Appointments: Monday 9am-3pm, Tuesday 9am-5pm, Wednesday 12pm-3pm, Thursday 9am-4pm, Friday 9am-5pm.) Don't wait to contact the service until you need support for an application for Special Consideration: counseling is offered to assist you to resolve the problems that are affecting your work. Check their web site on <http://www.cofa.unsw.edu.au/start/currentstudents/services/>

Fees

If you need to pay fees or HECS it is important to realise that the university will not send you a statement or invoice. You will need to go into the Student Gateway to both get fee statements and to pay online. If you have elected to pay HECS upfront and don't pay on time you will be excluded from all classes and only be able to continue your enrolment for that semester by enrolling as a miscellaneous student, with the higher tuition fees involved.

Advice and instructions to students regarding workplace safety and hazardous substances:

Students should be aware of their responsibility to avoid causing injuries to themselves or to others. These injuries could include; eyestrain, hearing damage, back, neck and repetitive strain injury (RSI), burns, chemical poisoning, inhalation damage, lacerations and the like. Students using, or planning to use, unorthodox materials, or materials/processes/performances in a potentially damaging manner in their class, or related work, ARE REQUIRED to complete a Risk Assessment Form. This form must be signed by the lecturer and lodged with the relevant Technical Officer or School Administrative Assistant. Unorthodox materials are considered to be material, solvents, chemicals, paints, electricity etc. not covered by standard practice or tuition within the area. All potentially dangerous materials MUST be used in consultation with the mandatory material safety data sheets (MSDS) available at the point of acquisition of such materials. It is UNSW policy that no bodily parts or fluids are used on any campus for any purpose.

Public Liability

The University has appropriate insurance cover whereby you, the student and the University are indemnified in the event of you, while on work experience, placement or assignment (including such things as film/video shoots) become legally liable for any injury to any person or damage to property caused by your negligent act.

Portable Lighting Safety

(to borrow portable lighting from the Resource Centre you must pass the Lighting Safety test – see Resource Centre)

Setting Up Lights - Caution

Electrical power is measured in watts. Watts is equal to the voltage multiplied by the current. A standard domestic power outlet is 240 volts and 10 amps (amperes measure current). Therefore the amount of power available is: $240 \times 10 = 2,400$ watts. For example, three 800 watt lights are the absolute maximum on one 240 volt 10 amp. power point. If you exceed 2,400 watts on one 240 volt 10 amp outlet you will trip circuit breakers, blow fuses, or worse, start fires inside walls.

Note also that in older houses multiple power points are often on the same circuit so the limit of 2,400 watts applies. 2 outlets but one circuit. 2,400 watts maximum allowed.

Long extension cables should not be used coiled up. The power cables can generate enough heat to melt their insulation, causing wires to touch each other resulting in short circuits, damage to lights, damage to other equipment plugged into the mains, fire hazards and possible electrocution.

- Do not leave a power cable where people will walk. If you must run the cable across a walk way, gaffer-tape it to the floor, leaving no part of the cable exposed where people will walk.
- Be careful to not have the cords from some models of lamps touching or draped over the lamp head. Power cords should hang entirely beneath the lamp.
- Elevate the light stands starting with the widest post at the bottom. When this has been fully extended, you can move up to the next widest post. If required, elevate the thinnest post last.
- All lights must be adequately supported or mounted to prevent tipping or falling. Spread the light stands as broadly as possible. Secure larger lights with sandbags or something similar.
- A free-fall area should be made with restricted access – an area where if a light should fall over, nobody will be hit by the falling light.
- Suspended lights shall have a separate safety chain .
- Check all plugs and cables before you switch lights on. If there is any evidence of damage – exposed wires – bent pins on plugs etc do not use the light and return it to technical staff as soon as possible.

Operating The Lights – Warning

- All lights must have a wire mesh or safety glass in place while they are in operation. (Protection against shrapnel from an exploding lamp.)
- Never switch on a light while it is pointed at anybody or look at a light while switching it on.
- These lamps produce very high radiation. Extended direct exposure to the lamp may lead to ultra-violet irritation of skin and eyes. For average light skinned people 4 hours exposure to 200 foot candles gives noticeable skin reddening. Increased foot candles shorten the time proportionately. For example an 800 watt lamp gives 200 foot candles at a distance of

2 metres.

- If you work for long periods under hot lights you may suffer from Heat Stress. Early symptoms may include dizziness, fainting, headache, sweating, Take regular breaks, resting somewhere cool, drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids, remove heavy clothing & turn the film/video lights off when not in use.
- Never have a light switched on when the barn doors are shut.
- Never use plastic pegs on barn doors.
- Do not move a light while it is switched on. Let it cool a bit. The bulb filament becomes very delicate when hot and may break if it is subjected to vibration.
- Never operate lights outside when its raining.
- Do not pack the lights away until they have cooled down.
- Lighting equipment must never be operated by anyone under the influence of alcohol/drugs.

Replacing Lamps – Danger

- Lights must be **switched off** and **unplugged** before changing lamps.
- Hot! Let the bulb cool before removing.
- Never touch the replacement lamp with your bare fingers - oil from the skin can overheat on the lamp when it is on causing the lamp to blow. If touched clean with alcohol.
- Do not use cracked or scratched bulbs.