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Visceral/Virtual: Performance
An investigation, through embodied practice, of the relationships between live and mediated formats in performance

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Doctor of Philosophy
THESIS CONTAINS CD/DVD
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Visceral/Virtual: Performance
An investigation, through embodied practice, of the relationships between live and mediated formats in performance

Abstract

Live performance engages the spectator in a same-time same-space reality with performer and performance; a phenomenon referred to by Walter Benjamin as a 'cult' event, ephemeral in nature. Contemporary digital and screen arts have engendered a new body of discourse around increasingly mediatised - and increasingly reproducible - performances enabled by new technologies. This thesis examines the relationships between live and mediated formats and argues against current trends (artistic, critical and funding) that polarise the two forms. This thesis argues for the recognition of a reciprocal relationship between the two, which I refer to herein as 'visceral' and 'virtual'.

The thesis was made as well as written, theorising from my embodied practice and unique experimentation into the creation of media hybrids in performance (including hardware and software prototyping) in three original works: Vena Amoris (1999); The Day Don Came With The Fish (1997); and Random Acts of Memory (1998). I have written from the perspective of a practitioner engaged in making live and mediated performances and as a scholar seeking to create an original approach to this kind of embodied practice in the academic sphere. The thesis submission comprises written text as well as video and CD-ROM performance documentation.

The thesis argues in every case against the placing of either visceral or virtual, live or mediated, in a position of dominance or higher artistic or cultural value in relation to the other. The ordering of the work and structuring of the thesis are offered deliberately, attempting to draw content and form together while allowing their tensions. In constructing the following arguments in this manner, I offer an example of the kind of symbiotic relationship between theory and practice that the thesis as a whole argues for as a means to create and share new contributions to the field of performance.
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Multimedia

Video: compilation of performances

CD-ROM: performance images and Quick-Time movies

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents:

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Program Notes

The video and CD-ROM are not merely 'appendices' to this thesis or 'illustrations' to support the arguments put forward in the text, but rather form the backbone of original embodied research underpinning the thesis as a whole. The video and CD-ROM can not, of course, replicate or document the live performances made for the thesis: these media artifacts rather re-present the live in mediated form and invite the viewer to imagine or re-imagine or re-member the moments of being in live performance.

I do not wish to prescribe any precise points at which the reader/viewer 'should' view or interact with these media re-presentations of my work. I much prefer, in keeping with the spirit and the letter of the thesis as a whole (and with my approach to performance and embodied theory more generally), to encourage a more individualised, spontaneous, performative manner of reception. I would prefer to encourage a process of choice wherein the viewer decides when to look and how to look, in so far as that is possible in a pre-recorded representation of performance. Of course, I am aware as I write and as you read that the live performance dynamic always directs the gaze with the use of light, sound, and movement for example. The fluid dynamic is directed, in visceral and virtual contexts, however much we might prefer to leave the experience of making meaning entirely or at least mainly to the viewer. However, my approach to the integration of the video and CD-ROM in the thesis as a whole is designed to replicate, in so far as possible, the fluid performer/audience dynamic in and of live performance.

For those who prefer to be directed in their viewing, however, I do include some guidelines at the start of each chapter. The full scripts of each of the three shows analysed in this thesis are also included in the Appendices. The act of making the thesis anew with each reading and...
viewing will benefit most from an engaged, individualised interaction with these linked components of the work.

The video contains:

- a 10-minute edited extract from *The Day Don Came With The Fish*: the performance described and analyzed in Chapter Two.

- a full, 40-minute performance of *Random Acts of Memory*: the performance analyzed in Chapter Three. This video was shot for camera, without a live audience.

- a short extract from BULL, a performance discussed in brief in Chapter Three.

In the section entitled 'Performance' the CD-ROM contains:

- a digitised copy of a Thomas Edison film made in 1904 and shown as part of the *Vena Amoris* performance discussed in Chapter One.

- an extract from *The Day Don Came With The Fish*

- a short video piece detailing some of the research and development process for the making of *Random Acts of Memory*

- a short extract from the performance of *Random Acts of Memory*

- a short extract from *Sniffing the Marigolds*, a performance piece referred to in Chapter One

In the section entitled 'Place and Placelessness' the CD-ROM contains:

- documentation of the *I never go anywhere I can't drive myself* road trip website discussed in Chapter Three. The website may be accessed at www.placelessness.com.

Interval: discretionary
Introduction

Everything is commutable into digital form, just as each individual is commutable into his own particular genetic code. Is there any longer any such thing as an action which does not in some sense want to be photographed, filmed or tape recorded, does not desire to be stored in memory so as to become reproducible for all eternity? No such thing as an action which does not aspire to self-transcendence into virtual eternity; not the durable eternity that follows death, but rather the ephemeral eternity of ever-ramifying artificial memory. The compulsion of the virtual is the compulsion to exist in potential on all screens, to be embedded in all programs, and it acquires a magical force (Baudrillard, 1993, p. 57).

This thesis is both a contribution to and a product of contemporary culture: a realm characterised by contradictions including the wide range of questions and theories surrounding media technologies and their intriguing, yet often troubled, relationships to live performance. The impetus for this exploration and analysis of live and mediated forms was inspired initially by my experiences of performance practice. Unlike many academics writing within and about Performance Studies - some of whom tend, as is quite understandable, to follow the standard academic ordering of research: who first read widely in the relevant fields and then engage in analysis of the performance practice of others, or perhaps in performance experiments grounded on a base of theoretical enquiry - I began this research project with the impulse to explore complex ideas through performance, and followed that embodied research with an in-depth study of the theories relevant to the work as a second phase. The various theories of performance which I encountered in print and at academic conferences and debates - and more precisely, the ways in which they
both did and did not ‘fit’ with my experience as a performer - provided
the first source of reward and tension that drove the project of this thesis. The secondary impulse was fuelled by a desire to create a new theoretical
approach arising from embodied performance, whilst addressing in detail
the specifics of mediated performance. As a performer experienced in
working in a live format, I was acutely aware of the controversial
developments in the field: in particular, chronic bouts of funding cuts to
the live arts, debates about the nature and purpose of documentation of
live performance in text and media formats, and the changing notion of
what constitutes ‘live art’ in an increasingly mediated society.¹

One of my main areas of investigation as a performer focused on the
question of whether the incorporation of various digital technologies into
live art work would make performances seem more distanced from
audience members, more ‘virtual’ or conversely, whether digital
technologies could be used to enhance live performances, making them
more present, more physical, more ‘visceral’. In exploring this complex
set of questions, I have studied a range of critical materials available on
the subject of the ‘mediated’, not only in the field of Performance Studies
but also in related fields such as Live Art, Visual Art, Media Studies and
Cultural Studies (all the fields where the role of the spectator is key to the
interpretation of the work in context). The role of mediatisation and its
relationship to live performance has, particularly at the end of the 20th
century and in the first year of the new century, formed part of a
significant area of theoretical, critical debate. For example, in Philip
Auslander's refutation of Peggy Phelan's arguments about the unique role and status of live work, Auslander suggests an (often implicit) hierarchical ordering of digital, mediatised forms. I interrogate this position in the thesis, both in the textual arguments of the chapters and in the performance works that tested my theories before they were inscribed on screen or paper.

This thesis as a whole examines the nature of live performance and its relationship with mediatisation. In each part (in the live performances which are 'unmarked' in the final submission, the video and CD-ROM and the textual dissertation), I address the prevalent range of questions and theories as an artist engaging with technology. In this sense, I offer an alternative gaze on some newly-familiar debates. I also offer some new theories arising from my performance practice, which involved the making of new technological tools by artists for artists. I chart this treacherous territory through my role as practitioner/critic, taking my embodied practice as the plumbline to center my methodology and to question the theories of others in practical terms. In devising shows and interacting with audience members, I directly address the subject of the relationship between live performance and mediatisation. Through this thesis in all its parts, and through my practice-based research (the process of making performance that explores live and digital relationships), I set out to explore the dynamic between live and mediated, and to argue for its fluidity in the age of new media: not as an observation about the dynamic but as a critical intervention in the debate.
In this thesis, I chart a course through my own practice. While I refer in the thesis to performances made nearly a decade ago, I concentrate overall on work made over a three-year period from 1997 to 1999. I focus primarily on three original pieces of my recent work in order to explore the contemporary impulses and contradictions enriching and complicating live and mediated relationships in performance at the millennium. The fixed, or dictionary-authorised meaning of the term 'visceral', is: that which is of the body, the anatomy of the inner organs and instinctual behaviors. The definition of 'virtual' refers to being something in effect if not in reality. The terms 'visceral' and 'virtual' as applied within this thesis are taken to represent both the live, embodied nature of performance and the more abstract or distanced modes of communication such as those represented by new digital technologies, film, photography and video. Within this thesis these terms are not taken as 'fixed' but are rather allowed to flow, to function as fluid definitions, each referring to what is live and what is mediated at given moments or in given contexts.

'Virtual' is the word most often 'pinned' to new technologies; with it comes the notion of being in touch virtually through electronic mail and the Internet, for instance. So at a basic level, the concept of 'virtual reality' is given its most common everyday forms and interfaces with most people's experiences, not of performance on stage, but of communication strategies on screen. This broad usage of the term implies a distance, a
vast and unmappable 'cyberspace'. Herewith, however, the definition of 'virtual' is also concerned with a nearness: a palpability, or a sense of 'almost being'. This notion of the virtual was one of the initial concepts which I began to explore through performance. For instance, in discussion of the performance of *Vena Amoris* (1999) described in Chapter One ('One2One – The Lone Journey': an exploration of the performer and audience relationship) I take this 'one-to-one' performance as an example of a site of inquiry from which it is not only possible but also necessary to examine notions of 'presence' and 'absence' which are so crucial to any lexicon of live and mediated. The one-to-one-format used in *Vena Amoris* - whereby the performance is experienced by audiences of one person at a time and also presented by a single performer - serves as an apt case study for audience/performer relationships, roles and role reversals which are central to arguments of 'interactivity' and 'navigation' in live and mediated formats. The use of visceral and virtual 'presences' here is underscored as inclusive, rather than exclusive.

In the second chapter, *Mortality and Immortality*, emphasis shifts from issues of viscerality and virtuality surrounding audience/performer relationships to questions surrounding the performer's relationship to herself in live and mediated formats. Here, I juxtapose ideas about the 'immortality' of film with the 'mortality' of live performance through a case study of the film, video and integrated performance piece *The Day Don Came With the Fish* (1997). 'Mortality' and 'Immortality' are here explored on a literal level, as the subject matter of the piece is death. To be
precise, the piece deals with the actual story of the infection of a friend with the HIV virus (the moment that changed everything), in the context of a larger exploration of the mortality of 'performance artists' or 'live artists'. The piece asks what any such death means to the art world and to the status of performance in general. This same set of questions is addressed in the chapter, developing arguments set out earlier about the relationship between the live and mediated, but adding a new emphasis on the experience and mutability of the physical body of the performer.

The third and final chapter, *Side By Side By Cyborg*, describes and examines the performance *Random Acts of Memory*. *Random Acts of Memory* (or RAM) plays with the double meanings of memory as human and computerised. The exploration of this piece in a chapter focusing on the human body and thoughts of the performer serves as a base from which to grapple with issues of the live and mediated, and the notion of an 'original' in the culture of the 'copy'. Here, I refer to Walter Benjamin's notions of copy, of reproduction, and of aura as well referencing contemporary writings. I refer in particular to the work of Hillel Schwartz, whose book *The Culture of the Copy* features prominently (or is cited physically and textually) in my 1998 performance piece *Random Acts of Memory*. This part of the thesis traces an experiential path through the integration of live and mediated work. The ephemerality and sensuality of the live, and in particular the relationship between the olfactory sense and human memory, are seriously considered in this chapter, positing an 'ontology of the olfactory.' The final section of this chapter brings the
theoretical inquiry back to a 'one-to-one' format, this time through a consideration of the time-based 'live' Internet performance, I never go anywhere I can't drive myself. This project comprised a three-week real and virtual journey across the U.S. Highway Route 66 from East to West and back again, exploring audience/performer relationships online. The piece also involved a large 'virtual audience' or audience in 'cyberspace' who followed the journey and sent or requested references to objects, and also asked for 'real' objects which might be delivered or obtained from points along the route. In this sense, the piece investigated in a practical way the status of 'web objects': a subject or concept which, arguably, extends beyond issues of copy and reproduction, as their existence and the access to them transcends, as it were, the concept of 'the original'. This chapter culminates in a discussion of the real time, real space journey taken by the performers and their two audiences, 'real' and 'virtual'. It explores the performer/audience relationship here as one of a 'cult' experience - in Benjamin's words - in relation to understood experiences of 'thereness' or 'togetherness'.

Volumes have been written about live and mediated, 'real' and 'virtual' performance, art and dance in the past few years (see the extensive bibliography to this thesis). While some of this work has informed this project and is cited within, much of it was not particularly helpful, either because it did not adequately address the presence of the performer in the practice of theory, or because it was too heavily polarized into 'camps' of pro-technology and anti-technology critiques. The energy and ideas
around these concepts and the actualities of these audience/performer experiences seem to stall or dissipate when pushed into 'for and against' arguments, celebrating notions of the mediated at the expense of the live experience, or vice versa. One of the overriding concerns of this thesis is to argue against the placing of live and mediated work in positions of opposition. I argue in these pages and demonstrate in the performance works, that the same 'oppression of oppositionality' to which Alan Read and others have referred is generally treacherous for practice and theory, where division serves to limit both modes of communication. Just as I have struggled to highlight and frame a sense of the fluidity between the terms 'visceral' and 'virtual' as they apply within this thesis, so too does this thesis attempt to demonstrate the possibility of real communication between performers and theorists, not least in the act of making a piece of practice-based research which engages intellectually and corporeally with both theory and practice, and practice as and in theory.

Significantly, at least from the perspective of a practitioner, the overwhelming majority of writing on this subject is by critics not themselves engaged in making either live or mediated performance work. Their inquiry, thus, comes from quite different experiential sense of the history and 'place' of performance than that of artists who are exploring many of the same concepts through embodied interaction with live audiences. It is my hope that the writings and reflections contained in this thesis (in all its differently mediated parts) make further contributions to the field, from the perspective of practitioner-as-critic. In something of a
reversal of the more familiar paradigm in which a critic uses the work of an artist as a site of examination from or against which to play out his/her theories, in this thesis I take my own artistic practice as a site of examination in relation to notions of live and mediated performance. I engage critically in a practical 'theatre of inquiry' into many of the theories of contemporary performance criticism. As a practitioner, I am actively engaged in integrating the dynamics of the live and mediated in performance works rather than critiquing their use from a position of distance. Writing from this position, as both a maker and performer of live and mediated work, I endeavor to detail a perspective not as readily available in written contributions to Performance Studies as those of (to use shorthand terms which could be thoroughly problematised in another context) 'academics' or 'pure critics'.

Donald Kuspit argues in his book Critic is Artist: The Intentionality of Art, that: 'It is harder to know what it is to be a critic, and to be one, than to know what it is to be an artist and to be one' (Kuspit, 1984, p. xi). Kuspit goes on to state that, 'The true critic is as creative and imaginative as the true artist, and must be if art is to survive its own making and immediate history, its marketability and entertainment value' (1984, p. xii). The relationship of theory to practice, theoretician to practitioner, is highlighted throughout this thesis by the circumstances of my own artistic practice and the evidence of my own empirical, experiential knowledge arrived at as performer and maker in the works discussed. Rather than presenting this as a case for prioritising practice over theory, I am
interested in extending the dialogue and redefining the relationship: in asking where the practice ends and the theory begins.

In a chapter provocatively entitled, 'Theory as one of the Fine Arts', critic Patrice Pavis states that:

The separation of disciplines is supposed to be unquestioned: practice and creation are supposed to be self-sufficient and only then is theory supposed to graft itself as an accessory, a parasite on creation (1992, p. 87).

As a critical extension of this line of thought, it is interesting to consider Alan Read's remark that:

The practitioner who avowedly thinks and the thinker who ostentatiously practices can still, unfortunately, be ostracised by those who believe specialism demands a choice between the two. But on closer examination there is no 'two', they are one. The idea of thoughtless practice any more than unpracticed thought is absurd. My idea of what theatre is cannot tolerate such a separation (Read, 1993, p. 9).

My approach to academic writing has been arrived at through an active engagement in creative performance practice where, in each case, the performances examined within this thesis preceded written analysis, though not necessarily the theory. Indeed, each performance derives from a thoughtful practice, and the philosophies, theories and ideas which provided the initial impetus for the performances are the same ones which I explore and re-examine within the textual arguments of the thesis. The performances cited within this thesis derive from a practiced theory and
similarly form a theorized practice. In tandem with this exploration of the relationships between live and mediated, I argue throughout for recognition of the symbiotic relationship between theory and practice, as between 'visceral' and 'virtual'.

In order to support my argument through theory, I studied my own performance practice in order to provide a second (almost, 'virtually') parallel path. *Vena Amoris* was a performance devised in order to explore the relationship between audience and performer. It teases at the question of how mediatisation plays a role in increasing the intimacy of the live encounter. *The Day Don Came With The Fish* offered an exploration of the similarities between live and mediated formats, discussed as 'mortalities' and 'immortalities' within a performance that itself dealt with AIDS. *Random Acts of Memory* provided a performative exploration of how live and mediated formats can highlight their own unique and distinct attributes.

My experience as performer within each of these pieces informed my research, in the making of the pieces and the re-view of them from a critical distance in the writing of the textual part of the dissertation. For example, in *Vena Amoris* I sought to find away to be less 'present', less vulnerable as a performer while still maintaining an intimacy with the audience. The explorations made through this piece revealed how the sense of distance enabled through mediatisation actually provided some clues to help me to address some of these concerns. In *Random Acts of*
Memory, the experience of engaging with mediatisation in a live performance as performer, while negotiating the preprogramming and timing of the media, informed both the performance and the theories arising therefrom.

Peggy Phelan's writing has often been the most relevant touchstone in my work, both practically and theoretically. Her writing is frequently quoted within this thesis, largely because her style and approach echo my own in their embracing of the act of making in the art of critique (she refers to herself as a 'writer', not a theoretician). Phelan writes the theory of performance through the performance of writing, which, to my mind, enlivens her writing with an epistemology of performance so articulate that it dispels the suggestion of a theory/practice divide. Similarly, Alan Read states that: 

In order to poach on the unwritten, theatre criticism needs to address the 'aura' of theatre, its unreproducibility, its resistance to mechanical reproduction. The notion of 're-production' that lies at the heart of textual tradition in performance has already been countered by many groups and individuals working towards a theatre where aura does, as Walter Benjamin says, most definitely rely on 'presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be.' The point here is not to participate in the wake of theatre, in the wake of television, but to insist on its resilience, to look at the place of the theatre's comings and goings, and to engage those interpretive and critical tactics most suited to the task in hand (Read, 1993, p. 15).

In reviewing some of the key texts and authors whose work has most directly influenced this thesis, it must be said that the work of Peggy
Phelan has proved 'most suited to the task in hand'. I say this, not in any simplistic sense of selecting theoretical materials which support my own views, but rather in the much more complex and rewarding sense that her work engages critically with the making of theory as performance: with performative writing. I have drawn in particular on Phelan’s ideas in her first authored book, *Unmarked*, which provided a highly relevant text for theorising the performance of *Vena Amoris*, both in terms of the process and the review of the final production. I found it useful to ‘replay’ the process of making *Vena Amoris* with the concept of the ‘unmarked’ to the fore, as I re-explored my own ideas about the relationship between form and the content, the role of performer and audience. The writing in *Unmarked* which describes the ephemerality of live performance provides a constant point of reference throughout this thesis. Phelan’s critical essays in her second authored book, *Mourning Sex* – which deals with artwork that confronts issues of death and terminal illness - provided an important framework for the analysis of *The Day Don Came With The Fish* in Chapter Two. Of particular relevance to that chapter is Phelan's work on 'Infected Eyes: Dying Man With A Movie Camera, Silverlake Life: The View From Here'. In that piece of writing, Phelan makes connections between the form and the content, the media and the subject matter of death and dying. I made the performance of *The Day Don Came With The Fish* before I read *Mourning Sex*. Later, in writing the performance having read Phelan in the interim, I found a truly useful and illuminating theoretical framework with which to re-view my own work and extend this examination to include the dynamics of live performance.
The writings and theories put forward by Philip Auslander have also been of significance to this thesis, though most often as arguments against which I found it necessary to counter-argue. This sense of an urgent need to challenge the views in print was most notable in my reading of Auslander’s 1999 publication, *Liveness*. In this work, Auslander re-examines and questions the status of live performance and its place within an increasingly mediated world. The conclusions of his examination are, in a nutshell, that live and mediated forms are (inherently, he implies) positioned as rivals. In Auslander’s view, live performance ultimately carries less cultural presence and prestige than do mediated works. I examine Auslander’s argument and counter some of his propositions with examples from my own research into live and mediated forms, arrived at and supported by reference to my embodied experience as performer working within both live and mediated formats.

