

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

Friday 14 September Workshop dinner — Slacks Creek

Saturday 15 September 6 pm till late

Metro Arts Studio 109 Edward Street Brisbane

Alicia Jones — WOMAN IN BLACK

Version 3.1. Highlight the constructs — a preparation for re-wiring.

Richelle Spence — ACCOUNTABILITY

A self devised ritual examining Western religious hypocrisy on Aboriginal land.

Rebecca Cunningham — PLEDGE

Multiculturalism, equality, religious tolerance: it sounds nice, but is it happening?

Kylie Hicks — PRESENT

An autobiography of the moment. Hicks will be there ... looking back ... looking at you maybe ... she will speak ... maybe not. An intimate encounter with the performer shaped by circumstance.

Zane Trow — MARCUSE/UTOPIA FUTURE/PAST

This performance uses minimal physical/spoken gesture, live electronic illbience and a redaction of recorded speeches and lectures by philosopher Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979). The work was first performed at length for the Indonesian International Performance Art Event at Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta in December 06. Variations of it will be presented on the streets of Singapore in late September 07 and at PSI #13 in New York in November 07. This is the first complete performance in Australia.

Sunday 16 September

Metro Arts Studio 109 Edward Street Brisbane

9 am–2 pm Live Art workshop (by invitation)

8 pm Michael Mayhew — SOMETHING TENDER

This performance keeps changing, as I do “*This is a short story from a long life.*” A generous, painfully honest, open and intimate account of a life and practice.

Something Tender combines a history of Mayhew's practice, an account of why live art is essential, documentation of some key pieces and personal testimony. *Something Tender* takes the audience on a journey crossing through the seasons of Russia, the deserts, mountains and cities of China and the suspended encapsulation of Switzerland. *Something Tender* has been performed at Greenroom, Manchester, and at the National Review of Live Art, Glasgow (06).

“It's sort of strange but we're just getting stupider and stupider ... the mainstream which is just sinking into a complete state almost bordering on the far side of idiocy ... Sloth, that's the whole bureaucracy. Take the easy way! Go by the book! Don't stick your neck out!”

William S. Buurroughs to Nicholas Zurbrugg in 1991.

7.8.07. Live Art of course is a movement, and like all art movements it operates on contested ground. This ground here is Aboriginal ground, and we choose to move carefully and with great respect.

Improbable Futures (If) is a haphazard system of occasional live performance events, projects and meanderings. *If* has, in the past, included South Bank Parklands, Scanner and Jean Luc Goddard. And will in the future include other imponderables impossibly juxtaposed.

This one, this future, includes live artists from the UK and Australia making long term meaningful connections against the odds. Those odds are colonial and involve the deep ravel in us all. If seeks to un-ravel. Michael and I have known one another for some time; this event seeks to involve local emerging live artists in a small international platform, an exchange of processes and ideas, and a seed for longer connections, extended collaborations across other borders and other events. Metro Arts is the right place to do this I reckon — minimal bureaucracy, plenty of real humans.

We petition you to enjoy some live art. We are not solemn, but we are serious and most of all we have the best of intentions. And yes, we make it all up beforehand and then we make it all up as we go along.

Zane Trow — *Improbable Futures*.



Alicia Jones — from *WOMAN IN BLACK* performance installation “Chambers” Judith Wright Centre.



Richelle Spence — *ACCOUNTABILITY* performance installation “Chambers” Judith Wright Centre.

Thanx

In using the title “*Once Only*” I acknowledge Ray Langenbachs' use of the name “*Satu Kali*” (Once Only) for the International Performance Art Symposium, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 2006. Thanx Ray. I'd also like to thank everyone at Metro Arts and especially Liz Burcham for excellent CEOing and Robert and Francis for saying yes a lot. Christine Peacock for her always sound advice and Robert Millet and Sarah Winter for always helping out. Thanx to all the workshop participants for their commitment and enthusiasm.

Also: The Marcuse family and live artist Angie Seah (Singapore) for the voice recordings. My kids Ronan and Aisling for letting me watch their *Untalkative Bunny* DVD whenever I want, and to Kylie for her words and Rebecca for her energy. Especial thanx to Michael Mayhew for making the journey.

!Metro Arts

Improbable Futures presents

ONCE

a Live Art event

ONLY

Featuring Alicia Jones, Kylie Hicks, Michael Mayhew, Rebecca Cunningham, Richelle Spence, Zane Trow.