In *The Audience* - Herbert Blau’s book of writings on the role of the audience in theater – the author provides a highly relevant resource, particularly applicable to my project of analysing *Vena Amoris* in Chapter One. As well as drawing on Blau’s theories on the role and function of the audience, I include audience comments from two of my own original performance pieces, *Vena Amoris* and *Random Acts of Memory*. Both of these pieces set out to examine and disrupt the role of the audience, with the one-to-one dynamic in *Vena Amoris* and the deliberate use of smell and technology in *Random Acts of Memory*. 

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Of course there were many other critical materials of relevance to the project of the thesis, listed in the bibliography and discussed when relevant in these pages. Of note is *Illuminating Video; An Essential Guide to Video Art*, edited by Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer. This text contains a collection of diverse essays on analogue and digital media including writings by artists such as Dan Graham and Vito Acconci analyzing their analogue video art work, and Lynn Hershman Leeson writing about her CD-ROM artwork. *Illuminating Video* charts a lineage of old and new media forms within a critical context which seeks to bring practice and theory together. It thereby supports the foundation for this thesis, in which I focus specifically on the roles of old and new technologies in the context of live performance.

I have chosen to address each of the performances in the order which best positions the main concerns and working methods of the practical work in the wider context of my argument, rather than in a strict chronological order for the making of the work. For example, *Vena Amoris*, despite being the most recent piece, is analysed in the first chapter of thesis. This piece focuses on the role and relationship of performer and audience, highlighting the sense of intimacy and distance engendered by live and mediatised interactions. In positioning the discussion of this late work early in the thesis, I seek to provide a firm foundation from which to explore linked elements of live and mediated performance in the following two chapters.
I do not wish to instruct the reader/viewer too programmatically on her/his experience of the video and CD-ROM which accompany the written thesis and form part of the total thesis. At the same time, I do of course recognise that there are some valid reasons for giving directorial cues to readers and viewers, while allowing for the human tendency to ignore or contradict such cues when possible. To this end I have included brief 'program notes' at the start of this thesis, and guidelines for relevant viewing and interaction at the opening of each of the three main chapters.

My argument develops from chapter to chapter as a process which is designed or 'directed' in such a way as to elicit a similar response from the reader as s/he might have had in responding to the journey represented in the live performance works. While I have attempted to make the total thesis as a performance and offer it as such, I am also limited by the technical capabilities of the printed page and the human eye. The reader/viewer is similarly encumbered, but also liberated by the willful human spirit, most often evidenced by audiences in live theatre when they select their own strategies of attention and interpretation in tandem with, or perhaps in contradiction to, the performance. Beyond all the possibilities and permutations of media and interpretation, however, the thesis offers itself to the reader/viewer for consideration. It attempts to communicate.
At the root of the practical project which made this thesis is the firm, lived and performed belief that the strength of performance, be it live or mediated, lies in investment in the contact and communication possible between performer and audience.

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1 With the emergence of digital technologies into performance at the latter end of the 1990's, the nature of live work, the form it took altered. This shift was reflected strongly within the Live Art field. For example the Live Art Archive (http://art.ntu.ac.uk/liveart) which had been established through Nottingham Trent University in order to amalgamate a body of live art documentation, was joined by the digital performance archive (a joint project between the Digital Research Unit at NTU and the Media and Performance Research Unit, University of Salford, website URL at: http://art.ntu.ac.uk/dpa), an archive dedicated to collating and developing an extensive collection of live and digital art 1990-2000. Similarly, the Arts Council of England's funding expanded to include a digital arts fund, and contracted, swallowing the Combined Arts department (1999), which had been the key funding department for live work, into its Visual Arts department. In the same year, desperate optimists performance company who have a 10 year history of making live work, stopped touring and making live work and switched focus to CD-ROM, Internet and digital film work.
Vena Amoris

Toynbee Studios
London
July, 1999
A Note to Send the Reader Viewing: Connecting One-to-One with Chapter One

In this chapter I set off on the journey of the thesis argument as a whole, but first addressing the role of the audience in relation to that of the performer in live and mediated work. I chose to develop this first section of the thesis with primary reference to the process of making and reviewing *Vena Amoris* (1999): a recent piece which demonstrates my current commitment to the exploration of the two-way dynamic between performer and audience, live and virtual. I have chosen to address this work in the order which best positions its main concerns and working methods in the wider context of my argument, rather than in a strict chronological order for the making of the work. I argue in this chapter that a notable intimacy between performer and audience member can be engendered through engagement both with the live and the mediated, the visceral and the virtual, absence and presence.

I support this argument with detailed reference to original research into the field, including an analysis of Peggy Phelan's theory of the 'unmarked' nature of performance. I also refer to Herbert Blau’s theorisations of the role of the audience, in the process of developing my own original theories of the performer/audience dynamic, arrived at through the active process of embodied performance practice as research. Here, I examine my experiences as the creator of the work, the performer in the work and also the critic standing back to view the impact of the work after the fact, through memory and through reviewing of recorded versions of the live event. I study my own interaction and engagement with the audience in the work, through the work.

*Vena Amoris* addresses the intimacy of the one-to-one connection between individual audience members relating to the performer via private mobile phones. Due to the significance placed within the piece, and within the broader context of its reception, on the individualised
performer/audience relationship, it was an important to represent the piece faithfully by deliberately refusing to 'mark' its presence with some ad hoc or post hoc public viewing medium. Therefore there exists no visual documentation of the piece. However, a short film made by Thomas Edison (1904), which is included within the performance of Vena Amoris, can be accessed on the CD-ROM under the menu heading 'Performance'. The audience member in Vena Amoris accessed this film via a CD-ROM on a computer present in the space; therefore, 'playing' with that clip on the CD-ROM within the process of engaging with this thesis is appropriate to the spirit of the piece. While I do not wish to instruct the reader/viewer too explicitly on when and where and how to look, I would suggest at this juncture that it might be helpful to view the film in a similar way to that employed in the performance itself: i.e., via the computer screen, at the point in the text where it is referenced, on page 56 under the sub-heading: 'Electricity'.
Chapter One
One2One
The Lone Journey
Case Study: Vena Amoris (love vein/vain)

The true artist is interested in the art object as an art process, the thing in being, the being of the thing, the struggles, the excitement, the energy, that have found expression in a particular way. The true artist is after the problem. The false artist wants it solved (by somebody else) (Winterson, 1996, p. 12).

Introduction

Vena Amoris (love vein/vain) premiered in London, July 1999. Its making and interpretation for me as artist and theorist have evolved over time: the performance has come to be used as case study within this section; it has become an investigation into the limits of the virtual as the conduit of the living breathing live presence. Initially, however, the idea behind this performance was that it would be a 'low tech' piece exploring notions of narcissism, immobilization, and communication, asking: 'How do we communicate at the end of the millennium?'; 'What are the things we want to say?'; 'How are we saying them?'; 'What images of ourselves are we leaving behind?' So although the piece set out to involve issues concerning communications through new digital technologies, it was to be done in a 'low' rather than 'high' tech way. Vena Amoris in many ways, would be far more visceral than virtual, with the transparencies of new media utopia represented by a two-way mirror and end-of-the-century hyperrealities represented by a black and white film by Thomas Edison
depicting the drama of early image processing. However, within the process of making the piece there were some dramatic shifts in terms of form: shifts that began to take place from the very beginning. It is of significance to this chapter, which focuses in part on artistic process in terms of both theory and practice, to chart the distinct changes that the concepts of the piece underwent. It is of significance to this thesis as a whole that what lay behind these changes, what in fact provided the catalyst for them, was the very relationship between visceral and virtual means of communication.

Peggy Phelan's *Unmarked* provides a highly relevant text for theorizing this performance both in terms of the process and final production, the form and the content, the role of performer and audience. Phelan states that performance critics must realize:

> The labor to write about performance (and thus "preserve" it) is also a labor that fundamentally alters the event. It does no good, however, to simply refuse to write about performance because of this inescapable transformation. The challenge raised by the ontological claims of performance for writing is to re-mark again the performative possibilities of writing itself (Phelan, 1993, p. 148).

In re-marking the process and performance of *Vena Amoris* through the following theorization and analysis, presentational issues similar to those involved with devising the performance arose. Ideas about what Form(s) would best convey the Content altered considerably at each turn of the devising process. My philosophy on the relationship between Form and Content posits a symbiotic union wherein both illuminate and reiterate
Therefore the form taken by this re-marking of the performance through writing will aim to reflect elements of the performance. In the first part of this chapter I will explore the theories and philosophies explored by myself as performer/maker in the performance process. The second part will be an analysis of the performance. However, rather than this taking the form of a description of what happened, followed by a theorization of ideas, the two will be developed in concert. This strategy is intended to give the reader an experience somewhat similar to the encounter of the audience member in Vena Amoris as the performance took the form of a constantly evolving journey on a one-to-one, audience/performer interaction, similar to the one-to one relationship between reader and writer.

The Process

In the initial abstract for Vena Amoris (prepared before I began making the piece) I described the work as being a corporeal response to external communications which would take as its starting point, and, in part, as its title, the Egyptian belief that the third finger of the left hand follows the vena amoris, the vein of love that runs directly to the heart. Vena Amoris set out to explore the desire of /for contact, real and virtual boundaries and the different manifestations of electricity, be it internally, corporeally or externally generated. The word play inherent in the translation of the title pointed to another reading, an area of intended exploration, namely a narcissism and self-obsession. In part the piece would present male and female narcissistic voyeuristic fantasies. The image of Narcissus leaning
over the water, 'lean gently over the cradle, over the black black pond, give me your hand. Soon we shall rest at its bottom', presented a danger not only of self desire but of the proximity of electricity and water, the danger in a world of increasing technological advances of leaning too far over the black pond of the ever present screen and slowly becoming immobilized as, head bowed, we are becoming entranced in our addiction in the quest for the perfect pixilated image. Early ideas for the conveyance of this idea of danger included the notion of the performance area being covered with a thin layer of water and the presence of a Van Der Graff generator, enabling the exploration of corpuscular electricity; generating static electricity from the body of the performer. The water would be a means of evoking Narcissus's reflective pool and, at the same time, the proximity of water to the electricity of the Van Der Graff would posit a very real danger. Also included within the initial abstract for Vena Amoris was the proposition that the live performance would question the voyeurism inherent in the female body on stage and ask whether it was only by accessing and inhabiting some sort of 'unmarked' state that this gaze could be deflected.

Can the annexing of new technology be the key to this? Can body memory merge with RAM in a symbiotic, mutually inclusive way? Or have the fittings and encodings of the female performer already been replaced by the totally wired woman? Sinewy black wires spilling out under her dress straps, hoisted back into place, battery packs bulging in her front pocket, head mic constricting fluid movement and extending her mouth and voice. Adapter cables revealed garter like, seductively removed, plugged in and turned on. A direct digital blood flow.
The use of the word 'unmarked' directly referenced writer and theorist Peggy Phelan who (referencing the philosopher Jacques Derrida) begins the first chapter of *Unmarked*, her investigation into the politics of performance with feminist writer and critic Julia Kristeva's statement that, 'belief is in itself the image: both arise out of the same procedures and through the same terms: memory, sight, and love' (Kristeva as cited by Phelan, 1993, p. 1). Phelan then goes on to state that, 'the question of belief always enters critical writing and perhaps never more urgently than when one’s subject resists vision and may not be “really there” at all,' (1993, p. 1). In retrospect, having devised and realized the piece, I would argue that these two tenets can be taken to provide a framework for *Vena Amoris*. The intimacy of contact between audience and performer is engendered through resistance rather than persistence of vision.

In the devising process of *Vena Amoris*, the knowledge of what Form would best convey the Content altered considerably at each turn of the devising process. I experienced a continually growing realization that the *more virtual* the piece was, both in terms of technologies employed and in terms of visibility/invisibility of and for both audience and performer, the more visceral, personal and emotive it became. The more ‘not really there’ the piece was, the more it existed and the more it would live in the memory. Phelan starts the last chapter in *Unmarked*, 'The ontology of performance: representation without reproduction', by crystallizing in the very first line the statement about the transient, intangible quality of performance which is in many ways the essence of *Unmarked*, the fact that:
Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology. Performance's being, like the ontology of subjectivity proposed here, becomes itself through disappearance (Phelan, 1993, p. 146).

I take Phelan's statement about performance becoming itself through disappearance, along with her ensuing remarks on the ontology of performance as a basis for the analysis of process, performance and post-performance appraisal of Vena Amoris. Phelan considers,

The ontological claims of live performance art as a means of resisting the reproductive ideology of visual representations. Defined by its ephemeral nature, performance art cannot be documented (when it is it turns into that document – a photograph, a stage design, a videotape - and ceases to be performance art). In this sense, performance art is the least marked of all the texts I consider here (Phelan, 1993, p. 31).

This 'unmarked' nature of performance is what led in part to the shifts in the devising process. It is interesting to note that these shifts also followed a pattern established in part by the fiscal support in the form of an Artsadmin artist's bursary that enabled the making of the piece. The freedom provided by the bursary, which emphasized an artistic focus on process rather than product enabled me to experiment with ideas surrounding the visceral and virtual in performance without having to focus on a final performance. In other words, the performance of Vena Amoris could have remained 'virtual' in performance 'unmarked' by an
audience. In his article entitled, ‘Touched by your Presence’, performance critic Ralph Rugoff writes about invisibility in art stating that, ‘Hiding oneself or one’s art can also be an exercise in humility, an ego-stripping practice designed to force artist and audience alike to rethink the desire to exhibit, and to question the narcissistic value we place on public approbation in general’ (Rugoff, Frieze, 1998, p. 88). Rugoff cites the work of artist Tehching Hsieh, ‘for a 13-year performance which stretched from December 31st 1986 until December 31st 1999, Hsieh continued to make art, but did not show it to anyone in any way, shape or form’ (1998, p. 88).

The question running through the beginning of the devising process of Vena Amoris was: ‘Will this be a performance?’ Would it instead take the Form of a ‘lone journey’ for myself as artist, both as performer and audience charting through (my) vena amoris the flow of creative circulatory system, in a way both narcissistic and voyeuristic? Unmarked by an audience? Or, was it actually the performer rather than performance that would be un-marked? Questioning not the presence of an audience but the nature of the presence of the performer. Such a structure would engender a reciprocal Form and Content relationship in dealing with communication, and the distancing of new technologies.

The structure also enabled me to re-approach several key questions concerning gender representation, which has arisen over the years of my performance practice. Throughout my practice questions and theories surrounding the representation of the female body on stage, the nature of
the gaze, reciprocal, voyeuristic, had infused my performance work which confronted such issues face on, thus adhering to Birringer's doctrine that:

Any intervention into visual representation today will need to take into account the problematics of voyeurism, fetishism, scopophilia, and the gaze – woman as the object of male pleasure and the bearer of male lack – developed by feminist theory and extended into a larger cultural critique (Birringer, 1991, p. 214).

Rebecca Schneider posits that, 'contemporary feminist performance artists present their bodies as dialectical images' (Schneider cited in Diamond, 1996, p. 157), and this awareness, coupled with the challenge to subvert, control and manipulate the image, became prominent in several of my solo performance pieces. Barbara Egervary writes, 'Paris enacts the desire for a reciprocal gaze; she is seen, but the material also reveals our own fears and desires, our own 'darker side' (Egervary cited in Rapi, 1998, p. 41). One strategy I employed in performance was to fully inhabit the 'erotic' stereotyped female body on stage, only to subvert those images once they were in place, opening up the flesh to expose what is abject. For Egervary, 'She plays with the eroticism of the female performer on stage, setting it against scenes in which she masturbates in the 'dirt' and spits and bites herself' (1998, p. 41).

This construction and subsequent deconstruction of female stereotype presented itself as a double-edged sword. In order to convey the duality of images, appropriating an image in order to subvert it oftentimes meant that I placed myself as performer in a position of personal oppression. For instance, in a previous solo performance piece, entitled C'est la Vie En
Gai Paris, I explored constructs of the 'monstrous feminine' and 'female madness', particularly within the history of electroshock and lobotomy treatments performed on women as a means of curbing sexual independence. In the final scene of C'est la Vie, half-naked, I stood spitting into a small cake holder, held at my crotch. I then re-consumed the saliva, pouring the viscous string slowly back into my mouth. I then bite into the flesh of my arms, pulling the skin between my teeth. The effect of the juxtaposed images of female sexuality, first vapid and non-threatening, later inescapably violent and disturbing, are hopefully as unnerving and precariously balanced as those which have been offered of and to women through the years: the historical portrait of the lunatic as salivating wretch, for instance, or the institutionalized hysteric appropriated in Charcot's Salpêtrière photographs, capturing the 'ill' woman as serene beauty. The female body, which had earlier played with the flirtation and sexiness now presented images that could be perceived as repulsive, overtly explicit. Rather than the 'acceptable', flirtatious, malleable presentation of the female body at the beginning of the performance, by the end of the piece it is the trail of viscous internal effluvia which is the last image imprinted on the retina of the (male) viewer. In terms of audience reaction to the piece, and in particular this scene, male viewers stated either that they had felt 'revolted' by this display or dismissed it as 'the sort of thing they had seen before'. The reaction from female audience members was very different, focussing on how empowered they had felt by the piece and how strongly it resonated
with them on a personal level. In reviewing *C'est La Vie* Barbara Egervary writes that:

She gives a sense of biting as expression of the need for a 'true real,' as an acknowledgement of pain, as an expression of need and desire to really feel, to feel that emotion is real. Such a reflection of ourselves shows us the marks we each carry - the marks on our psyches reflected and made real within the frame of reference in the marks on the performer's body (Egervary as cited in Rapi, 1998, p. 41).

Experienced from the perspective of the performer, this embodiment of the 'true real' felt at times too intense and debilitating a stance to continually take. In her book, *The Explicit Body in Performance*, Schneider quotes C. Carr as having written about Annie Sprinkle's display of her cervix, that 'to look inside someone's body is to see too much' (1997, p. 76). From my perspective as performer in *C'est La Vie* I would ask who exactly is it 'too much' for? The audience member or the performer? The reactions *C'est La Vie* engendered for the male viewer would seem to posit that they had seen 'too much'. But had they really 'seen it all before' or had they in fact they had seen more that they wanted to see? Despite my desire to create and perform *C'est La Vie*, at times I felt that I had shown more than I had wanted to show, leaving me with a feeling of vulnerability. For Rebecca Schneider the 'too much' exposes sexuality as indivisible from social issues of vulnerability and power inscribed in ways of seeing (1997, p. 77). George Maciunas declared that Carolee Schneeman's work was too messy for inclusion in the Art Stud Club. Schneider points out that in fact Schneeman intended the mess, 'wanting her body to be both "desired and desiring"' (1997, p. 35). In working with
technologies in live performance I have often experienced the distinct impression that myself as performer (re)presented the 'messy' part of the art form juxtaposed with the sleek and streamlined technology. In Vena Amoris I wanted to find a way to 'be' as fully present as in previous work, maintain the 'stickiness of the organism' (1992, p. 120), and yet not leave a mark, a stain, to be physically more 'absent', to find a place where sexuality is transcended, and to mark yet remain unmarked.

Since the female body and the female character cannot be "staged" or "seen" within representational mediums without challenging the hegemony of male desire, it can be effective politically and aesthetically to deny representing the female body (imaginistically, physically) (Phelan, 1993, p. 164).

In terms of the power dynamics between (male) audience member and (female) performer it is interesting to note that the online Encarta Dictionary (http://www.encarta.msn.com/reference/) states that the word 'virtual' dates from 14th century and comes from the medieval Latin 'virtualis', and that the meaning 'so in effect' has developed from 'having power.' Does the 'virtual' performer have more power? Sidestepping the gaze can she redirect it? Rebecca Schneider states that:

The notion of the a "returned" gaze or an object's eye seemed always to be reacting to an initializing challenge, always servicing a scene marked by the self-perpetuating and ultimately boring tango hold of patriarchal objectification, always complicit in a drama of submission. The impulse to find an "object's eye," like a "female gaze," seemed fraught with the impulse to create yet another de-objectified subject, caught in the binaried dance between subject and object that had set the stage for the shadow play of gender in the first place (Schneider as cited in Diamond, 1996, p. 160).
Rather than joining in the reactionary two-step, my intent through giving myself, as performer within the piece an unmarked role was to re-choreograph this dance between subject and object, using technology as appropriate to this end, in an attempt to refocus the gaze. This notion of technology enabling a re-viewing and re-focussing the gaze is shared by artist and theorist Susan Kozel when she writes that:

In the past few years performers and artists have worked to transform our physical and conceptual engagement with technology, well aware of the dangers of simply importing the old gender and racial stereotypes into new media. Is the feminist critic always an outsider? Even in relation to work that transforms the divide between spectator and performer and dismantles the hegemony of the representative process? Much technological performance work thoroughly reworks the trajectory of the gaze in performance using multiple representations of bodies and audience interaction to make subjects and objects out of both the performers and audience (Kozel as cited in Goodman 1998, p. 301).

It is the audience/performer relationship and the contact and communication possible in the live moment that has most fueled my interest in live performance. The recent influx of technologies into live performance has made me re-question the levels of communication and contact possible. Do they augment or alter the audience/performer communication? These interests informed the content of the piece: the owned narcissism of performing with its looking-at-being-looked-at-ness.

Taking Mulvey’s comment that, 'The female performer, unlike her filmic counterpart, connotes not ‘to-be-looked-at-ness’ – the perfect fetish – but rather ‘looking-at-being-looked-at-ness’ or even just ‘looking-ness” (Mulvey as cited in Diamond, 1997, p. 52), I wanted to review the audience
performer visibilities. Also central to the content of the piece was the live moment of exchange possible between performer and audience and the communication simultaneously enabled and immobilized by technologies. Phelan writes that within much Western theatre the exchange between audience and performer is limited, being predicated on a set of assumptions about the role of each:

Much Western theatre evokes desire based upon and stimulated by the inequality between performer and spectator - and by the (potential) domination of the silent spectator. That this model of desire is apparently so compatible with (traditional accounts) of "male" desire is no accident. But more centrally this account of desire between speaker/performer and listener/spectator reveals how dependent these positions are upon visibility and a coherent point of view. A visible and easily located point of view provides the spectator with a stable point upon which to turn the machinery of projection, identification, and (inevitable) objectification. Performers and their critics must begin to redesign this stable set of assumptions about the positions of the theatrical exchange (Phelan, 1993, p. 163).

This led to my eventual decision predicated on a looking-at-being-looked-at-ness that as performer I would neither look nor be looked at. The exchange between myself as performer and with the audience would, in Phelan’s terms renegotiate ‘the (potential) domination of the silent spectator,’ using a strategy which fully informed the content and which would redesign performer/audience ‘assumptions about the positions of the theatrical exchange.’ This strategy was that a one-to-one performer/audience interaction would take place and that this interaction would be enabled not by face to face communication but by communication relayed to the audience member by the performer via a mobile phone.
During the time of making the piece I became increasingly aware of witnessing couples walking in the park, arm in arm, seemingly deep in conversation with each other, only to realize as they approached that both were indeed conversation, but not with each other, but rather to others, each on their own mobile phone. At the same time I had a heightened awareness of overheard conversations on public transport. These cacophonies of conversation around me seemed to point to a redundancy of actual information, fellow travelers on the train using their mobile phone to state little more than, 'I'm on the train.' Overall my perception was that in London in 1999 I could look about me and it would seem that everyone was on a mobile phone. Whilst seeming to act as a communication enabler, my response was that the phones subverted communication. These observations (the lost potentials of communication, and the presence/absence simultaneity I perceived) informed the decision to use the mobile phone as the means of performer/audience access. The telephone, introduced to the public in 1876, allowed people, for the first time, to be in two places at once (see Wooster in Heershman Leeson, 1996, p. 276) and laid the foundation for the future of telecommunications. In The Soft Edge, Levinson writes that:

The Internet, the Web, and most telecommunications via personal computers and modems since 1980s have piggybacked on the voice lines and networks put in place for the telephone: the backbone of the digital revolution in telecommunication was thus a wholly unintended consequence of the telephone, (Levinson, 1997, p. 63).
Complicit with the decision to use mobile phones was the decision that the performance would be devised on a one-to-one basis. This decision enabled a format from which to explore the depth of contact possible between audience and performer, accentuated by a fin-de-siècle desire to confront what and how we communicate to one another. Over the course of two evenings, 30 audience members would be invited to join me, one at a time, in a series of explorations of narcissism, isolation, and immobilization, in which the direct contact and communication between performer and audience was central, in which lone journeys converged.

Audience members arrived at particular times, at 20-minute intervals. Throughout each performance I remained in situ in the studio, on the first floor of the building, whereas the audience members would begin the piece waiting in the café bar downstairs. Through the course of the performance each audience member was guided to various places and spaces within the building, an empty fully functioning theatre, a small cupboard built into one of the walls on the first floor, an oak paneled courtroom and finally to the studio where I was located. Through this process my aim was to present a performance wherein the female performer remains unmarked and the gaze of the spectator is redirected through the performer back onto itself, at the same time enabling the audience member to be performer. In this enablement there is a ‘low tech’ interactivity throughout the piece that mirrors, with a gentle irony, the interactivity of new technologies. Paul Pouveur writes that:
The spectator has strongly evolved and become an active player, thanks to the television media and the computer. Since a few years, (s)he undertakes a journey to the image to the story. First the remote control gave him/her a certain power over the image, over the story, and (s)he should make choices, combine, make connections between programs. Interactivity allows him/her influence on the outcome of the story. Soon (s)he will be, thanks to "Virtual Reality", in the image. The spectator will actually become an 'actor' (Pouveur, 1999).

**The Performance**

Performers and spectators are separated by a curtain of light that helps maintain the fictitious fourth wall. Performers facing the audience are blinded by the workings of the apparatus that frames them. The blinding lights set them apart from the sea of silhouetted heads without faces toward whom their words flow. The spectators' individuality is subsumed under an assumption of commonality; their differences from each other are disguised by anonymity. The spectators become the audience whom the performers address – albeit obliquely, given realist theatre conventions – as a singular mass (Dolan, 1988, p. 1).

**The Phone Call**

From the very beginning of the performance the spectator/performer boundaries are blurred, the audience member is seated in the bar and suddenly their mobile phone rings. It is the performer who says:

**Performer:** Hello. The performance is about to begin so if you’d just like to make your way to the theatre. It’s just through the pink door, follow the signs to the back and should we loose touch — if for some reason we loose contact, please move to somewhere I can find you again and I’ll call you back. I promise.

The wording of the instructions seem to follow the usual theatre format, the familiar announcement to the audience in the bar informing them that ‘the performance is about to begin’, yet the way this message is delivered,
via the mobile phone, to one person only immediately signifies something Other, and with the ring of the phone there is an awareness that a performance has in fact already started.

The pre-show nervousness usually felt only by the performer in a piece is now shared by the audience member as they sit in the bar, phone before them, waiting, not knowing exactly when it will ring, but knowing that at any moment it will ring. In his book The Audience, Blau states that, 'As we play out our roles and scenarios, we recognize them for the conventions they are, as if we were sitting in the audience, which we are; though it feels like sitting alone' (1990, p. 3). Here the isolation is real, and the conventions unconventional; the audience is one person, sitting alone in their chair, outside the theatre, watched, rather than joined by other audience members. Not only does this unconventional placing isolate the audience member it also engenders the question 'who is the performer and who the audience?' The audience member fulfils their role as audience as they pick up the phone, enabling the interaction with the performer to start, for the performer to literally be audible. Conversely, the shrill call of the ringing phone and the ensuing conversation between performer and audience member are witnessed by others present in the bar. Many of those present know that a performance is taking place and so from their perspective the individual audience member becomes the performer in the moment. Those present in the bar unaware that a performance is taking place, witness merely a familiar interchange, which they do not question. Thus the familiarity of this communication and the technology which
enables it is reinforced. Performance has become invisible, discreet, hidden by technology and it is interesting to question what those present in the bar who are in the know contemplate when next they see a conversation on a mobile phone. Art? Life? I'm on the train? Phelan writes:

The belief that perception can be made endlessly new is one of the fundamental drives of all visual arts. But in most theatre, the opposition between watching and doing is broken down; the distinction is often made to seem ethically immaterial (Phelan, 1993, p. 161).

Lyotard in The Postmodern Condition considers, 'The paradigm of the sender/addressee/hero..., what one must say in order to be heard, what one must listen to in order to speak, and what role one must play...to be the object of a narrative (1984, p. 21). He continues with the following definition:

Know-how savoir-faire, knowing how to speak savoir-dire and knowing how to hear savoir-entendre – the speech acts relevant to this form of knowledge are performed not only by the speaker, but also by the listener, as well as by the third party referred to – communities relationship to itself and its environment played out through these criteria...transmit set of pragmatic rule that constitutes the social bond (Lyotard, 1984, p. 21).

Here the criteria of 'the savoirs' are confused. A bond of some sorts is being engineered but for what order? For what end? For whom?
Despite the confusion, the phone must be answered. In his chapter entitled, 'Telephone: The Toy that Roared', Levinson writes that, 'The phone's ring is an entreaty that cannot be denied. Every one of us has dreams in progress - yearnings whose fulfillments may lie just in that voice at the other end of the phone's ring' (1997, p. 65). For Levinson there is always the hope that it could be the call we are waiting for, the call that gives us the job/answer/opportunity that we want, 'To be human is to have such fantasies, and the telephone conspires in its every ring to perhaps speak to them (1997, p. 65).

The shrill ring of the phone is the call of the performer to the audience member. Hers is the voice that lies at the other end of the phone's ring. She has made the first move. Demanding attention. The audience member must respond. One way or another. Levinson writes that:

The phone not only has informational access to our homes, but extraordinary purchase on our attention. No other medium has such power. Not the online world of the Internet and the Web, where one must make the first move to receive as well as send information - that is, where one must first log on to an online system in order to receive any waiting e-mail, in contrast to the phone that rings unbidden. Not television, which is almost always vulnerable to interruption by the telephone, or just good old-fashioned sleep. Indeed the long-standing joke among media theorists is that twentieth century lovers sometimes suffer 'telephonus interruptus' - the putting on hold of love-making to answer a phone's ring - and the joke is not at all far-fetched (Levinson, 1997, p. 65).

With the strategy of the mobile phone it can be seen that already Phelan's (potential) domination of the silent spectator has been diverted. The spectator now lacks her/his 'stable point upon which to turn the
machinery of projection, identification, and (inevitable) objectification. The positions of theatrical exchange are already being exchanged.

The Theatre

Answering the phone following the performer's instructions to walk to the auditorium the audience member enables the performance. The reality is that the audience member becomes both performer and the audience. This situation can be seen in some ways to be reflective of the work and ideas formulated by Brazilian theatre director, Augusto Boal who used interactive techniques to try and transform theater into a dialogue between audience and performer. Here, in Boalian terms, the audience member has become spect-actor, the single entity that subsumes both functions within a single body (see Auslander, 1997, p. 101). The duality of the audience member's role is further signified as they enter the theatre space and are directed, not to the rows of empty, red plush theatre chairs but to the stage itself where, already positioned, set, and waiting for them, is their light, an empty spot on the stage which the performer instructs them to enter:

Could you possibly step into your light?¹⁸

[Audience member steps into the spot. In the center of the spotlit area there is a box of matches and a cigarette.]

Please feel free to smoke.

Taking their place on the stage spotlit and silhouetted center-stage, the coil of cigarette smoke curling in the shaft of light, the audience member presents an image, which is instantly recognizable as Theatre. Any audience who now walked into this moody, atmospheric and quintessentially theatrical mise-en-scene could begin to interpret a scenario, instantly recognizing that a performance was happening.

³⁷
Referring to Herbert Blau's notion that presence is 'ghosted', Elin Diamond points out that:

Conventional theatre as a 'seeing place,' particularly the proscenium space with its hidden lights, its illusionary magic, its techniques of illuminating and obscuring the body, reactivates these psychic mechanisms (Diamond, 1997, p. 151).

The performativity of the theatrical set up, the illusionary magic is further heightened when, by an invisible cue, two other lights come up downstage, bathing the 'performer' in full light, signifying the start of something. Simultaneously music fades up and fills the empty auditorium. But the manipulation of the theatrical mechanisms has been subverted, 'The lighting, setting, costumes, blocking, text – all the material aspects of theatre – are manipulated so that the performance's meanings are intelligible to a particular spectator, constricted in a particular way by the terms of its address' (1988, p. 1). Not only have these devices been switched, they seem to operate of their own accord. The Theatre plays out its phantasmogorical nature; its existence as a 'seeing is believing place' as performative elements mysteriously float into place, the lights magically come up, sound is invisibly cued and with the music that fades up and fills the auditorium the ghosted presence of the audience is augmented as Doris Day's song, Make Someone Happy, resonates through the emptiness,

The sound of applause is delicious,
It's a thrill to have the world at your feet.
The praise of the crowd is exciting.
But I've learned that's not what makes life complete.

There's one thing you can do for the rest of your days
That's worth more than applause,
The screaming crowd,
The bouquets...\(^{19}\)

The lyrics confirm the dual roles of audience and performer, which the audience member appropriates, and at the same time there is a growing awareness that as well as performer, the audience member is also the performance itself. There is a reference to Brecht's self-observing condition of the verfremdung technique in play here and the audience member self-consciously awaits the spectacle of the performer and the unfolding of the performance whilst simultaneously being that performer and performance.\(^{20}\) They are both 'watching' and 'doing'; both audience and performer in a performance in which both performer and the audience are missing. The binary oppositions of absence and presence, performer and spectator, viewer and viewed are constantly at play here, but their relationship is not oppositional, rather there is a duality; performer is both performer and spectator, both present and absent. According to Phelan:

Redesigning the relationship between self and other, subject and object, sound and image, man and woman, spectator and performer, is enormously difficult. More still is withdrawing from representation altogether (Phelan, 1993, p. 164).

As the song continues, the lyrics evoking the presence of the audience, and crystallizing the essence of performance, they also posit that something is lacking. What is lacking is what is the essence of life, the real
performative success, namely, love. If we continue with the idea of the lyrics of the song being interpreted as being directed to the audience member, part of the performance they are in/witnessing, there is a suggestion that they are in fact in the wrong place. They are isolated, where, what, whom is the person for them to make happy? Faced by overwhelmingly empty banks of chairs, alone in an auditorium filled with all the necessary elements for performance but without anyone to make contact and communicate with - whom can they make happy? To whom do they then direct this love? To themselves? In the narcissistic-voyeuristic enactment of performance they become their own audience. The epitome of self-love. Or, is there another interpretation? Is there in fact an audience for them? Someone to whom they are audible? The performer, whose voice they hold in their hand determines the action, although it is the audience member who becomes the actor. Blau defines ‘audience’ as ‘an unstabilizing dialectic between the heard and the seen, voice and eye, being-heard and being-seen’ (1990, p. 53). We usually think of an audience as coming to ‘see’ a play as opposed to ‘hear’ or even be.\textsuperscript{21} As spectators watching the performance, in conventional performance the audience is unquestioning in its silence, here however the audience member/‘performer’ make a choice as to whether they should/will speak or not. In his introduction to Lacan’s Language of the Self, translator Anthony Wilden quotes Lacan when he states that in the very fact of listening without replying:
The analyst imposes a meaning on the discourse of the subject. Even if what the subject says is 'meaningless,' what the subject says to the analyst cannot be without meaning, since it conceals what the subject wants to say (what he means) and the relationship he wishes to establish. The subject thus seeks to turn his auditor into an interlocutor, through the transference, and in fact imposes this role upon the silence of the analyst, revealing as he does so the image which he unconsciously substitutes for the person of the analyst. The psychoanalytical experience, he said, 'runs its course entirely in a relationship of subject to subject, signifying in effect that it retains a dimension which is irreducible to any psychology considered as an objectification of certain properties of the individual' (Wilden in Lacan, 1968, p. xi).

This being the case, does the audience member/ 'performer' as silent witness, performer, performance, action, have the power? Is the audience member the agency of domination?

In The History of Sexuality Foucault argues that, "the agency of domination does not reside in the one who speaks (for it is he who is constrained), but in the one who listens and says nothing; not in the one who knows and answers but in the one who questions and is not supposed to know... As a description of the power relationships operative in many forms of performance Foucault's observation suggests a degree to which the silent spectator dominates and controls the exchange (Phelan, 1993, p. 163).

Or, because of the reversed position of audience member and performer is the power in fact now shared between the two? Has the renegotiation of roles renegotiated the power dynamics? The audience as performer holds the performer as audience on stage with them, they are performing together and they are audience for each other whilst both perform. Phelan states that, 'One always locates one’s own image in an image of the other and, one always locates the other in one’s own image’ (1993, p. 18). And what is the answer? Love is the answer, love that is firmly embedded within the title of the performance the audience has come to see/be. It is a
love that is completely visceral – a flow, an exchange from the vein from the finger to the heart. It is the flow from the finger that dialed the number to contact the audience member in order to lead them inextricably to them, to the heart of the performer and to be the heart of the performance.

The intimacy in this flow of connectivity is augmented by the nature of the phone contact. Levinson states that the telephone is, ‘revolutionary not only in what it may promise, but in the most intimate way it makes that offering. The intimate acoustic distance of the speaker’s mouth and voice form the listener’s ear on the telephone’ (1997, p. 66). Earlier in this chapter I stated that one of the aims of Vena Amoris was to create an intimacy between performer and audience member, a closeness, despite a physical separation. The use of the phone served to fulfil this desire on several levels. In part this was achieved by the characteristics of the medium. Levinson states that:

The whisper in the ear – lips of the speaker literally at the ear of the listener – is permissible in snippets between friends, but is by and large the domain of lovers and loved ones. And yet this is exactly the acoustic distance obtained in a phone conversation, whether the party at the other end is one’s lover, an unknown voice offering a great deal on insurance, or a wrong number. No wonder that the obscene phone call – the lewd proposition from a faceless voice – came into its own on the phone. An obscene telegram would lack equivalent impact (Levinson, 1997, pp. 66-67).

Levinson describes the telephone as a ‘highly sexually charged instrument’ (1997, p. 67) and in her article entitled ‘Reach Out And Touch
Somebody: The Romance of Interactivity’, Ann-Sargeant Wooster points out that the phrase, ‘reach out and touch somebody’ was part of a Telephone Company’s advertising campaign. What is significant here is the fact that we understand the phrase to mean that we should pick up a phone and call someone; an interpretation which the Telephone Company banked on. For Wooster the dream of a world where people can communicate with each other more effectively through machines than face to face is now a reality (Wooster in Hershman Leeson, 1996, p. 275).

This notion of intimacy, of sound as caress, as touch, the performer reaching out and touching the audience member with her voice once again works towards fulfilling initial aims for Vena Amoris about the depth and closeness of the communication between performer and audience member, engendered despite/because of the fact that the performer cannot be seen.

In his critical work Visible and The Invisible, philosopher Merleau-Ponty writes of the phenomenology of the voice, citing Malraux’s statement:

I hear myself with my throat. In this...I am incomparable; my voice is bound to the mass of my own life as is the voice of no one else. But if I am close enough to the other who speaks to hear his breath and feel his effervescence and his fatigue, I almost witness, in him as in myself, the awesome birth of vociferation (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p. 144).
Does the performer become more present to the audience member through the viscerality of the voice, presencing the performer through her embodied and unique sound/being-as-sound/sound-as-touch?

As there is a reflexivity of the touch, of sight, and of the touch-vision system, there is a reflexivity of the movements of phonation and of hearing; they have their sonorous inscription, the vociferations have in me their motor echo. This new reversibility and the emergence of the flesh as expression are the point of insertion of speaking and thinking in the world of silence (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, pp. 144 - 145).

There is an interesting connection here in terms of the power of the reverberations of sound with McLuhan’s thesis about the impact of acoustic space for electronic media:

To appeal to the eye is to present a discrete, fixed stimulus, always somewhere in front of the face; in contrast, the ear can be effectively approached from anywhere in a 360-degree surround. McLuhan saw this difference between acoustic and visual space as among the most fundamental in understanding the impact of media. And he went on to explain much of the impact of the electronic age, especially television, as emanating from its treating the eye as an ear (Levinson, 1997, p. 66).

The notion of the 360-degree access available further augments the audience’s member’s feelings of vulnerability on the stage. Throughout this section the audience member sustains a belief that in fact they are being watched by someone out there in the dark, in the space that they themselves usually inhabit in their role as spectator. The reality of the situation is that the voyeurism is imagined, however the strategies in place that encourage the audience member to perceive an element of
voyeurism are deliberately positioned. These strategies are the means by which the spectator *becomes* performer, by which the voyeur becomes viewed. In referencing the performance of artist Angelika Festa entitled *Untitled Dance (with fish and others)* in which the artist performs with her eyes taped, Phelan writes:

Her eyes are completely averted and the more one tries to “see” her the more one realizes that “seeing her” requires that one be seen. In all of these images there is a peculiar sense in which their drama hinges absolutely on the sense of seeing oneself and of being seen as Other.... The spectator becomes a kind of performer (Phelan, 1993, p. 161).