MICHAEL MAYHEW

"I was struck by a sense of yearning in it: You seeking to find/define yourself, your past, your path to this point, your acknowledgement of yourself as a conduit for other people's stories, a vessel other people pass through and even a yearning for the work itself, its ephemeral being, its lack of documentation. It's here today gone tomorrow-ness"
Terry O'Conner — Forced Entertainment

Michael Mayhew has been working in the new performance sector for 20 years. In that time he has engaged with a multiplicity of art forms that have often been inspired by the environments he finds himself in. His practice has seen him travel widely throughout the world, often stepping into new and untested locations, testing the ground for the development of new performance practice and processes.

Mayhew makes live art which responds to a particular time and place. Performances manifest according to what is happening in the world, whom he met that day, what he's heard or witnessed, what matters to that particular audience in a particular place and time.

He makes work through a process of in-depth immersion, of gathering and collecting, of responding to the lives and life around him. The performative language he uses is determined by each location and its community. The aim is to create something truly of the moment, something unique, where the performance, the meeting between an audience and performer, is everything.

2006 saw Mayhew acquire a new studio space in Manchester, a dedicated producer, management support from PANDA and an ACE supported organisational development project. With this all in place, Mayhew has now begun to develop a host of new ideas.

From www.michaelmayhew.com ...

Something Tender

This performance keeps changing, as I do,
"This is a short story from a long life."
Something Tender is a generous,
Painfully honest,
Open and intimate account of a life
and a practice.

Something Tender is a journey.

On His visit

I am really interested in who we are as Human beings.

Really fascinated in what it is to be a human being.

I search for what matters and whom it matters to.

I explore the immense possibilities of the forms I

Need to employ, learn about, and discover in order to communicate to people

I aim to listen to the silenced and see the invisible.

It all sounds good.

On working with the artists

I would like dinner with you on Friday night.

Take me out round a table, so we can eat and talk about our lives.

Sit around a table with a paper napkin or a note-book, make some plans.

Write up some list, do some doodles and then meet again on Sunday.

By doing this I am able to listen to you all, I am able to attain what and who, and possibly learn something about what matters.

See you in September.

Michael Mayhew

"I know Michael Mayhew's work is difficult — it's provocative, it's challenging, and it winds people up. But it also moves people and changes people, and it's important, significant and influential."

Lois Keidon, Director
Live Art Development Agency

And so we respond:

We desire the investigation of the grace and danger in the practice of making live art; and the inherited paraphernalia in and around the live performer and the audience — the social, cultural, and political; the ecological and the economic. We see live art as a public happening: an early 21st century shape shifting durational event down amongst the cheap street markets of the zone. We'd rather be here than in the chain stores.

We invite and conjure ideas about human rights. We like political correctness (we are committed to social justice, non-sexism, and non-racism). We also like merlot, curry (except Bec), chardonnay, and café late.

We learnt to read and write before all that became illegal for people of our class and genetics.

We are well over all the bollocks about "interdisciplinary" and "collaborative"; we are post-disciplinary if anyone asks. We do not ground ourselves in any one art form technique; for we think the grounding lays a kinda cultural colonialism and we'd rather steer clear.

We sit, we stand, and we walk. We use time, space, gesture & stillness. We talk to people.

We are uncertain about everything. We are anti certainty.

We look forward to being part of the journey ...

EXCUSE ME: CAN YOU DEFINE LIVE ART?

Kylie Hicks answers:

"A bunch of weirdos who love to get naked and scream about leftist politics" (Yuppie in a bar)

"You mean those decadent elitist lefties who hide behind the art thing and beg for Government money?" (Politician)

"It's just ... very cool stuff ... makes you think & shit" (Passer by)

"I'll answer with a joke: What do you get when you cross a Live Artist with a Mafia boss? An offer you can't understand" (A friend)

"Whether Live Art describes the various activities associated with a lifetime's work, as in the case of Alastair MacLennan, or Marina Abramović, say, or the socio-political interventions associated with Ricardo Dominiguez, or Guillermo Gómez-Peña, or the interface of theatre, performance and all things inherent to the work of Goat Island or Forced Entertainment, there is no escaping the conundrum that the condition for the continuation of this work is the imaginative sustenance of exceptional acts in cultures that are constantly concealing their own conditions of production"
Alan Reid* (2006)

Live Art performance is, and always has been, a contested and often controversial issue with the slippery and ever changing nature of the field making definitions difficult. Despite strong historical precedents, established methodologies, and traceable lineage, contemporary live art performance strategies are often mistakenly referred to as 'new' or 'emerging' practices. UK based Live Artist and Academic, Joshua Sofaer, cites the cause of this confusion as being the

'necessary' existence of live art in the margins of cultural production. This 'necessity' resultant of live art's critiquing of dominant culture, through the deconstruction and recombination of more traditional forms of arts practice.