The play between seeing and being seen, watching and being watched runs through *Vena Amoris*, culminating with the moment at the end of the piece when the audience member and the performer do at last actually see each other and simultaneously see themselves as Other. Throughout the piece the audience member’s perceptions are distorted at each turn. Butler writes that:

In the theatre, one can say, ‘this is just an act,’ and de-realize the act, make acting into something quite distinct from what is real. Because of this distinction, one can maintain one’s sense of reality in the face of this temporary challenge to our existing ontological assumptions about gender arrangements; the various conventions which announce that ‘this is only a play’ allows strict lines to be drawn between the performance and life. On the street or in a bus, the act becomes dangerous, if it does, precisely because there are no theatrical conventions to delimit the purely imaginary character of the act, indeed, on the street or in the bus, there is no presumption that the act is distinct form a reality; the disquieting effect of the act is that there are no conventions that facilitate making this separation. Clearly there is theatre which attempts to contest it, indeed, break down those conventions that demarcate the imaginary form the real...Yet in those cases one confronts the same phenomenon, namely, that the act is not contrasted with the
real, but constitutes a reality that is in some sense new...(Butler, 1997, p. 278).

In *Vena Amoris* performer and audience member are in the theatre physically but not formally. As the audience member looks around it is harder to say, ‘this is just an act’ when they are, in a sense, alone, playing a part and yet simultaneously unsure of what that part is. The theatrical conventions on display are flagrantly ignored or contradicted. At the times when the audience member feels that they are being watched, for example the moment when they sit on the spotlit stage, they are in fact alone, ‘unmarked’ whereas when they at last feel that they are alone, towards the end of the piece when they sit before a six foot tall mirror, seen by only themselves in their mirrored reflection, they are in fact being watched as the performer is behind the two-way mirror. Here, alone on the stage the gazing audience member/ ‘performer’ must try and see everything including their own image, as they are both, *being* and *seeing*. This ‘mirror stage’ reflects their image back on them. The disembodied voice of the performer on the phone both heightens the awareness of the absence of the performer from the stage and at the same time manifests the presence of the performer. Are then the audience member and performer in fact performing *together*?

Performance implicates the real through the presence of living bodies. In performance art spectatorship there is an element of consumption: there are no leftovers, the gazing spectator must try to take everything in. Without a copy, live performance plunges into visibility - in a maniacally charged present - and disappears into memory, into the realm of invisibility and the unconscious where it eludes regulation and control. Performance resists the balanced circulations of finance. It saves nothing; it only spends.
While photography is vulnerable to charges of counterfeiting and copying, performance art is vulnerable to charges of valueless and emptiness. Performance indicates the possibility of revaluing that emptiness; this potential revaluation gives performance art its distinctive oppositional edge (Phelan, 1993, p. 148).

Phelan includes in her notes to *Unmarked* that not all performance has oppositional edge and that she is addressing the ontological claims of Performance Art, not talking about the politics of ambition (1993, p. 191). In *Vena Amoris* the notions of performance ambition, performative pleasure and the narcissism of performance form a part of the experience. There is a direct inclusion of pleasure, and self-pleasuring. Narcissism is elevated and at the same time negated with the Doris Day song, the spotlight, all indicative of moments of performance glory for the individual engaged in the performance.

After the first verse of the Doris Day song has been sung, the performer starts to speak once more, almost as if giving the answer to ‘what makes life complete.’ The song lyrics offset the text, with wordplay around the use of the word ‘making’. The performer describes making in the most literal sense that of how things are made. The text spoken is taken from a paper entitled *Prototyping Madness*, which refers specifically to the ‘madeness of things.’ In this context it provides an interesting metaphor of what is to ‘make something’ in this case not a tangible object or building but a performance and there are no prescribed categories to adhere to when making live performance. The lone journey taken by the maker is reflected in the lone journey undertaken by the audience in experiencing
the piece and in some ways it can be seen to be a piece that is being made as it is being experienced. It also works to impress the idea that the performance is being made as it is being experienced. Hearing the music through the phone the performer choreographs the timing of the text to the music:

**Performer:** The process of making basically distills into four different categories. And these four different acts of making break down into waste; form; cast; and construct. These four terms describe how material is transformed because whenever we make something, whatever the motivation, we have to transform something in order for something else to come into existence.

**Lyrics:** Make someone happy.  
Make just one someone happy.  
Make just one heart the heart you sing to.  
One smile that cheers you.  
One face that lights when it nears you.  
One man your are everything to.

**Performer:** Wasting: this is the making method that we have the largest association with. It means simply removing the material not wanted. Cutting things out is the obvious example. Constructing is making a whole out of parts and requires the parts to be joined in some fashion, while Forming is to change the shape or structure of the material in question by bending or pressing etc. But what I’d really like to focus on now is casting, because this is the most sublime way of making.

**Lyrics:** Fame, if you win it,  
Comes and goes  
In a minute.  
Where’s the real stuff in life to cling to?

**Performer:** Casting is the most sublime way of making in terms of the transformation of the material and the wholeness of the artifact, according to Chi Roberts. We have a long, long history of making with this method. This method requires the material used to be homogenous and this gives it a blank nature, which the surface of the mould can effectively write on with mere skin of texture.

**Lyrics:** Love is the answer.
Someone to love is the answer.  
Once you've found him,  
Build your world around him. /

**Performer:** So, waste, form, cast, construct; the four ways of making. /

**Lyrics:** Make someone happy.  
Make just one someone happy.  
And you will be happy too.  

[The music comes to an end and the lights on the audience member on the stage fade slowly to black and then the house lights come up in the theatre]

The double readings inherent in the specific placing of the certain song lyrics alongside the information on making elicit a particular interpretation. As I have argued above, there is an intimacy in the phone conversation, heightened even more by the fact that it is accompanied by a song about love being the answer to everything. However the song lyrics, telling of the importance of finding the someone, (the right *man*) juxtapose with a gentle irony the factual information of how to mould something into the correct shape, assemble relevant parts and dispose of the detritus. The rituals of traditional, old fashioned, heterosexual courtship are played out alongside the rituals of object making all within the rituals of theatre which are subverted at every turn. These theatrical semiotics continue with the end of the speech, (and therefore the presumed end of this stage performance) being signified by the lights fading slowly fade to black, and the house-lights come up. This pattern is what usually signifies that the show is over and it is time for the audience to leave the theatre. This is the moment when the audience go to the bar, go home, re-enter 'real life' autonomous and, from the outside, seemingly
unmarked by what they have experienced. Here, though, the audience member remains in the theatre, and what is more, remains onstage. The onstage world is now altered, the bright, overhead fluorescent lights illuminate the area offstage in the wings; the dusty ladders and forgotten sets from old productions. The music, which previously filled the auditorium, is finished. The magic of theatre has gone and is replaced by the 'real' theatre, the building itself with all its cracks and fissures, its worn carpet and faded velvet seats. And in this space the performer and audience remain in an assignation almost explicit in its flagrant disregard of convention. This rendezvous is in a complete reversal of their usual, acceptable encounter, in the dark when the performer is onstage and spectator in velvet seated oppositional security. The danger here is not about what happens when the lights go out but rather what happens when they come up. What is the role of the audience member now in the cold stark theatre light, still wondering if someone is watching, feeling themselves more 'seen' without the magical vestments of the theatre giving them their performance role in the warm embrace of the spotlight? The audience rules and established codifications have been overturned; they have no set ways to respond. Baudrillard states that, 'The eruption of the binary scheme question/answer is of incalculable importance.... It short-circuits all that was...the dialectic of the signifier and the signified, of a representing and a represented' (1983, p. 122). The visual semiotics are present as in traditional performance, the theatre venue, the proscenium arch, the lighting, the sound and yet the positions have been reversed. The theatre building itself becomes an artifact to be viewed, a historical
document to be witnessed as the performer's voice on the phone relays a
lecture-like description of theatre architecture and design and how both
were determined at the end of the 19th Century by the Victorian fear of
fire, a detailed, historical account about theatre given whilst the audience
member is within a theatre building. As mentioned previously the mobile
phone is a communication enabler which usually signifies the
communication of everyday instructions/information, 'I'm on the train'
etc. It is not therefore perceived as a conveyer of a long, detailed lectures
on the processes of 'making' or historical accounts, both more reminiscent
of a museum speaker phone, enabling the viewer to wander round
various buildings or artifacts and have a simultaneous factual description
of what it is that they are seeing. This is establishes the performance 'tour'
which the audience member is to take, a sightseeing tour in which they
are guided by their own eyes and the performers voice. The performer
says:

I don't know whether you are aware of this but a hundred years
ago when theatres switched from fire to electricity – from gas lights
and lime lights to electric lights just about every aspect of theatre
design was influenced by the fear of fire. They replaced nearly all
the wood in theatre buildings with iron, metal and asbestos and
London City authorities began to require the roofs of theatres to
be crowned by an iron smoke flue. City councils actually wanted
theatres to be separated from other buildings, ideally on open sites,
but if not, then at a distance of no less than 20 to 30 feet from other
buildings. Brick walls were also built to further contain the
theatres. So the theatre building became something of an
architectural leper, separated out, cordoned off, walled in, and
swallowed into the earth. The real danger, and this is the part I
particularly like, was perceived as coming directly from the stage.
In the event of fire it was stage and audience that had to be
separated. Performances were quarantined behind the proscenium
arch A huge tank of water was suspended in the ceiling above the
stage. I think this is a good time for you to leave the stage now and
make your way out of the theatre by the doors you came in by. Just outside the theatre doors you will see a staircase, please take it three flights up....

[Audience member leaves theatre and begins to ascend the stairs.]

Within this section several key themes are brought to the fore. The playful mention of the water tank traditionally suspended above the performer's head, which is quickly followed by the instruction for them to 'leave the stage' is a lighthearted joke from the performer to the audience member. It is a reminder of the position of vulnerability on the stage, which the audience member has experienced, sitting alone and uncertain of what is to happen next, and as to whether they are being watched. In his chapter entitled 'Combustion: Fire and Safety', Alan Read cites Goethe when asked what was the nature of a theatre building, 'I really know it precisely: the most inflammable substances are crammed together and at the soonest instance it goes up in flames' (1993, p. 234)\textsuperscript{26}. The whole nature of the performance/spectator dynamic is brought into direct focus with the text stating that 'The real danger... was perceived as coming directly from the stage. In the event of fire it was stage and audience that had to be separated. Performances were quarantined behind the proscenium arch.' Throughout the piece thus far the binary oppositions have been challenged, audience and performer becoming mutually interchangeable. They have not been 'separated' from each other, rather they are conjoined, together on stage, together as audience, together in one body. In this light, quarantining of the performer/performance from audience can be seen as tearing not only self from other but also self from
self. ‘Danger’ then is implicit in this intertwining of performer and audience, and this danger is represented by fire, which is present in varying manifestations throughout the rest of the piece. Read states that the intention of the safety curtain:

Artistic principles apart, was to separate performer form audience in the interests of safety. This is hardly an innovative conception given that Artaud sought a theatre of ‘a single and undivided locale’ which would effectively dismantle the iron curtain and its protection of the audience from performer (Read, 1993, p. 233).

This notion of separation is also of interest as it refers to the isolated audience member, trapped on the stage. In The Audience, Blau references Canetti’s section on ‘Panic’ argued in his book on Crowds and Power:

Canetti exposes the spurious unity of the audience in a theater that disintegrates in a fire. ‘The more people were bound together by the performance and the more closed the form of theater which contained them, the more violent the disintegration.’ Actually, Canetti sees the crowd as the consummation of the audience, for he adds: ‘It is also possible that the performance alone was not enough to create a genuine crowd. The audience may have remained together, not because they felt gripped by it, but simply because they happened to be there. What the play could not achieve is immediately achieved by a fire.’ He speaks of fire as being the strongest and oldest symbol of the crowd. ‘However little crowd feeling there may have been in the audience,’ he says with a dryness almost mordant, as if to suggest that the crowd is the ultimate community, ‘awareness of a fire brings it suddenly to a head. The common unmistakable danger creates a common fear. For a short time the audience’ – in a sense, playing at pity and fear – ‘becomes something like a crowd’ (Blau, 1990, pp. 18-19).

Blau continues by stating that if they were not in a theater, they could, and might:
flee together in the common collective experience of herds. But in that enclosure where panic sets in, the crowd disintegrates more violently than elsewhere, each one demonstration what was perhaps always latent in the claustral unity of the theater, some resistance to all the others who are kicking and shoving as this one is kicking and shoving, each fighting for a singular life. 'In such a moment, a man cannot insist too strongly on his separateness' (Blau, 1990, p. 19).

The audience member, alone, onstage in an empty theatre warned about the fear of fire in theatres is all too aware of his or her 'separateness.' Rather than being surrounded by a crowd whom they might push and shove through for their escape, there is no-one and in a sense the stage could be seen to be more frightening, more claustral than the fire which may threaten to engulf it.

There is a challenge for both performer and audience member in making/participating in performance where the audience member plays an active/activated role. For example, there is often a concern when making and presenting work for an audience that the ideas/text/movement/images etc might not be explicit enough to convey the desired meaning(s) to an audience and performers can often fall into overcompensation and 'doing all the work' for the audience, rather than letting the audience do part of that work. Similarly, issues can arise for the audience member around whether they are doing the 'right' thing, should they be doing more, less, have they misunderstood. And of course, how do they deal with being watched. Jeanette Winterson posits that:
The solid presence of art demands from us significant effort, an anathema to popular culture. Effort of time, effort of money, effort of humility, effort of imagination have each been packed by the artist into the art. Is it so unreasonable to expect a percentage of that from us in return? (Winterson, 1996, p. 16).

For Winterson it is the influx of the media, which is in part responsible for the lack of 'significant effort' afforded to art. Winterson states that mass media:

Ransacks the arts, in its images, in its adverts, in its copy, in its jingles, in its tunes and journalist's jargon, it continually offers up faint shadows of the form and invention of real music, real paintings, real words. All of us are subject to this bombardment, which both deadens our sensibilities and makes us fear what is not instant, approachable, consumable (Winterson, 1996, pp. 15-16).

Although I agree in part with Winterson's statement regarding the effects of media saturation and with her belief that art demands effort I think that it is significant to make a differentiation as to what specific art forms we are talking about. For example, there is an interesting contrast as to how fine art and visual art is viewed with how Theatre and performance art is viewed. In the brightly lit gallery space the visual art confronts the viewer, who is forced to walk round the piece, trying to figure out what it means, or what it is meant to mean, and having to do this in broad daylight with other people watching. They do not have the hidden, somnambulance of the 'traditional' theatre audience set up.

What does the performer in live work want to say to this audience who share the same-time same-space reality with them? Why has the audience
come? What do they want? What does the performer want from them? What is the performer giving? What can the performer take? Where is the place in the work where both can meet? In this scenario the audience member questions their role, are they meant to respond to the performers voice, as would usually be the case within a two-way telephone call? How do they interact? According to Schneider:

The terror that accompanies the dissolution of a binary habit of sense-making and self-fashioning is directly proportionate to the social safety insured in the maintenance of such apparatus of sense. The rigidity of our social binaries – male/female, white/'black, civilized/primitive, art/porn – are sacred to our Western cultural ways of knowing, and theorists have long pointed to the necessity of interrogation such foundational distinctions to discover precisely how they bolster the social network as a whole, precisely what they uphold and what they exclude (Schneider, 1997, p. 13).

**Electricity**

Leaving the theatre space the audience member is guided up the stairs by the ‘blind’ performer – unable to see exactly where the audience member is at any moment. Yet at the same time she seems to be with them, following them and having gone before them:

Have you passed the kitchen on your left? Then you are nearly there – just a few more stairs. If you’d like to make your way around the corner at the top of the stairs now, towards a room marked the Fire Room, you’ll notice a series of wooden cupboards in the wall on your left. I’d like you to open the second cupboard along. Have you got it?

The low-tech/high-tech nexus, which permeates the piece, is strongly enforced here. The play of ‘interactivity’, the post modern techno buzz word pasted on computer games, CDs and Art alike is adhered to
playfully within the performance format, encouraging the audience member to interact with the performer, and objects they encounter on the way, creating the performance itself.\textsuperscript{28} The dialogue to explain activating the computer is deliberately low tech, as is the given placement of the sleek state-of-the-art G3 laptop, secreted in a small scuffed brown wooden cupboard, which lay flush in one of the corridor walls. Four purple fluorescent light strips line the cupboard giving it a seventies style neon glow. The performer speaks:

Now, in the cupboard you can see the computer and on the computer is a digitally rendered film. If you move the cursor so that the arrow is positioned anywhere around the words Animated Picture Studio. Then just click on the flat button on the computer and the film will start to play. I'd like you to watch it; it's very short.

The computer runs off battery power and is like the phone, wireless In the film the audience watch three figures in Victorian garb, a finely dressed woman, a bearded man and an enthusiastic filmmaker (Edison himself). The woman has come to have her moving image captured and as the camera starts to roll she becomes highly animated, posturing and posing and eventually high kicking with abandon, etiquette momentarily quelled with the joy of performance. When the camera stops rolling, enamoured by the woman's display the bearded man makes amorous advances towards and persuades her to sit on his lap. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to the two of them the wily filmmaker has restarted the camera, and films their flirtation. He then leaves, returning with a mirror-like screen on which to project the moving images. At first the woman is delighted to
see her image before her and revels in watching herself, clapping her hands in joy. Her joy turns to horror, however, as her playful posturing is replaced by the moving image of fraternization between herself and the bearded gentleman. Aghast and furious she dashes the screen to the ground, breaking it. The image however retains a quasi-immortality and remains projected at their feet. They are forced to watch their lovemaking, their deed marked in imperishable replay. The inclusion of this particular film serves several purposes within Vena Amoris. The play between early and modern technologies continues with the 1904 film footage digitized using the latest 1999 digital technology formatting the image into an aptly named ‘Director Movie’ (digital technology adopting the terminology of early image processing). The content of the film is significant to the themes within Vena Amoris concerning the reflection of self, the narcissism and the inescapability of the image.29 In ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’, Walter Benjamin states that, ‘Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be.... The presence of the original is prerequisite to the concept of authenticity’ (1968, p. 220). What stares back at the couple in the film is an aspect of their truth, the authenticity of their deeds more fully (re)presented through the lens of the camera that in life. The couple in the film are watched, the voyeurism of the filmmaker through his lens references the feeling the audience member has experienced of being watched. When the woman is in control of who is watching her, she is happy to perform, displaying her desire to be seen, and ultimately see
herself, 'he desire to see is a manifestation of the desire to be seen, in live performance as well as in the spectator's relation to inanimate representation' (Phelan, 1993, p. 18).

The filmmaker, both behind the lens and in front of it in the shape of Thomas Edison himself is relevant to the performance. He inhabits different worlds divided by the frame of the lens and like the audience member and performer, is both spectator and artist, is present and absent. His presence as inventor ghosts the performance of Vena Amoris in the light bulbs in the theatre, the phone, the currents of electricity and within the text:

Thomas Edison made the film you just watched in 1904. The same Thomas Edison who invented the light bulb. Or did he? There seems to be some controversy about this. At any rate, he at least liked to take the credit for it and was totally opposed to Nicola Tesla's dream of free wireless electricity. Particularly, he didn't like the way Tesla dressed. Unlike Tesla, Edison was unconcerned by appearance and in fact disapproved of washing, believing that too much cleanliness negatively altered the chemical on the surface of the skin. He began to smell so bad that his wife refused to sleep with him.

Electricity connects performer to audience member. This unbroken current, is physically experienced the audience member is requested by the performer to enter the door opposite, labeled 'Fire Room.' The room itself is quite grand with oak-paneled walls and polished wooden floor. Gold curtains hang at the windows giving a theatrical atmosphere. Chairs are set out in neat rows as if for a lecture and as with the theatre
space the chairs are empty. A small stage is at the far end of the room. On the stage is a white gallery style plinth, upon which stands a Van Der Graff generator, as if as art object. The generator is switched on and buzzes, making little sparks of electricity, visible from close up. The performer asks the audience member to:

Please take a seat in one of the chairs for a moment, because I’m going to have to go soon and I just need to share a few things with you first. The most important thing is to do with your safety, because under no circumstances should you approach the Van Der Graff generator on the podium while your mobile phone is switched on. Let me explain. If you haven’t come into contact with one before, a Van Der Graff generator is a device that reacts to the static in the atmosphere, or the static electricity off a person’s body. It is absolutely harmless to humans, but should not come into contact with electrical devices. Your watch, if you are wearing one, is fine and does not need to be removed.

After you turn off your phone and leave it on your seat, I’d like you to approach the Van Der Graff and, if you can, extend one of your hands towards the metal ball on the top very slowly, until your fingers are an inch or two from the surface. As you move close enough, you will experience a tiny spark of contact with your body’s own electrical current. If you look closely you will be able to see this as well as feel it. Again, don’t worry. I wouldn’t ask you to do anything dangerous. I have to go now; I’ll see you soon.

[Audience member approaches the Van Der Graff, sparks, and reads the note written on the white lecture podium:]

_Egypýians believed that the third finger of the left hand follows the vena amoris, the vein of love that runs directly to the heart._

_A direct ‘digital’ blood flow._

From the moment the audience member switches off their phone enabling them to approach the Van Der Graff, they experience this part of the performance completely alone. To experience the Van Der Graff it is necessary for the audience member to climb onto the stage and stretch
out their hand to the Van Der Graff in order for them to generate, feel and see the visible sparks of 'self' electricity.

From the initial stages of the development of the work I had been interested in including an element of danger which represented the charge, the power of contact, the power of electricity whether it be corpuscular or generated by external sources. Various ideas had been considered and abandoned such as the proximity of water to the electrical current. As a theme or idea, danger is hinted at early on in the performance with the fear of fire. The danger finally manifests itself in the form of the very contact between the audience and performer, the mobile phone. In order for the audience member to approach the Van Der Graff they must switch off the mobile phone as the proximity of the phone to the generator is potentially dangerous. Thus contact between performer and audience member has to be broken by the phone being switched off in order for the performance to proceed: a procession which leads to the performer and audience member meeting in the flesh. In his article, 'Revenge of The Intuitive', Brian Eno writes that 'In the end, the characteristic forms of a tool's or medium's distortion, of its weakness and limitations, become sources of emotional meaning and intimacy' (Eno, 1999). The Van Der Graff itself presents a physical challenge for the audience member. They can choose to accept or decline – and only they will know what they decide. 'The relationship between the real and the representational, between the looker and the given to be seen, is a version of the relation between self and other' (Phelan, 1993, p. 3).
The Mirror

At the bottom of the plinth, underneath the writing about the vena amoris a tiny arrow and instructions direct the audience member to exit the 'Fire Room' through the door to the right of the Van Der Graff, on the opposite side of the room to where they entered. They find themselves in a narrow corridor, outside a door with a code lock. A tall blonde woman, elegantly dressed in a black velvet evening gown is standing outside the door. Upon the audience member's approach she enters the code, opens the door open a crack and gently pushes them through, while simultaneously whispering to her identical twin, who appears on the other side of the door, whispering back:

Twins: I've missed you. I've been thinking of you. I've so wanted to see you again. I wanted to say something to you. I have to go now. I'll be thinking of you. I'll be waiting until we can be together again. Goodbye. Goodbye.

As the audience member passes through to the other side of the door, the twins kiss on the lips and whisper their good-byes through the crack in the door until the door closes again. Again there is the concept of the audience member enabling the performance. Their journey through the door enables the twins separated by a locked and coded door to see each other, to kiss, to speak.

Performance approaches the Real through resisting the metaphorical reduction of the two into one. But in moving from the aims of metaphor, reproduction, and pleasure to those of
metonymy, displacement, and pain, performance marks the body itself as loss. Performance is the attempt to value that which is non-reproductive, non-metaphorical. This is enacted through the staging of the drama of misrecognition (twins, actors within characters enacting other characters, doubles, crimes, secrets etc.) which sometimes produces the recognition of the desire to be seen by (and within) the other. Thus for the spectator the performance spectacle is itself a projection of the scenario in which her own desire takes place (Phelan, 1993, p. 152).

The interior twin closes the door and remains inside the studio with the audience member. For the first time then the audience member has an audience with the presence of the twins. However their presence is also one of usher or facilitator as well as performer. Their performance presence is further convoluted by the fact that their performance is themselves. This layering of roles and images and their implicit meanings is further extrapolated by the presence of screens. As the second twin ushers the audience member in, another screen, another identical laptop, greets them with the digitally altered voice of Doris Day singing *Make Someone Happy*, the cursor scrolling slowly across baby blue vector waves on a pastel pink screen. The laptop is sitting on a white plinth, and echoes not only the Edison film played on the Laptop in the cupboard but also the Van Der Graff, both posing as art objects to be viewed. The pitch of the song has been digitally shifted so that it sounds oddly as if it is being sung by a man³¹, the binary code of the computer enabling a transgendering. Rebecca Schneider states that:

There is no way a woman can escape the historical ramifications of that representation unless she passes from visibility as a woman, passing as a man. As "woman" she is preceded by her own
markings, standing in relation to her body in history as if beside herself (Schneider, in Diamond, 1996, p. 157).

This statement provides an interesting interpretation to the scene that the audience member has entered. The unmarked presence of the performer allows the freedom to engender a presence through the performance where there is almost a transcendence of gender. At the far end of the room there is a door sized mirror stands surrounded by dressing room lights. Another screen, another image. A chair is positioned in front of the mirror, which the audience member is invited to sit in by the ‘interior twin’ who then recedes to the far door. The audience member sees their own reflection in the brightly-lit mirror, unaware that the performer, in the dark on the other side can look directly through the mirror at the audience member. Schneider posits that:

The image/commodity does not “give” what it promises, the viewer does not “get” what he desires – he is destined to spend himself unseen, un(re)marked by the blinded object of his gaze, to try and try again, ritually stabbing his own eyes like Oedipus (Schneider, 1997, p. 70).

The performer speaks from behind the mirror, so like the voice on the phone her voice still seems disembodied. It is interesting to note that nearly all of the audience members who witnessed the piece initially failed to recognize the presence of the performer in the room with them, because they were so accustomed to the voice of the performer through the phone. According to Judith Butler:
The process of signification is always material: signs work by appearing (visibly, aurally), and appearing through material means, although what appears only signifies by virtue of those non-phenomenal relations, i.e., relations of differentiation, that tacitly structure and propel signification itself (Butler, 1993, p. 68).

The performer's visceral presence has become virtual, virtual almost as the word may apply in Physics when it is used to describe a particle whose existence is suggested to explain observed phenomena but is not proven or directly observable. It is almost a hypothetical situation - when 'what appears only signifies by virtue (virtual) of those non-phenomenal relations'. Butler goes on to state that:

Insofar as language might be understood to emerge from the materiality of bodily life, that is, as the reiteration and extension of a material set of relations, language is a substitute satisfaction, a primary act of displacement and condensation (Butler, 1993, p. 69).

The presence and simultaneous absence and displacement provided by the disembodied voice, can be seen to parallel the disembodiment of digital technologies:

Identity is the first thing you create when you log on to a computer service. By defining yourself in some way, whether through a name, a personal profile, an icon, or a mask, you also define your audience, space and territory...Anatomy can be readily reconstituted. You do not need a body...entering cyberspace encourages a disembodied body language (Hershman-Leeson, 1996, pp. 325 - 326).

Through the disembodied voice the only tangible identity established is that of gender, although with the 'transgendering' of the Doris Day song,
even this is thrown into confusion. In the text the performer speaks to the audience member the play on what is or is not known is highlighted:

**Performer:** I'm glad you came.
I didn't know if I would recognize you.
I had a picture of you in my head.
Did you miss me? I mean
Did you ever think of me?
Did you want to see me again? I mean
Did I make any difference?
Did you want to say something just to me?
Did you want to catch hold of something that you thought you might have seen or at least thought you'd caught a glimpse of and at least, for a little while?
Not want to let go?
Was I too late?
Did I say the right thing but at the wrong time?
And what I'm really asking is do I get another chance while everything is changing skin, legs, flesh, hair, head, heart, chest
Did I lose part of myself – the part where I recognize myself but never had the chance to say goodbye?
...And did you did you NEED that tiny jolt of electricity just to know you were alive?

The text fragments are at once instantly recognizable and instantly unfamiliar; the text deliberately abstract and at the same time intensely personal and open to individual interpretation. There is a seeming randomness to the selection, to the way the fragments are pieced together. As it progresses the delivery of the text becomes more frantic, more desperate in its need to communicate, almost saying *anything* in order to say *something*. This randomness raises the question of whether the text is in fact the *same* for each audience member. Is whole journey they have taken unique to them? The live, real time real space, nature of performance means that each performance is by definition unique. Thus the transient quality of live work is reflected by the fact that the audience
member is unsure whether the next person will be directed to the same spaces, told the same things. There is an enigmatic quality to the text. Who is the performer talking to? What is their gender? Is it the gender of the performer? Of the audience member? Are the words directed to their own image that they see reflected in the mirror? The line, 'did I loose part of myself – the part where I recognize myself but never had the chance to say goodbye?' echoes Freud's statement of narcissism as identification with the lost loved object. What is the relationship between the inner and outer – and which is which? Who has walked through the looking glass? Who is absent in the present, and who present through absence? Derrida's critique of Sollers' writing provides an interesting intersection in terms of presence and visibility:

While we remain attentive, fascinated, glued to what presents itself, we are unable to see presence as such, since presence does not present itself, no more than does the visibility of the visible, the audibility of the audible, the medium or 'air,' which disappears in the act of allowing it to appear (Derrida, 1981, p. 314).

All the while that the audience member has been making the journey, guided by the words of the performer the performer has been gazing at their own reflection. Has the performer then been talking to her own reflection? Is this the insight into the narcissism of the performer who has been frozen behind glass, immobilized by their own image, so entrapped/entranced they have not been able to leave, to take their place on the stage. The ownership of 'I' has shifted throughout the performance and within this text the subjectivity retains its ambiguity. For Lacan:
The subject is constituted through language – the mirror image represents the moment when the subject is located in an order outside itself to which it will henceforth refer. The subject is the subject of speech and subject to that order. But if there is a division in the image, and instability in the pronoun, there is equally loss, and difficulty in the word. Language can only operate by designating an object in its absence...symbolization turns on the object as absence (Lacan, in Mitchel, 1982, p. 31).

Who then was the journey for? Who took it? The Performer? The Audience member? Both? Who was enabling whom? Or are the words spoken suggestions of the thoughts of the audience member? Uncanny illuminations of their own thoughts surfaced at some time or another? Seen with clarity through the glass, when confronted with their own image? Or is it in fact a direct communication from the performer to the audience member? Judith Butler states that:

Within a language pervasively masculinist, a phallogocentric language, women represent the unrepresentable. In other words, women represent the sex that cannot be thought, a linguistic absence and opacity. Within a language that rests on univocal signification, the female sex constitutes the unconstrainable and undesignatable. In this sense, women are the sex, which is ‘not one’ but multiple (Butler, 1990, p. 9).

Do the questions posed by the performer require an answer? In some ways the audience member is at last in the place familiar to them in which to witness a performance. The room is darkened, heavy curtains block out the light, they are seated and before them is the performer. Yet still the conventions of their role is confounded, as they have been throughout the journey. The way the mirror has been dressed, with open light bulbs
framing it, can be seen to signify the traditional theatre dressing room mirror, the place where the performer sits before and after the show, before and after the audience, where she faces her reflection before presenting that image to another - seeing herself before she is seen. If art holds a mirror up to nature, what is the intent when the artist holds the mirror up? Is this the Theatrical Fourth Wall, reflecting,

... imperfectly - what comes to it - imperfectly - from the other three walls and lets through - presently - the ghost of what it reflects, the shadow deformed and reformed according to the figure of what is called present: The upright fixity of what stands before me; "The inscriptions...appear inverted, righted, fixed" (Derrida, 1981, 314).

Phelan writes that:

In the plenitude of its apparent visibility and availability, the performer actually disappears and represents something else – dance, movement, sound, and character, "art"... The very effort to make the female body appear involved the addition of something other than "the body." That "addition" becomes the object of the spectator’s gaze.... Performance uses the performer’s body to pose a question about the inability to secure the relation between subjectivity and the body per se; performance uses the body to frame the lack of Being promised by and through the body – that which cannot appear without a supplement (Phelan, 1993, pp. 150-151).

Here the performer disappears into the audience. This audience / performer configuration again begs the question that has been asked silently throughout the journey: has the audience member been under some sort of surveillance,36 like the body in cyberspace, ‘tracked, traced, digitized and stored’ (Hershman–Leeson, 1996, p. 326). Who is being seen and who is seeing. Who listens and who speaks?
Who perceives? Who enunciates the difficulty? Asks Derrida, sustaining the implications by reversing Nietzsche's question, Who speaks? The new environments in which performance occurs — including the written page and the reading of a text — raise seductive questions about where performance really occurs and, equally perplexing, where it begins. It is a problem just about as old as the generic relationship of theatre and theory, which share an etymological root having to do with watching and the place of watching, the site of seeing, which as in the unconscious, a memory-place, where the thing seen is being-thought and, in the act of speculation, not seen until thought. It is, in Freudian terms, the dream-thought behind manifest content of the specular ego (Blau, 1990, p. 39).

Throughout the performance the audience member has felt watched on their journey, at times feeling a victim of an imagined voyeuristic gaze of the somewhere present performer. Ironically, the only time that the performer can in fact see them, the audience member feels unseen, unwatched.

The audience member can guess at the gender of the performer through her voice and this is potentially all that they can surmise. In terms of a mind/body distinction it is important to note that in Vena Amoris the voice (the expression of the mind) of the performer is free, but her body is trapped behind an image of itself. This separation of the body from physical freedom is an intended construct by the performer. The audience member does not know when or if they will see her face to face, one to one. For the performer, there has been greater knowledge; she dials the numbers and places the calls. She knows the very moment others will join the performance. The performer has sightlessly guided the
journey the audience member has taken it, seeing it for and before them: ‘just through the pink doors in-front of you,’ ‘Can you see your light on the stage?’ She does not see them. The moment of sight happens when the performer lights a cigarette from behind the mirror. The flame from the Zippo lighter brilliantly illuminates her face and she is visible to the audience member for the first time. ‘You are getting hot as you approach that icy looking glass and the key to a certain clasp,’ (Derrida, 1981, p, 309). The moment comes and goes in a whisper, in a heartbeat. A presence. An absence. Fort! Da!

In her book *Sexual Difference* French feminist critic Luce Irigaray writes:

As for mirrors, they give access to another order of the visible. Cold icy, frozen-freezing, and with no respect for the vital, operative qualities of laterality. I see myself in the mirror as if I were another. I put another that I am in the mirror between the other and myself, which disconcerts this experience of the inverted laterality of the other. The other whose left hand can see my right, for example. Making me more passive than any passivity of and within my own thought... Between the other in the mirror and the other who inverts me, there is also the other of the same, at once closer and more distant (Irigaray, 1993, pp. 170-171).

Irigary seminal writings focus on difference, on the existence of a different female subjectivity, on the difference between the language of women and the language of men. Here dynamic for the audience member is simultaneously one of difference *and* sameness, ‘Between the other in the mirror and the other who inverts me, there is also the other of the same, at once closer and more distant.’ This situation is in someway similar to the moment the audience member experienced on stage, alone yet with
the disembodied voice of performer held close to them, right by them. How does the audience member respond? As with the quandary engendered by the phone conversation, regarding whether or not they were expected to join in, now how are they 'supposed' to (re)act?

For the first time, the body no longer couples itself up with the world, it clasps another body, applying itself to it carefully with its whole extension, forming tirelessly with its hands the strange statue which in its turn gives everything it receives; the body is lost outside of the world and its goals, fascinated by the unique occupation of floating in Being with another life, of making itself the outside of its inside and the inside of its outside (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p. 144).

In cultural critic Samira Kawash’s article entitled ‘Interactivity and Vulnerability’, the author cites the account of philosopher Emmanuel Levinas of the ethical demand inherent in face to face interaction. For Levinas something is demanded of the face to face interaction ‘it is an interaction even if one should choose to be passive – to turn away.’ For Kawash:

Interactive performance art makes a spectacle of this ethical encounter by staging a demand for mutual recognition; in the face of this demand, the spectator is positioned in advance as party to ethical relation. Refusing to interact is no less a part of the interaction than is becoming an active participant. ...Levinas emphasizes the vulnerability inherent in this scene of face to face encounter: to be in an ethical relation with the other means to be open and vulnerable to the other (1999, p. 51).
The moment the audience member sees the performer, their vision through the looking glass presents them with an equally strong image of themselves, still partially reflected in the glass.

What is the danger in unseen eye, or the eye of the unseen, suddenly seen? Perhaps attempts to rescue a female gaze or discover an object’s eye – to bring, we might say the seeming blind to seeming sight – displaces or shrouds another, more complex issue. Can the drive to invest the objectified with a countergaze be considered relative to another notion: the unsettling eye of a secret? The eye of that which has been secreted? The eye, hidden and denied, which still sees? And what does the secreted see? (Schneider in Diamond, 1996, p.161).

In this moment the mirror transposes the two illuminated faces onto each other, patina like, creating an almost otherworldly effect, Blau’s ‘ghosted’ presence, as the performers eyes are imprinted on the audience members eyes, mouth on mouth, forehead on forehead:

The blind spot is where duality overflows, exceeding its own distinctions – for instance, where something is both *heimlich* and *unheimlich*, familiar and strange – not without contradiction, but inexorably in contradiction, or “alteration” (Schneider in Diamond, 1996, p. 169).

The audience member has entered a double world, like Alice they have gone through the looking glass - but which side are they on? Whose image do they look to find? Their own? The performer’s? Truly performer and audience member are meeting each other, flesh on flesh, shape on shape, feature on feature,
As a representation of the real the image is always, partially, phantasmatic. In doubting the authenticity of the image, one questions as well the veracity of she who makes and describes it. To doubt the subject seized by the eye is to doubt the subjectivity of the seeing “I” (Phelan, 1993, p. 1).

Inherent in this moment wherein the audience member and performer meet there is a mutuality in the interchange, the imprint of each face contains the other, the gaze from both pairs of eyes meet what is almost a vanishing point,\(^\text{39}\) a constant loosing oneself in an endless gapingness of self reflection,\(^\text{40}\) comparable to Lacan’s notion of beance; a yawningness:

\[ \text{Appeal of the void, in the ambiguous beance of an attempted seduction of the other by means of which the subject has come compliantly to rely and to which he is going to commit the monumental construct of his narcissism (Lacan, 1968, p. 9).} \]

Or are the Performer and Audience member engaged in an endless return as their gaze meets in the mirror and passes through,\(^\text{41}\) their reflections constantly altered, and returned?

Reciprocity? It is arguably the current project of postcolonial and cultural critical studies to ask: What can reciprocity look like? How can we do it? How do we access this reciprocity in our approach to alterity, our approach to “objects” of study as well as our approach to our “selves”? Reciprocity suggests a two-way street, but it does not necessarily reconstitute the delimiting binaries which feminists and postcolonial theorists have been fighting to undermine. Binaries such as subject and object, male and female, have been erected according to a hierarchical, oppositional structure...Is there something imaginable as satiable in a mutual gaze, double vision, a hybrid pass, a two-way street, or even a “trivialis”? Performance, a medium of mimesis and exchange, has become a terrain well suited to this exploration because performance acknowledges the present moment of exchange between embodied participants, embedded in cultural codes (Schneider, 1997, pp. 177-8).
And in terms of gender, definitions already somewhat confounded by the ambiguity of the usage of 'I' and 'you' in the text spoken behind the mirror, what is suggested by double image of the layering of woman on woman, woman on man? When is the body unmarked or marked by gender? And which gender? For Butler:

Bodies cannot be said to have a signifiable existence prior to the mark of their gender; the question that then emerges: to what extent does the body come into being in and through the mark(s) of gender (Butler, 1990, p. 8).

What does the image represent when different ages, genders, and ethnicities merge? What identifications are made, and what narcissistic and scopophilic pleasure is found.

In his article entitled 'The Mortality of the Image', Bill Viola writes:

There is a natural human propensity to want to stare into the eye of another, or by extension of oneself, a desire to see seeing itself, as if the straining to see inside the little black center of the eye will reveal not only the secrets of the other, but of the totality of human vision...Looking closely into the eye, the first thing to be seen, indeed the only thing to be seeing, is one's own self-image (Viola in Hall and Fifer, 1999, pp. 483 – 484).