The potentials and concerns of live art in relation to such notions of cultural production, and thematics of marginalised existence & embodiment are characteristic of a large body of live art performance works by artists whose esthetics and politics challenge both the art world's and the media's version of socio-cultural reality.

The desire or need to discover and make connections between a culturally and spiritually dissociated past and our present social and political realities, is embedded in the recurring thematics within live art practices that commonly investigate: identity; conditions of embodiment; the value of social and collective intersubjectivity; the transformative nature of ritual practices; and the status of performance as a social ritual with the capacity to connect distant times with the present.

"To talk about Live Art is to talk about art that invests in ideas of process, presence and experience as much as the production of objects or things; art that wants to test the limits of the possible and the permissible; and art that seeks to be alert and responsive to its contexts, sites and audiences. Live Art offers a space in which artists can take formal and conceptual risks, create a context to look at different mediums of expression, explore ideas of process, presence and endurance, and investigate relationships with an audience"

Lois Keidon

* Reid is currently Professor and Chair of Drama Theatre and Performance Studies at the University Surrey Roehampton. He is author of Theatre and Everyday Life: An Ethics of Performance (1992), and Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and Everyday (2000).



Rebecca Cunningham — PLEDGE

THE ARTISTS

Alicia Jones

Of Tasmanian Aboriginal and European descent she has trained in Suzuki with Frank Theatre and works at Access Arts in performance with people with Disabilities. As a live artist she is researching site specific live "vigil" art in a series entitled *"Woman in Black"*.

Kylie Hicks

A practice precariously perched and/or positioned in public and private sites, streets and structures; socially — local locations, lounge rooms; rooted in ritual, innovatively, intuitively, sometimes improvised. In between installation, environment, invention, intervention and imaginings.

Rebecca Cunningham

During her time at the QLD Con. drawn to experimental sound, particularly John Cage, then thru Duchamp to the everyday, happenings, performance and live art. Recent work as event curator and live artist includes a Cage *"Musicircus"* at Brisbane Powerhouse and *"FLUX-US"* and *"CHAMBERS"* at the Judith Wright Contemporary Arts Centre.

Richelle Spence

Art work varies between political performance art, celebratory and ritual performance and community performance. Richelle centralises her performance on displacement and placement, justice and in-justice and human rights. She has worked as a community artist over four years with "Nundah House — pathways to better mental health".

Zane Trow

Work as a curator and artist in live art and new media has involved major projects with the National Gallery of Victoria, the Art Gallery of NSW, the Victorian Arts Centre, QUT, RMIT University, Scienceworks and the Sydney City Council. He has studied Kathakali drama in India and toured art to Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan and India amongst other places. A sound artist and solo performer since the 1970s Trow currently works with a combination of keyboard improvisation (through pure frequency modulation synthesis), complex digital delay systems and lap top computer processing. Electronic sound and music include installations for the Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne and the Melbourne International Arts Festival; synthesizers, devices & delays for *George Telek* (an ARIA award winning CD), sound art for the ABC Listening Room and live improvisations with Lawrence English and the C!RCA circus ensemble. Other live performances in Brisbane include the *Liquid Architecture Festival 06*; and an improvised electronica trio with Lawrence English and Scanner during *Time Space Place* at QUT. His 2004 CD release (*Room 40*) *"For Those Who Hear Actual Voices"* has received wide critical acclaim in the USA, Europe and Japan.



Kylie Hicks

OTHER FUTURES

September

Spence has just completed a project as artist in residence at the State Library of Queensland.

Jones is currently artist in residence at the kuril dhagun Indigenous Knowledge Centre at the State Library.
www.sliq.qld.gov.au/info/ind/kurildhagun

Spence, Trow, Jones and Cunningham perform outdoors as *"Throwing Stones"* at the Fetter Field Performance Art festival — an artist run event curated out of the Your Mother Gallery in Singapore.

www.geocities.com/yourmothergallery/index.htm
www.throwingstones.com.au

October

Cunningham and Hicks will be performing/ installing/videoing on a Gold Coast beach with a piano.

November

Trow has been invited to perform at PSI#13 in New York.

December

Sees Hicks collaborate with UK Live Artist Silke Mansholt, in a creative development process set on the Gold Coast.
www.silkemansholt.com/

2008

Trow is an invited research artist in residence with performance curator Heru Hikayat in Bandung, Indonesia 08.
www.psi-web.org/psi13/main.html

Mayhew will be returning to search for his sister.
www.michaelmayhew.com