Where is the desire? For Whom? For self? Does the audience member, who has undertaken this journey feel the desire to see themselves? To re-view what they have felt has been viewed by some unseen eye. Or do they need to see the Performer – to play out their role of spectator in this
one moment? Or does the Performer need to see and be seen? Desiring the gaze that she has veiled herself from and denying the gaze of her audience to her performance. Or is her desire purely for herself, avoiding being seen and delighting Narcissus like in her own reflected gaze. An Ethics of Sexual Difference Luce Irigary questions and defines love of self:

Love of self. Who is loving whom? Or who is loving a part of whom? How in this case is the relationship between subject and object to be determined? The relation between two different subjects?

Love of self. I am supposed to relate to my self, but how? The I is supposed to relate to the self, but how? By what mediation? What means? What instrument? And what are the two terms; the subject of love and the loved self?

Love of self creates a particular movement, a kind of play between active and passive, in which, between me and me, there takes place this double relationship, neither active nor truly passive (Irigary, 1993, p. 59).

Or is the desire, the love for other? Who makes whom ‘happy?’ For Judith Butler:

To identify is not to oppose desire. Identification is a phantasmatic trajectory and resolution of desire; an assumption of a place, a territorializing of an object which enables identity through the temporary resolution of desire, but which remains desire, if only in its repudiated form (Butler, 1997, p. 99).

Does the moment in the mirror, the moment of visibility of self, the visibility of Other create an intimacy between the two faces, layered one upon the other, reflecting one and the other, holding one in the image of the other with a closeness and an intimacy intensified by the proximity?
The visible about us seems to rest in itself. It is as though our vision were formed in the heart of the visible, or as though there were between it and us an intimacy as close as between the sea and the strand (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, pp. 130 - 131).

Merleau-Ponty goes on to state that in fact 'it is not possible that we blend into it, nor that it passes into us, for then the vision would vanish at the moment of formation, by disappearance of the seer or of the visible' (1968, p. 131). What engenders the intimacy, the immeasurable proximity between performer and audience member is the same as what separates them. They may have shared roles, a journey, an image but they are separate, in a moment the flame will be extinguished. Each will be left only with their own reflection. There is a double and crossed situating of the visible in the tangible and of the tangible in the visible; the two maps are complete, and yet they do not merge into one,' states Merleau-Ponty, 'The two parts are total parts and yet are not superposable' (1968, p. 134). The performer created the map for the audience member to follow and yet in taking the journey, becoming the performer, the audience member is also the pathfinder, the mapmaker.

For Irigeray, Merleau-Ponty's sea imagery raises notions of immersion and emergence (see Irigaray 1993, p. 152). The performer and the audience member both become immersed in the face of the other while simultaneously aware of the emergence of their own image. Later, when the audience member finally leaves the performer, the journey, the performance, there is an emergence from the relationship, from the role,
from the journey but in a sense a consequent re-emergence and re-immersion as they see their face reflected back to them once more, this time in the shiny surface of the CD, which is handed to each audience member as they leave the space, which contains the body (of work) of the performer.

The innocent simplicity of the flame engendering the phantasmic representation of multiplicities belies the complexities of the representations and configurations it illuminates. Again there is the persistence of the low-tech/high-tech confluence, each mode seeming to switch roles, with the digital format used to manipulate grainy 100-year-old film as well as play Doris Day songs, and the elemental power of fire creating visual 'special effects.' This final flame, rather than being the fire that separates performer and audience, spectator from stage - it is what enables them to meet, the heart of the piece. Yet they meet only to say goodbye,42

I'm glad you came
When will I see you again?
I'll miss you
I miss you already
Goodbye.

The flame is blown out, the face of the performer disappears and the audience member is left staring at his or her own reflection once more, 'As I am under the gaze, I no longer see the eye that looks at me and, if I see the eye, the gaze disappears' (Sartre as cited in Blau, 1990, p. 63). As
Narcissus becomes immobilized by his own reflection looking back at him, so the performer has been immobilized throughout the performance behind the mirror, behind her own reflection and has used the audience member to mobilize the performance, leading them through the performance whilst gazing at her own reflection. It is the audience who have allowed the performance, writing the text of the piece beneath their feet on their journey. Rather than the moment when performer and audience member meet being a moment of demystification, it exists in a form as transitory as live performance itself, it does not signify an answer, a denouement, the reason for the journey. What has been revealed? What is no longer being disclosed? Derrida writes of, 'the visibility of the eidos, of what is, in its truth, behind the veil or screen' (1981, p. 324). The audience has not been 'in search' of an author who they eventually see through a glass darkly. Rather, in the same way as an electric current must remain unbroken to be 'live', as the flow of the blood from the vein to the heart relies on a constant circulation, the meeting of he performer and audience member signifies a part of the journey, of the performance, not the conclusion. Just as the 'stade du miroir' represents a turning point, it provides the same function within the piece. For Blau 'The actor's presence is in-and-of-itself a beguiling thought, with a multitude of possible articulations or degrees of presence' (1992, p. 168). Here is a moment of presence and of absence, heralding a beginning as much as an ending, an immobilization and a mobilization. According to Blau:
Various techniques of the theatre – including the Brechtian Alienation derived from Russian formalism – have tried to interrupt or expose the gaze as a vitiating look. But the gaze is obdurrate. It is a fixation of sight that really refuses to see, since it converts what is palpably out there to the delectable image of the metonymic I, that maybe malefic version of the viewing subject itself. The secret power of the gaze is that it does its work on both sides of the Cartesian frame, in which the mirrored subject appears even when – in the light that blinds upon the stage as it never does on the silver screen – the gaze appears to be broken (Blau, 1990, p. 6).

As the audience member enters the studio they are already passing through the mirror, as established by the identical twins, who, unlike the performer who is held captive by her image, they are denied their reflected image in the face of each other. The audience member grants them the image they desire and they meet through the mirror, visually, physically, verbally. ‘The idea of the mirror should be understood as an object which reflects – not just visible, but what is heard, touched and willed by the child’ (Lacan in Mitchell, 1982, p. 30). Meanings and perceptions shape shift through presence and absence. For Derrida, ‘The meaning of meaning is Apollonian by virtue of everything within it that can be seen’ (1978, p. 26). Blau takes up this statement in The Audience stating that:

As we reflect upon (and within) this Apollonian heritage – switching back and forth between seer and seen – we are inevitably drawn into the dialectical wordplay between the visible and the invisible, where in the very sinews of perception the spectacle appears as a trace or decoy, the ghostly, reverberant surface of the seen. Theatre is made from this play of meaning in a structure of becoming, the passing form of an invisible force, where we lose meaning by finding it, and there is always something repressed (Blau, 1990, p. 57).
Lacan's mirror stage is completely palpable at this point, in terms of the shifting subjectivities in play throughout the performance and heralding as it does an original moment wherein Performer and Audience member eventually see each other, but as an image of the 'body in bits and pieces' (Wilden in Lacan 1968, p. 174). Wilden states that:

There is less emphasis on the justification of the stade du miroir in Lacan's writings of the sixties – the concept is simply integrated into the Lacanian algorithms, but the empirical facts of narcissism, identification, fascination and, of course the double (the doppelgänger sometimes appears reversed as in a mirror)... makes the topic especially important (Wilden, in Lacan 1968, p. 174).

It is these issues which are particularly pertinent in the analysis of Vena Amoris. Although a literal reading of initial Lacanian theories concerning the stade du miroir are also of interest within this analysis. Just as the Lacanian mirror conceals and reveals the identities of the child, the mirror that stands before the audience member at the end of their journey both conceals and reveals the truth. Anthony Wilden states that:

The stade du miroir is an interpretation of findings in both psychological and biological research concerning the perceptual relationship of the individual to others at a crucial phase in his development (from 6 to 18 months in a child); for Lacan, it is the root of all later identifications. His view of the ego depends upon this primary identification seen in the light of Freud's important article on narcissism (1914) (Wilden in Lacan 1968, p. xiii).

It is interesting to (re)view The Mother/Child relationship in Lacan's 'mirror stage' in relation to the Performer/audience member
relationship. Mother-like, the performer has guided the audience member through their journey. She has talked to them, told them stories, been with them at all times, and when she had to leave them (in the room with the Van Der Graff) warned them of danger but assured them of safety. In as much as they have been inseparable, there has always been the awareness that the audience member took the journey alone (although feeling watched over) and will at some point continue to do so, but no longer guided by the words of the performer. In Lacan's mirror, the mother allows the child the image, 'which her presence instantly deflects,' (Lacan in Mitchel, 1982, p. 30). At the same time the image of the audience member is revealed to them, their gaze is diverted to the image of the performer's face, and the image of the performers face grafted on top of their own reflection, 'The image in which we first recognize ourselves is a misrecognition' (Lacan in Mitchel 1982, p. 30).

The 'master/servant' power dynamic has been brought sharply into focus throughout the piece, not only in terms of who has had the power but who has been master and who servant? Or, to put it another way, who has been the dancer and who the dance? For Lyotard, 'theatre places us right in the heart of absence or negativity, or within the nihilism of representation that raises the question of power' (as cited in Blau, 1992, p. 116). The opacity and enigmatic quality of the exchange between performer and audience member, the embodiment of the audience member as spect-actor, have enabled both performer and audience member to be 'never only one'. Or as Margaret Morse writes:

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In performance art, as opposed to traditional theater, the body of the performer and his or her experience in a here and now can be presented directly and discursively to an audience, which thereby becomes a you, a partner inhabiting the same world, possessing the capacity to influence as well as respond to events (Morse in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 158).

As Doris Day's song comes to an end, the words lingering in the dimly lit room, '...make just one someone happy ...', the 'interior twin' opens the door inviting the audience member to leave and at the same time, once more enabled by the actions of the audience member, freed to see and speak to and embrace her twin on the other side of the door. As the door closes behind the audience member, the exterior twin hands them a CD-ROM, its shiny gold side facing them so they can see their reflection, and a lipstick. The distribution of the CD-ROM and lipstick replays the motif of a low-tech/high-tech confluence present throughout the piece. The code writes the disk with images, script, writings, video clips of past performances, each embodied by the performer. These embodied parts are refigured, compiled onto a format which, mirror-like, reflects the face of the audience member on its smooth circular silver surface. Real and virtual images. Returning once again to Phelan's statement about the transient nature of performance visible only within a 'maniacally charged present' (1993, p. 148). The giving of the CD-ROM at the end of the performance, handed out like the ubiquitous post-party cake in a napkin, also references the unmarked nature of performance, a memento is given (but what is it to recapture?) The work of the performer? Or the image
of the audience member? One, again, is impressed upon the other. The interactivity of the CD format parallels the interactivity the audience member has experienced in the performance, the journey they have taken. Erkki Huhtamo states:

Typical metaphors for describing the experience of using a CD-ROM are 'travelling' or 'navigating.' They refer to a spatial experience, an interactive journey of discovery into the virtual world 'hidden' on the disk, supposedly beyond the interface (Huhtamo in Hershman Leeson, 1996, pp. 307-8)

Referring to her CD-ROM, Laurie Anderson states that, 'I like the idea of collaborating with this new person who is no longer the passive reader, the passive viewer, but someone who is making something with you' (see Jones, 1998, p. 213). Jones draws the connection with this to performance, stating that:

Such an engagement through interactivity, obviously and exaggeratedly mediated through the technological apparatus of the computer, oddly mimics a major structural component of live performance, where our activity as audience/participants can potentially shift the terms of the performer's actions. While live performance is apparently more 'authentic' because apparently more phenomenologically direct, it entails a relation of intersubjectivity that is, like the CD-ROM, both circumscribed by the terms staged by the performer (just as Anderson's programmed codes to a certain extent direct our seemingly freely chosen movement throughout the 'motel') and thoroughly mediated a communication (Jones, 1998, p. 213).

Similarly in the performance of Vena Amoris the audience member has made choices throughout the journey, but within a structure predetermined by the performer prior to the performance and during the performance by the instructions given on the phone.
The End/The Beginning

With the giving of the CD-ROM the performance re-appears, in the (re)fection of the face of the audience member, within the coded memory of the disk. Phelan states that, 'Without a copy, live performance plunges into visibility – and disappears into memory, into the realm of invisibility and the unconscious where it eludes regulation and control' (Phelan, Unmarked, p. 148). With the extinguishing of the flame the performer disappears and the remaining image is the face of the audience member on the mirror. As they walk back through the mirror they are handed, on their re-emergence into the outside world, the world outside the performance, outside the mirror, their reflection back again. They carry with them not just the performance but themselves within the performance. In Mourning Sex Phelan writes that, 'At the heart of mimicry is a fear that the match will not hold and the 'thing itself' (you, me, love, art) will disappear before we can reproduce it. So we hurl ourselves headlong toward copymachines, computers, newspapers, cloning labs' (1997, p. 12). This statement echoes the earlier reference to the quest for the perfect pixilated image. The reflected image of performer and audience, simultaneously you and me and love and art is captured momentarily in the flame from the cigarette lighter. The next time the audience member sees their face it is captured on the golden disc on which are frozen performance moments – thus the audience member’s vision of self is still facilitated through the performer, and through performance. Like the performer she/he are hidden inside the
reflective surface, not instantly discernable, requiring a ‘spark of electricity’ to open the window. As they leave the space, their image in their hand, the performer, (re)viewing their own, frozen image before them, rings the next mobile phone number and the performance begins again, anew, remarked, re-choreographed and revisioned through the audience member. Phelan posits that:

Performance occurs over a time that will not be repeated. It can be performed again, but this repetition marks itself as “different.” The document of a performance then is only a spur to memory, an encouragement of memory to become present (Phelan, 1993, p. 146).

At the place in the performance when the performer and audience member meet, it is interesting to note that what enabled them to see each other and themselves within the other, is the same thing which keeps them separate, the glass which stands between them, immobilizing them in and from each others image. In this separation there is an echo of the earlier line, ’The real danger was perceived as coming directly from the stage. In the event of fire it was stage and audience that had to be separated.’ Here performer and audience member, like their counterparts in the Victorian theatre building, are separated, cordoned off from each other. The text draws the connections between the circuit of energy which have pulsed through the piece as she lights the lighter, ‘did you did you NEED that tiny jolt of electricity just to know you were alive?’ The through-line of electricity of fire of energy has created a current throughout the journey and there is a cyclical rhythm to it – from the
cigarette lighter and the history of fire lecture on the stage, Tesla's dream of wireless electricity, the mobile phone and laptop, the electricity of the body in the empty room with the Van Der Graff, the light bulbs on the mirror allowing and restricting vision and finally to the cigarette lighter again.

Conclusion

According to Phelan,

Performance is the artform that most fully understands the generative possibilities of disappearance. Poised forever at the threshold of the present, performance enacts the productive appeal of the nonreproductive. Trying to suggest that the disappearance of the external other is the means by which self-assurance is achieved requires that one analyze the potential payoffs in such disappearance: performance exposes some of them (Phelan, 1993, p. 27).

This moment is emblematic of the transient passing nature of performance itself; the audience member has not only been performance and performer, they have been within the passing moment that is the art form itself. In terms of the control, detached viscerality, virtual closeness and compliance which have been at play throughout the piece in terms of the performer I would like to take Schneider's comment that:

For the feminist materialist "reciprocity" becomes a project of recognizing the ricochet of gazes, and the histories of who-gets-to-see-what-where. The invested object will be, to some degree, both separate from and relative to herself in her general struggle with historical legacies of disembodiment – paradoxical and impossible as she is, being, herself, the previously unimaginable: philosopher
There is a liberation within this comment that goes some way towards providing succor to initial performance concerns discussed earlier in this chapter, regarding loss of self within presenting certain images. Schneider's final, affirmative, 'never only one' presents a freedom for the performer, fixed physically behind the mirror but fluid in role, spectator, mediator, non-performer, guide, ally, and able to reform, change, re-embody, shapeshift chameleon like with every returned gaze of each audience member reflected before her and on her.

At the beginning of this chapter I discussed the desire as performer to supercede a marked, gendered, objectified role. This supercedence was engendered by the one to one format and the performer/audience invisibility/visibility. At the same time it presented an interesting counter-perspective to current debate surrounding the work of artists employing new technologies as a way to transcend the body, such as Stelarc or Orlan (see Chapter 3 of this thesis). There is an echo of this transcendence of the body through the binary codes of technology in the final section of the piece, with the presentation of a CD-ROM to the audience member.

In terms of the play between the body, the live presence and technology, Vena Amoris can be seen as having formed an electric circuit both internal and external to the body. This fire spreads through the building, carried
by the audience/performer as they move from the theatre to the stairs, from the stairs to the first floor, from the first floor to the wooden paneled court room and from there to the studio. It takes different guises: the lighter on the stage marking the place for audience member to take; the hot embrace of the spotlight, the wireless connectivity of the phone; the digital energy of the computer; the sparks flying from the Van Der Graff generator; to the final flame that illuminates the face of the performer, the face of the audience performer as one is reflected on the other. These are what bring them together, and what separate them and cue their eventual leave-taking and the end of the performance. The fire is essential. It is the current that pulses through the piece and through the bodies of performer/audience member taking as direct, and as vital a route as the vena amoris to the heart. This circuit is its own 'spur to memory' imprinted within the body of the audience, imprinted within the body of the performer, the current which connected them.

Egyptians believed that the third finger of the left hand follows the vena amoris, the vein of love that runs directly to the heart. A direct ‘digital’ blood flow.

The audience comments given by some of those who participated in the one to one performances of Vena Amoris form an appendix to this chapter. These comments, highlight the specifically personal, emotional reactions to a piece that was in many ways detached, virtual, alone. Are they the return call on the mobile phone when the journey is relinquished? Or are they the applause? Read reminds us that theatre images are not just visual
they are 'a composite of the visual, aural and nasal.... Applause is the audience's consolation to themselves that touch is more often than not precluded form their experience of performance' (Read, 1993, p. 66). But in Vena Amoris who would the applause be for? The Performer? The Audience member? And which was which? At the end of Vena Amoris there is no applause. No consoling touch. But does this applause, this touch, this contact happen in another way? Maybe as the two faces merge in the mirror? When the audience member hears the performer's voice, unmediated by a phone saying to them, 'I'm glad you came. When will I see you again? I miss you already.' The sound of applause is delicious....

1 Szymanowski, No 1 of three Lullabies, op.48 (Iwazkiewicz), 'Pochyl sie cicho nad kolyska, nad czarnym, czarnym stawem. Daj reke spoczniemy na dnie niebawem.' It is interesting to note that Stefan and Franciska Themerson used Szymanowski's music in their 1945 film The Eye and the Ear. In each of the films four sections songs by the Polish modernist composer are explored through abstract photograms, graphic diagrams and photogenic camerawork (see Rees, A History of Experimental Film and Video, p. 55).

2 In her illuminating article 'Multi-Medea: Feminist Performance Using Multimedia Technologies', Susan Kozel writes, 'Feminist criticism enables us to see through the ritual virility of virtual reality, and to transform technological space into a powerful location, and mode, for performance' (Kozel, Gender and Performance, Lizbeth Goodman (ed.), p. 299).

3 Helen Paris, Vena Amoris performance abstract, Artsadmin Bursary application, 1999. See also Rachel Armstrong's article entitled 'The Body and New Technology', where she posits The emergence of a genre of post-human actors does not mean the redundancy of 'natural' human characters but implies that it is likely that human and post-human theatrical spaces and performers will need to co-exist' (Armstrong, Totally Wired: Science, Technology and the Human Form, Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1996).

4 Philip Auslander argues that Phelan's all or nothing binary distinctions here are too extreme and that terms such as 'betrayal' are overly dramatic (Auslander, Performance
and Cultural Politics, p. 197-198). His argument about the relationship between live and mediated raises some interesting issues, which are referred to in Chapter 3 of this thesis, wherein I discuss the potential symbiotic relationship between live and mediated work.

5 Vena Amoris was developed over a four-week period, supported by an artists bursary from Artsadmin, London. Artsadmin, an organization established since 1979, provide a unique service for artists, companies and the live art sector as a whole. Housed in Toynbee Hall, Artsadmin rent studio spaces and digital sound, video and computer equipment at competitive prices and specially employed artist advisors offer artists advice on the promotion and development of their work, administration and how best to approach funding bodies. As part of their support Artsadmin offer bursary support for, 'artists whose work push the boundaries of contemporary artistic practice in the areas of time based media and/or any one of the following in combination with the above: new performance, installation, text, sound, digital technology and projected image.' (Artsadmin brochure, published by Artsadmin, Toynbee Hall, 1999). The bursaries support the artist as opposed to a specific artistic product and thus provide a luxury of time and fiscal security to focus on process rather than product, which is a rare event for an artist, and particularly so for a performance artist. The bursary enabled me to take risks in terms of ideas, to experiment with structure and form and pursue my ongoing artistic research into the possibilities of depth and viscerality of contact and communication with an audience. I felt thoroughly supported by Artsadmin every part of the process, so much so that there seemed to be a symbiotic relationship between the role of the artist and that of the programmer/administrator.


8 The inspiration for this piece of work came from Elaine Showalter's book, The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980 which provides a vital source of information, covering 150 years, of cultural perceptions of female 'normality' and 'madness' including several prints of Charcot's pictures. See also Didi-Huberman, Invention de l'hystérie; Charcot et l'iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière, 1982. Also see Janet Frame's Faces in the Water 1980; a desperately moving account the fears of incarceration and lobotomy. The central character describes a lobotomy as having her furniture taken away from her and the poignancy of the writing inspired the end section of C'est La Vie. Although I go on in this section to speak about the difficulty and the challenge to (re)present through performance both physically/emotionally concepts/images inspired by the information within these books I owe them both much respect for how they affected and mobilized me.

9 See the body performances of Vito Acconci in which his visceral performances 'react against a cultural economy of representation that emphasizes cleanliness and order' (Auslander, From Acting to Performance, p. 93). In relation to the visibility/invisibility, presence/absence of the performer in Vena Amoris, see also
Acconci’s 1972 Seedbed performance, where he is present in the gallery space but out of sight, hidden under a ramp in the gallery, where he masturbates.

11 See Julia Kristeva’s discussion of the work of Mary Douglas in *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, ‘I expel myself, I spit myself out, I abject myself within the same motion through which I claim to establish myself.’ According to Butler, ‘The boundary of the body as well as the distinction between internal and external is established through the ejection and transvaluation of something originally part of identity not a defiling otherness’ (Butler, *Gender Trouble* p. 133).

11 See Chapter 3 of this thesis, *Side By Side By Cyborg* in which I describe the infiltration and exaggeration of specifically ‘messy’, sweaty, visceral moments in response to the technology.

12 A friend told me that once she and her work colleagues all became armed with the obligatory mobile they never managed to meet up for their regular office lunches together simply because they could, they would change the lunch venue or time, rapidly sending the new information between themselves so that in the end ever managed to finalize a time – because they always knew that they could change it. What enabled their communication simultaneously disabled it.

13 Performances took place on the evenings of the 1st and 2nd July 1999 in Toynbee Hall, London.

14 The space where I had devised the piece during my residency at Toynbee Hall.

15 See Laurie Anderson’s 1972 piece, *Audience as Performers*. Anderson, tells of how each Sunday in Rochester, Vermont there was a town get-together on the green, and the school brass band would play in the gazebo. What struck Anderson was the fact that the audience would remain in their cars, around the gazebo and after each number they would honk their horns as applause. For Anderson the rich honking of the horns sounded better than the tinnyness of the concert. This inspired Anderson to then write a piece for car horns and send out flyers asking for volunteers to audition for the ‘Automotive Orchestra’ (no previous orchestral experience necessary). Dozens of cars and trucks showed up to ‘audition’ and the eventual concert was performed on the town green, this time with the audience sitting in the gazebo and the orchestra surrounding it. Anderson describes one of the pieces as having the magnificence of an enormous traffic jam,’ (Anderson, *Stories from The Nerve Bible*, p. 154).

16 Similarly the one-to-one nature of the encounter reflects the format engendered by interactive technologies. As Tony Feldman states, ‘The one-to-oneness that will increasingly become a feature of digital media products is especially distinctive. All existing content – broadcasting, music, film, publishing – are based on a generic model of distribution. In other words, their business is creating a single product and either replicating it in physical form and delivering it to as many individuals as they can find who will pay for it or transmitting it identically through a broadcasting infrastructure so that the same product is received by all who are tuned to the signal... In the digital domain, this generic model can persist... but more importantly it can be disposed of entirely. To some extent, interactivity means every user can enjoy a slightly different content experience depending on how they choose to interact with a product but, more fundamentally, it means that information or entertainment experiences can be
exactly tailored to individual needs and can be accessed when the user wants those experiences' (Feldman, Digital Media, p. 155).

17 Levinson states that, 'The telephone answering machine no doubt remedies some of this problem, and serves as a good example of how humans can rationally design technologies to reduce problems of other technologies (hence my term' remedial media'). But so potent is the phone's presentation of possibility that even this fix is incomplete: dare I trust my answering machine to put my initial best voice forward to that potential Hollywood producer at the other end of the line?' (Levinson, The Soft Edge, p. 65).

18 During one of the performances, one audience member, a prestigious Live Art programmer when asked by the performer, 'can you see your light?' retorted, 'I can see a light', instantly aware of the meaning inherent in the question.

19 Make Someone Happy from the Musical production of Do Re Mi B, Comden/A. Green, J. Styne From Two classic albums from Doris Day, Two On One, Bright and Shiny Compilation 1994 Sony Music Entertainment (UK) Ltd. MCPS/BIEM/SDRM.

20 Stanton B Garner writes that, 'Beckett stages his spectator as deliberately as he does his characters and actors, and with a similar phenomenological emphasis: not as the disembodies eye/I of traditional realist spectator ship but a s a body situated with its own positionality and material presence. Just as his late plays reveal an increasing dispossesssion within bodied subjectivity on the part of Beckett's characters, so these plays also involve the audience in a phenomenological displacement, disclosing the body that underlies and sustains theatrical seeing at the very moment that they subject this body to a marked perceptual displacement' (Garner, Bodied Spaces, pp. 36-37).

21 Blau references a letter from Jeffrey Nuttall in which Nuttall states that the London based company The People Show are 'not theatre' because 'the audience is part of the show and space is the witness. In other words it can only be seen from the inside, like a tunnel – therefore not theatre' (see Blau, The Audience, p. 345).

22 Levinson states that, The telephone, even when sheathed in the prophylactic of the answering machine, is so potent an inseminator of our dreams that it remains the one medium that can pull us away from our physical beds' (Levinson, The Soft Edge, p. 65).

23 Although at this juncture I use the term Mirror stage to refer directly to the Stage of the theatre, the Lacanian notion of the mirror stage as phase provides an interesting double reading which is referred to in detain later on in this chapter.

24 This glory, this moment of self-love to be relished in the privacy of the theatre is reminiscent of Rosalind Russell as Rose the starstruck stage mother in the final scene of the film Gypsy. Here too is the empty Theatre which seems to have a life of its own as the curtains rise and the lights come up to Russell's command. In true star-style her name appears in lights behind her around her. Invested with her energy, her performance presence her love of performance and her love of performing the theatre comes phantasmagorically alive as she performs to the empty seats. As with Vena Amoris there is just one ‘performer’ onstage and the auditorium is empty. There is a similar complication surrounding the presence/absence of an audience, as the character
of Rose lets go and abandons herself fully to the performative moment on stage certain she is alone, ‘unmarked’, whereas in fact she has an audience of one, onstage with her, in the presence of her daughter, the ‘real’ performer who watches her Mother from the wings.


26 Martha Rosler in her chapter entitled, ‘Video: Shedding the Utopian Moment’, notes that, ‘the person who introduced photography to America not only was a painter but also was the inventor of the telegraph, Samuel F. B. Morse, who received the photographic processes from Daguerre himself. While they chatted in Morse’s Paris lodgings, Daguerre’s diorama theatre, based on the protofilmic illusions of backdrops, scrims, and variable lighting, burned to the ground’ (Rosler, Illuminating Video, p. 36).

27 Phelan references Sophie Calle’s museum piece GHOSTS, noting that the layout of her museum installation is as if Calle were surveying the route of the audience member. Phelan goes on to state that the notion of following and tracking was a fundamental aspect of Calle’s earlier performance pieces. See Jean Baudrillard Suite Venitienne/Sophie Calle; Please Follow Me, for documentation of Calle’s surveillance of a stranger (see Phelan, Unmarked, p. 191).

In terms of other performance work formed strongly on audience interaction and one to one interaction see Fiona Templeton’s YOU – The City (1988), individual clients are guided through Manhattan, oppositions between performance and environment, performer and spectator seem continually under challenge. See also Forced Entertainment’s Nights in the City (1995), where the audience are taken on a coach tour. Tim Etchells writes that, ‘the old dialectical separations between inside and outside, fiction and reality, self and other, audience and performer, were here exploited and blurred.’ (Nick Kaye in ‘The Temper of The Times’, Performance Research, volume 1, no.1, Spring 1996).

28 Computer interactivity is an excellent example of a situation wherein the audience/spectator becomes the performer/participant/creator.

29 The film also references the larger framework of current debate around areas of art and technology and new technologies creation of a culture of copy.

30 In fact the real name for this room is the CourtRoom and its neighboring room across the hall is actually named the Fire Room. The room labels have been swapped.

31 See Birringer on Laurie Anderson, ‘Anderson is in control of the technological manipulation of the various (gender) identities constructed...’(Birringer, Performance, Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism, pp. 221 – 222).

32 There is an interesting parallel with Barthes when he writes about the paradox of the photographic look. A boy glances about the café in which Barthes sits and occasionally his eyes rest on Barthes, ‘I then had the certainty that he was looking at me without however being sure that he was seeing me: an inconceivable distortion: how can we look without seeing?’ (Barthes, Camera Lucida, pp. 111, 113).
Barthes goes on to make a connection between the photographic reality of 'that-has-been' with truth, 'there she is!' which has an interesting resonance later in Vena Amoris when performer and audience member do see each other (Barthes, Camera Lucida, pp. 111, 113).

33 See Freud, in Mourning and Melancholia (standard edition XV 249-51), (as cited by Wilden The Language of the Self, p. 169).

34 See Butler's statement that 'Inner' and 'outer' make sense only with reference to a mediating boundary that strives for stability. And this stability, this coherence, is determined in large part by cultural orders that sanction the subject and compel its differentiation from the abject. When that subject is challenged, the meaning and necessity of the terms are subject to displacement. If the 'inner world' no longer designates a topos, then the internal fixity of the self and, indeed, the internal locale of gender identity, become similarly suspect. The critical question is not how did that identity become internalized? As if internalization were a process or a mechanism that might be descriptively reconstructed. Rather the question is: From what strategic position in public discourse and for what reasons has the trope of interiority and the disjunctive binary of inner/outer taken hold? In what language is 'inner space' figured? What kind of figuration is it, and through what figure of the body is it signified? How does a body figure on its surface the very invisibility of its hidden depths? (Butler, Gender Trouble, p. 134).

35 Christine Tamblyn writes how in the film work of Yvonne Rainer and Bette Gordon 'the voice is multiplied, temporally distanced or otherwise displaced from the site of enunciation. Interludes of silence alternate with a reliance on voice-overs and intertitles. The voice-over plays a crucial role, since it represents the power to contextualize images from an indeterminate location, permitting the speaker to be heard without being seen, and thereby disrupts the specular regime of dominant cinema' (Tamblyn, Illuminating Video, p. 413). Tamblyn also notes that in Cecilia Condit's Beneath the Skin visual motifs of doubling occurs throughout the tape; one woman's face is often projected over another's (Tamblyn, Illuminating Video, p. 414).

36 See Lynn Hershman-Leeson, 'Romancing the Anti-Body, Lust and Longing in Cyberspace', where Leeson references her art piece, Paranoïd Mirror (1995), in which reflection was used as means of portraiture and reflected self-portraiture. Though obscured and distanced, the artist's reflection watched from behind central figures. Paranoïd Mirror engaged ideas of reflection, tracking, surveillance, and voyeurism and used the viewer as a direct interface. Sensors strategically placed on the floor caused the still image in a gold frame to activate, turn around, and dissolve between sequences of reflection into the viewer or other women in the videodisk sequences. In some instances, a switcher placed the viewer's back into the frame, countering the direct reflection into the scrimlike layers of the images. The back of an older woman's head was seen when the piece was inactive. The suggestion of difficulties with eyesight underscored the paranoiac fear of being watched as well as the relationship of paranoia to voyeurism and surveillance. Accompanying this piece were four photographs from the filmed sequences. These images were framed so as to obscure the image. Appearances therefore, are often reflective illusions and projections of the observer' (Hershman-Leeson, Clicking In, p. 336).

38 See Lacan in The Language of the Self, when he interprets Freud’s Förtl Da!, ‘Förtl Da! It is precisely in his solitude that the desire of the little child has already become the desire of another, of an alter ego who dominates him and whose object of desire is henceforth his own affliction (Lacan, The Language of the Self, p. 83).

39 An interesting comparative piece here is Carolee Schneeman’s 1963 Eye/Body piece in which according to Schneider, Schneeman, ‘established her artist’s body as “visual territory,” as if to declare: if I am a token, then I’ll be a token to reckon with. But the work also suggested a complex theoretical terrain of perspectivalism on the flip. Eye/Body suggested embodied vision, a bodily eye – sighted eyes – artist’s eyes – not only in the seer, but in the body of the seen’ (Schneider, The Explicit Body, pp. 177-8). According to Schneider the piece contained ‘broken glass and shards of mirrors, photographs, lights, motorized umbrellas, her own nude body’ and the presence of reflective (potentially hazardous) surfaces is interesting here - Schneeman delights in the fragments of body image desiring and desired, the eyes that see her and her eyes that see.

In terms of narcissism which has also been a focus of this chapter it is interesting to note that although at the time Eye/Body was criticized in its day as self-indulgent exhibitionism, it has now been recognized by critics such as Lucy Lippard have since recognized the work as prophetic one of the first American installations to incorporate the artist’s own body as object – terrain (see Schneider, The Explicit Body, pp. 177-8).

Lucy Lippard, however was not so ready to commend the body installations of Hannah Wilke and joined with other feminist critics who deemed the work narcissistic. It wasn’t until Wilke, some years later, remaining true to her art/body practice, included her cancer riddled body in her work. No longer presenting what was considered to be the body beautiful, she could no longer be accused of narcissism but instead lauded. (See Amelia Jones account of Wilke’s project, Intra-Venus, in which Wilke shows posed Photographs of her lymphatic body and images fabricated from the hair she lost during chemotherapy, ‘a brilliant riposte to those who condemned her work as narcissistic and Wilke herself as exploiting her own beauty’ (Amelia Jones, Body Art, p. 185),

40 See Merleau-Ponty, ‘For the first time the seeing that I am is for me really visible; for the first time I appear to myself completely turned inside out under my own eyes’ (Merleau-Ponty, The Visible and the Invisible, p. 143).

41 See A.L. Rees account of Jean Cocteau’s first film, Blood of a Poet, ‘where the poet-hero is first seen in a burlesque of eighteenth-century décor, drawing a portrait. The mouth of this image takes on a life of its own, calling for ‘air, air’ in the voice of Lee Miller. Materialising as the poets Muse, she leads him ‘through the mirror’ – in a spectacular trick-shot – to a series of encounters with archaic art, fake suicide, magic, ritual, voyeurism, opium and transvestitism’ (Rees, Experimental Film and Video, p. 47).

42 See Anthony Wilden’s notes wherein he describes Freud’s derivation and meaning of the Förtl Da!, The child in question would associate the appearance and disappearance of a toy which he alternately threw away and drew back again with the vowel sounds ‘ö’ and ‘á’, which Freud interpreted as those of the German words for ‘gone!’ (Förtl) and ‘here’ (Dá!) the repetition of this game was apparently evidence of
the child's beginning to master his environment actively through speech, for the active repetition seemed clearly to replace the passivity of the situation where the child's mother was alternately present and absent. Freud notes the eventual detachment of the game from the figure of the mother, and he notes the importance of the antithesis of disappearance and return rather than the content of the opposition: by means of his image in a mirror, the child soon discovered how to make himself disappear (see Wilden, *The Language of the Self* pp. 152/153).

In his article 'The Actors Who Have Two Faces', Dave Kehr writes that, 'When a performer doubles as his own director, he gazes into a reflecting pool more profound than the poor thing available to Narcissus. He sees himself through the eye of the camera, a more objective, more judgmental observer. He sees himself as the world perceives him, but in amplified action and 50 feet tall. For Charles Chaplin the cinema was...a mirror, ...one that provided him with infinite delight. Chaplin's affair with himself is one of the great love stories of the movies (Kehr, *New York Times*, January 16th 2000).

See Jacques Derrida, 'Writing, Encasing, Screening', where he quotes from Philippe Sollers Drama 'The past is not behind us but beneath our feet...yet nothing is truly written, all can change at every moment, and is still and interminably the first time' (Sollers as cited in *Dissemination*, p. 310).

Textual analysis is a method in which the reader becomes an active participant, rather than a passive consumer, of the meanings of a text, such that the reader, through reading, becomes, in effect, the writer of the text. Through this process the reader often experiences the thrill of discovery combined with the sensation that the text itself is actually being transformed' (Barry, *Illuminating Video*, p. 249).

See also Judith Barry's article 'This is not a Paradox' in which she writes that, 'The reader often experiences the thrill of discovery combined with the sensation that the text itself is actually being transformed' (Barry, *Illuminating Video*, p. 249).

In her article 'Performativity and Difference: The Politics of Illness and Collaboration', Tina Takemoto cites Homi Bhaba, 'who suggests that for the visually marked subject, looking into a mirror and 'seeing oneself seeing oneself' has a different 'othering effect' than the one suggested by Lacan's mirror stage.' The mirror reflects an other both 'recognizable and alienating,' but this recognition is not based on a 'series of equivalencies, sameness, identities' that can be made between the self and image. Recognition depends on understanding how the mirror functions, the image is a visual index of one's (sur)face.' (See Tina Takemoto, *The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, vol. 27, n.o 1 p. 11, Spring 1997).

In terms of both the conflation of actor and spectator within *Vena Amoris* and the performer/audience member mother/child relationship it is significant to reference Augusto Boal's creation myth for theatre. For Boal the creation myth of theatre was
embodied by Xua Xua, the pre-human woman who gave birth to her son finding, post partum that with presence of another, independent entity; theatre is discovered. For Boal, ‘the moment when Xua Xua gave up trying to recover her baby and keep him all for herself, accepted that her was somebody else, and looked at herself, emptied part of herself. At that moment she was at one and the same time Actor and Spectator. She was Spect-Actor’ (Boal in Auslander, From Acting to Performance, p. 99).

49 See Lacan’s theories concerning the analyst/client relationship. The passive /active, witness/witnesser, object/subject dynamics established between performer and audience member in Vena Amoris have interesting parallels to this relationship, although who play what role is not as defined, ‘The relationship is a purely dual one for the subject; he is infact maintaining a sort of short circuit between his narcissistic image of himself and the image of the other, in order to resist any attempts to change the image. But the analyst himself is neither an object nor an alter ego; he is the third man. Although he begins by acting as a mirror for the subject, it is through his refusal to respond at the level consciously or unconsciously demanded by the subject (ultimately the demand for love), that he will eventually (or ideally) pass from the role of ‘dummy,’ whose hand the subject seeks to play, to that of the Other with whom the barred subject of his patient is unconsciously communication. The mirror relationship of ego and alter ego which was the obstacle to recognition of his unconscious desire’ (Lacan, The Language of the Self, p. 168).

50 In The Soft Edge Levinson writes that, ‘So significant as a communication medium was the electric lightbulb’s turning of night into day, that its inventor Thomas Alva Edison could be justifiably regarded as the most important inventor of media in the past two centuries on the basis of that alone, with his creation of the phonograph and development of a motion picture process left out of the bargain’ (Levinson, The Soft Edge, p. 71).

51 See Part One of United States, wherein Laurie Anderson refers to a ‘Language of the Future, ‘Current runs through bodies, and then it doesn’t. On again. Off again. Always two things Switching. One thing instantly replaces another. It was the language of the Future.’

52 It is interesting to note at this point that, Vena Amoris was booked prior to its premiere at Toynbee, by two prestigious London performance venues, Battersea Arts Center as part of the Live Art contingent of the 10th Festival of Visual Theatre, and by Hoxton Hall for their 1999 Festival of Performance. However both venues claimed that they could not support the performance in the format that it took, as it created some fiscal problems i.e. an audience quota of 20 a night would not fulfil the demands of the box office. According to Phelan, ‘The pressures brought to bear on performance to succumb to the laws of the reproductive economy are enormous. For only rarely in this culture is the “now” to which performance addresses its deepest questions valued’ (Phelan, Unmarked, p. 146).

Therefore the show must be presented to a full, seated ‘bums on seats’ audience. In other words, it was to be a completely different show under the same title. ‘Performance in a strict ontological sense is nonreproductive. It is this quality which makes performance the runt of the litter of contemporary art. Performance clogs the smooth machinery of reproductive representation necessary to the circulation of capital’ (Phelan, Unmarked, p. 148).

Phelan has described Performance Art the ‘runt of the litter’ (Phelan, Unmarked, p. 148) due to it’s nonreproductive status. While trying to place Vena
Amoris in a venue I pondered as to whether the curators of the Serpentine Gallery had ever approached any of their visual artists before an exhibition and demanded some conceptual changes; 'Damien, we love the sheep – formaldehyde – fantastic! It's just that we were wondering if maybe you could submit it as a painting instead – we really need optimum floor space to get more people in to the exhibition.' The challenge for the re-working of Vena Amoris was and will continue to be to find a way of generating a similar depth of audience/performer interaction and intensity (as witnessed by the audience comments included as an Appendix to this thesis) within a fixed, conventional audience/performer construct.
The Day Don Came With the Fish

The Lux
London
December, 1997
A Note to Set the Reader Re-Viewing: Transgressing the Currents into Chapter Two

In this chapter I progress my thesis argument by demonstrating the symbiotic relationships between live and mediated formats, with reference to the performance *The Day Don Came With The Fish* (1997). Again, I have chosen to address this work in the order which best positions its main concerns and working methods in the wider context of my argument, rather than in a strict chronological order. I argue in this chapter that live and mediated formats can be seen to share similar ontologies and to reveal the mortalities and immortalities of each unique form, each within the other. I support this argument with detailed reference to original research into the field, including: an analysis of Roland Barthes' theory of photography as certifying presence, consideration of Peggy Phelan's writings on the temporalities of film, reference to the photographic work of artist David Wojnarowicz and to the digital and analogue art of Jim Campbell, and detailed discussion of my own performance practice as research.

While repeating my view that I do not believe that detailed program notes necessarily instruct viewers on the most creative ways to view (which are most often arrived at individually, within the bounds of the possible in the performance arena of the always-already mediated), still I will offer a few suggestions for viewing materials related to this chapter. The text of the chapter opens with an edited extract from the performance script of *The Day Don Came With The Fish*. The reader/viewer may also wish to interact with that section of the performance on the CD-ROM, located under the menu option entitled 'Performance'. Alternatively, some 'audiences' of this thesis might prefer to consult the full script of this piece, included as Appendix 3, and to leave the viewing/interaction until later.
Chapter Two
Mortality and Immortality
Analogue and Digital Media
Case study: The Day Don Came with the Fish

A cinema of the dead allows us to imagine that precisely because death is unstillable we will not be separated from it. If one of the things we grieve over is the end signified by death, a cinema for the dead reveals that such an end keeps moving, and does not end (Phelan, 1997, p. 156).

Introduction

If the performance highlighted in Chapter One [Vena Amoris (love vein/vain)], became an investigation of how far the virtual could be the conduit of the living breathing live presence, then The Day Don Came with the Fish,¹ became and is still becoming a case study in experimentation with the viscerality of the virtual. The Day Don Came with the Fish can be seen to show how both old and new technologies can function almost as a fascia, a permeable membrane, around and between the body of performer and spoken text.

According to critic of the postmodern Chantal Pontibrand, mediation has been a determining influence on the form of postmodern performance even before it is captured on video; she summarizes the idea by stating that ‘theatre today, in order to overcome the impossibility of theatre has chosen the path of cinema’ (Pontibrand as cited in Auslander, 1992, p. 48). In other words the insertion of mediatization into performance has become a defining feature of the art form itself.²
Patrice Pavis states that:

Theatre tends towards simplification, minimalization, fundamental reduction to a direct exchange between actor and spectator. Media, on the other hand, tends towards complication and sophistication, thanks to technological development; they are by nature open to maximal multiplication. Inscribed in technological but also in ideological and cultural practices, in a process of information and disinformation, media easily multiply the number of their spectators, becoming accessible to a potentially infinite audience. If theatre relationships are to take place, however, the performance cannot tolerate more than a limited number of spectators or even performances because theatre repeated too often deteriorates or at least changes. As a result, theatre is ‘in essence’ an art of limited range (Pavis, 1992, p. 101).

The attempt to set the dynamics of live performance against technology through the binary oppositions of ‘simple’ and ‘complex’ limits results for both forms. It is often the case that the simplest uses of technology can engender the most adroit effects, while conversely, that same theatre/performance can manifest itself in complex enjambments. Arguably, it could be said that the fact theatre ‘changes’ is inevitable with each performance and is in fact what makes live performance unique. Whilst disagreeing with Pontibrand’s notion of an impossible theatre, her comments about the alternative ‘presence’ mediation can have in live performance are of significance to this chapter which explores reciprocal live and mediated. Much of my practice has focussed on explorations of the body and new media, relating form to content, focusing strongly on the body in performance and the interweaving of film, video, and computer generated images to compliment or juxtapose it.
One of my desires in making *The Day Don Came With The Fish* was to explore varying nuances of live and mediated work, both individually and in conjunction with each other. The shifting temporality of live performance informed the content of *The Day Don Came With The Fish* in terms of presenting a kind of mortality, intertwined with the immortality of the mediatization. I will explore mortalities in *The Day Don Came With The Fish* with specific reference to the role of the live presence in performance, analogue video and Super8 film. I will then look at the interweaving immortality involved in *The Day Don Came With The Fish*, with reference to digital video and photography, including the photographic work of artist David Wojnarowicz, and the film, *Silverlake Life: The View From Here* by Tom Joslin and Mark Massi. I will also include, in both sections, brief reference to the work of artist/engineer Jim Cambell who uses digital and analogue mediums in his work dealing with ‘transforming time.’

If the phrase McLuhan famously coined in 1966 is true and the medium is indeed the message, then in *The Day Don Came With The Fish* the medium is (im)mortal; the message is (im)mortality (im)mortalised by the medium. For example, on a formal level the combination of live presence, Super8 film and digital editing techniques juxtaposed the mortality of live performance with the immortality of film yet, in turn the rather fragile, limited *mortal* nature of Super8 film is juxtaposed with the potentially limitless possibilities of digital editing, which, in turn does not have a
meaningful ontology without the live presence. (I use live presence to refer to the live presence of the performer and audience during the show).

In conjunction with the exploration of digital and analogue; live and mediated, mortal and immortal the meta-theme of the work is that of memory. In this chapter memory is examined within the performance of *The Day Don Came With The Fish* as body memory, analogue and digital memory, performance memory. Memory is at the core of exploring the immortalities and mortalities of live and pre-recorded mediums. It is also at the core of the live performance, which exists and refuses to exist, as memorial.

[In terms of the live and mediated relationship, linguistically there arose a problem regarding how to differentiate within the following text between when the text refers to the performer in the live performance and when it refers to (the same) performer in the film. Entitling each respectively the 'live performer' and the 'mediated performer' engenders a quandary around areas of existence and presence. Implicit within making a distinction immediately the 'mediated' performer is perceived textually as 'other' than live. This is interesting when we consider that the images and actions shown through the film are indeed no longer 'live' - they are in and of the past, and generated into view in the present through the live performer who acts in the present and to an extent determines the future, although it is a future still mediated by the film. Eventually it seemed more true to the content of the piece to resist such an oppositional use of]
terminology and simply add the word 'live' to performer when referring to the live performance only].

In Memory - the performance

It may well be that theatre and performance respond to a psychic need to rehearse for loss, and especially for death. Billed as rehearsal, performance and theatre have a special relation to art as memorial (Phelan, 1997, p. 3).

At the start of the performance of The Day Don Came With The Fish the audience enters to see the performer standing opposite a Super8 projector at one end of the performance space. There are no chairs and at the far end of the space is a raised platform, with a projection screen behind it. The audience gathers around the projector in a semi-circle. The performer moves towards the projector and switches it on and silent color Super8 film rolls noisily. The small images are caught on delicate circles of rice paper, strung together and hanging from the ceiling on a silver fishhook a couple of feet away from the projector. The performer stands by the rice paper spheres, which hang at the same height as her face, her breath making them sway and flutter slightly. With her intake of the skin-like sheets of paper separate slightly and the performer catches a single wafer of paper between her parted lips, almost as if kissing the image, and slowly pulls the circle off, layer by layer, each fragile screen holding an image which disappears into her mouth - a seascape with a ruined castle on a cliff, an image of a man's face, smiling in the sunlight, a blue sea. The performer slowly eats the fragile 'screens' one by one, the images
dissolving into her mouth, swallowed into her body, literally embodied,
until the film reel spends itself and only the sound of the empty projector
and the stark white light of the bulb remains.

Once the spheres have disappeared and the silver fishhook hangs empty
the performer moves her face close to the projector light so that eventually
only her mouth is lit, both outside and in. When she finally speaks, her
voice is scratched, the inside of her mouth still lightly coated with the last
dissolving fragments of film:

What day of the week was I born on mother?
Wednesday I think dear,
Hold on and I’ll ask your father.
Tony, what day did Don come with the fish?
Wednesday I think dear.
That’s right,
You were born on Wednesday,
The Day Don Came With The Fish.

The performer then turns off the Super8 projector and moves to a video
projector, positioned in the middle of the space, which she turns on.
Images of an oscilloscope reading of the performer’s asymmetric heartbeat
are projected on to a film screen opposite. The performer cups her hand
under the light so the shadow of her hand appears on the film screen, as if
holding her beating heart. She speaks the following on a single breath:

When I was a baby I stopped breathing one day.
My mother noticed that I was very quiet
And very blue.
She gave me the kiss of life and then, because we had
no phone,
She grabbed me and ran with me clutched to her, to the
nearest house.
I often wonder about that run
Just the two of us
Both gasping for breath
Bouncing jerkily together
Suspended in time and running for my life on her big brown shaky legs.
She wasn’t able to speak for weeks after that
And it was my first kiss.

Towards the end of the speech the performer’s voice sounds strangulated as she tries to shape the words and force them out, her breath gone.

The heartbeat sound beeps dissolve into the image of oscilloscope reading of Edith Piaf’s Je ne regrette rien. Subtitles to the French song appear on the screen but they are only a faltering, incomplete translation of the words. The performer moves to the side of the screen, lit by a spotlight and signs the words to the music (American Sign Language). The sound recording has been digitized from a 78’ record with a scratch halfway through the song. The song and concurrent signing ‘stick’ on the word ‘nothing’ for 12 scratches, 12 signed stutters then the song stops short.

The fractured moment of the song, on the screen captured in the broken oscilloscope reading, dissolves into a shot of a man’s hand holding a medication beeper containing an assortment of HIV drugs, which he opens and empties into his cupped hand. The piercing sound of the beeper insistently punctuates silence and performer signs the chorus of Non, Je ne regrette rien, the translation through her hands reading as, ‘no, nothing, no I regret nothing,’ which is repeated over and over again until the piercing sound of the beeper is taken over by the soundtrack of the
BBC Shipping Forecast, the Radio 4 thrice daily coastal weather forecast for ships at sea.

The image on the screen now dissolves to an image of the performer, her mother and father at the beach. Waves are beating onto the shore and the mother stands, trousers rolled up, in the water. The performer speaks,

In this country said the Red Queen it takes all the running you can do just to stay in the same place.

I haven’t pricked it yet she said but I soon shall. When I fasten my shawl again the brooch will come undone directly.

Last night I went to bed with the taste of my own blood in my mouth.
I woke up feeling more like myself.

The performer moves onto the platform in front of the screen her body becoming a living part of the projection surface. The Shipping Forecast finishes and the family image dissolves to black and white footage of Dunluce Castle. The performer embodies the film footage of the castle as its image is cast on her white shirt. She speaks:

Dunluce Castle just about stands on the tip of the windswept Northern Irish coastline. The castle dates from 1300 and is described in the guidebooks as: ‘one of Northern Irelands most romantic ruins.’
In 1639 a huge freak storm carried off the kitchens of the castle taking with it all the kitchen staff busily preparing for the evening meal. Only a tinker mending pots in a window embrasure survived.
The other day I received a letter from Paul. In it he wrote, 'you know the way one chooses to spend the next moment can change everything.'

The black and white castle dissolves to color footage of the castle and the frame is frozen. The Performer says:

The castle dates from 1300 and is described in the guidebooks as 'one of Northern Ireland's most romantic ruins.'

This is followed by time lapse sequence giving a 'day-in-the-life-of Dunluce Castle' whilst the performer says:

Dunluce castle just about stands on the tip of the windswept Northern Irish coastline.
I first saw it on a wild windy October day.
It was the day the virus entered Paul's body.

He and Ralph had almost missed the coach and I remember them running through the rain, laughing, exuberant.
Ralph died the following Autumn.

The other day I received a letter from Paul. In it he wrote, 'you know the way one chooses to spend the next moment can change everything.'

As the performer says these final lines the castle has completed its journey from morning through to night and now there is backward repeat of time lapse of the castle from night till early morning as the performer speaks:

Dunluce Castle
Visitor Center
Views
Guided tours July-Aug
Open:
Tues. – Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sun: 2p.m.-4 p.m.
Price: £1.50
Child/OAP: 75p
On the A2, east of Portrush.

Visitors to the castle may receive a complimentary copy of the musical notation of 'The Banshee's Wail' - a death boding aire associated with the castle and the blustery caves beneath.

The harsh sound of the medication beeper going off for 12 counts with oscilloscope image of soundwaves breaks the moment. The film then cuts to an image of the performer and Paul in sea. It is bright sunlight and the sea a deep blue. In the film the performer sits on Paul's shoulders as he walks towards the shore, both laughing. Within the film is captured a moment of pure *joie de vivre*. The live performer speaks:

I remember moments more than anything.
The way we danced the polka, fast
In a nightclub.

The film cuts from the seascape to images of Paul's body. Radio 4 pips go off, the sharp signals, which mark every hour on the UK radio news program. The Shipping Forecast recommences and the performer stands in front of the projected images of Paul's body so that his body is reflected on her own. The performer now repeats the lines from earlier:

In this country said the red queen it takes all the running you can do just to stay in the same place.

I haven't pricked it yet she said but I soon shall. When I fasten my shawl again the brooch will come undone directly.

Last night I went to bed with the taste of my own blood in my mouth.
I woke up feeling more like myself.
From within the filmscape, her back to the audience the performer once again signs the words to _Je ne regrette rien_. Again the song plays up until the scratch in the record, then stops short. The image of the tide moves out to black and white shot of a narrow stone path running along a cliff edge. Jerkily, the handheld camera makes its way along the narrow path. Within the filmscape the performer moves her body so it seems as if she is on the path, as the camera moves shakily along the path it is as if the performer she has entered the image, revisiting the past. She speaks:

He told me as we walked the narrow precipitous pathway that jutted out below the cliff. It was dark and wet and we walked unsteadily, pushing against the strong wind blowing off the sea. After he had told me I looked down at the water swirling below us and thought how silent it was. In a deafening sort of way and I thought about the moment just before the moment that changes everything.... The moment when everything is ok.... The moment when everything is going to be all right.... And then I thought about the moment that changes everything.

As the performer speaks the last line of the text the film freezes on walkway, runs backwards, freezes, moves forward again:

The future is now.
And now.
And now.
Any thing can happen now that we have crossed....
‘You can’t repeat the past,’ he said.
I said, ‘of course you can.’
I was thinking what if.... The future is now.
And now.
And now.
Any thing can happen now that we have crossed....
‘You can’t repeat the past,’ he said.
I said, ‘of course you can.’

The sound of the medication beeper is heard for 12 beeps and the film freezes once more on the walkway, at a bend on the path with the waves crashing on the rocks below. The camera moves slowly around the corner to reveal a small figure, Paul, sitting on a bench in the distance. The camera pans from him down to the rocks below and out to sea and then repeats this shot. The beeper continues throughout the text and the performer remains in the filmscape:

Paul will point up to one of the wards, ‘that is Kenneth’s ward,’ he will say
‘Lets pop in and see how he is.’
I will sit in a green waiting room and listen to the dull rubbery sound of shoes on the hospital corridor
Drink tea from a green cup
Gagging
From too much milk.
‘Kenneth’s dead’, Paul will say.

At the end of the second panning shot from Paul and out to sea the actual last few frames of the Super8 film of the sea burnt from the light of the projector. This moment was kept in and slowed down. It manifested itself as a brown stain, spreading over the image of the rocks and sea, obliterating them. Eventually it bubbles and bursts. The performer speaks; ‘At this point the heat from the projector burnt some of the film.’ The burnt image dissolves to become the face of the performer, as color film footage of the performer, seen standing in front of Dunluce Castle,
Northern Ireland, fills the screen. She is shouting against a gale; the audience can see the strain in her face as she forces out the words and yet, because of the soundless Super8 film, nothing can be heard. Her act is futile.

The live performer steps into the picture, becoming her own projection surface as the image of her face appears across her chest. In this position, tidily layered beneath her projection the performer lip-synchs herself in a normal speaking voice, she does not have to raise her voice and battle against the elements, safe within the performance space:

Most parts of England and Wales can expect some reasonable spells of sultry warm sunshine, but a few scattered thundery showers may break out in the afternoon, and drizzly rain is lightly to affect the south-west of England and Wales later. Showers and localized thunderstorms are likely over Scotland and Northern Ireland, but some places will escape the downpours and stay dry. The east coast of Scotland will be plagued by mist and low cloud throughout the day. Tomorrow, most parts of England and Wales will be warm and humid with sunny spells... .

At this point the performer in the film makes a mistake and says ‘stop’. The performer stops speaking and the film rewinds to the line before. Both the filmed performer and the live performer begin again until the same point is reached and the same thing happens, the film stops, rewinds and plays again, the same point is reached and the film stops, rewinds and this time plays on straight through to the end this time with the ‘glitch’ edited out. The Shipping Forecast once more fades in and becomes steadily louder, in order to be heard, like her filmic counterpart, she has to
battle against the noise. During the speech the film image dissolves into the vector image of the forecast, the performer on film almost being seen to become the weather she shouts about and against.

As the live performer begins to speak the Shipping Forecast text fades out but the image of the spiraling vector storm remains, engulfing the live performer, obliterating her in a vortex of chaotic green.

He said he was driving back from Manchester on the M1. He said it had just gone 4 o'clock, he had to stop at the next available service station to take his protease inhibitors with the obligatory glass of grapefruit juice. Luckily, he said, the next stop was only a few miles away.

The service station car park was virtually empty as he stood in the sleet, rummaging through his bag in the boot for the pills, the juice, the plastic flask-mug.

Then he noticed an old man and his son walking to a sheltered veranda-like spot where the son left his father to place his prayer mat on the ground, take off his shoes and pray.

The high pitched medication beeper punctures the text once more and the storm image on screen dissolves into a shot of Paul and the performer in the sea, again. The cessation of the spiraling vector storm and the appearance of the calm blue sea literally seems to announce a calm after the storm, and is a visual relief for the audience. However, this shot of the sea is the same one that the audience has already seen previously with the same two figures in it. This time however the film plays backwards and
the couple move back out to sea rather than coming in. Just as the figures are still visible the live performer says:

And Paul said, 'Does that ever effect you?'
And I said, 'What?'
And he said, 'You know,
Monday's child is fair of face
Tuesday's child is full of grace
Wednesday's child is full of woe...
And I said, 'No.'

At this point in the text the image of the performer and Paul on the screen freezes, the frozen moment just before they disappear from the frame caught on the body of the live performer. During the following speech the figures slowly fade into a sea blue screen:

I used to love watching old films.
I would gaze in adoration at the actors and ask my father to say which ones were dead.
Often it could be the whole cast.

The screen goes black and the performer pulls a small severed strip of film from her pocket. As the film screen goes black the sound of a Super8 projector is heard. Against the black screen and the sound of the projector the performer speaks:

Summer
Few seconds of film,
On the beach with my parents.
Watching these moments over again.
Summer.
On the beach with my parents
The performer then holds up a severed piece of film and shows it carefully to the audience,

Sometimes, no matter how careful I am,  
The projector will destroy a few frames.  
Tonight, for example, the film won’t feed properly and a full thirty frames will be severed.  
The severed moment will only be a couple of inches long.  
The images are tiny,  
But clear:  
A blue sky,  
Three figures,  
Three smiles.  
I could try and stitch them back together  
But the moment would lose its smoothness.

The film on the screen now jump cuts from black to a color morning to night time-lapse of Dunluce Castle. As the castle moves through its time lapse, the performer slowly lifts her arms and once more signs the words to the Edith Piaf song, although this time there is only silence. She signs the words before they are heard, predicting the future through her body, which has born witness to the past. Finally, the song fades in for the third and last time. The signing is now out of synch and when the performer gets to the part in her signing where the record sticks she signs the trapped moment whilst the song ‘catches up with her. Still is predicting the future, anticipating what she knows is there, the moment she has been waiting for. So too is the audience prepared. There is an inevitability, a knowing of what the future holds. During the 12 repetitions the performer speaks:
I used to listen this song when I was young.  
I would accompany it with actions.  
These would be executed with great passion and feeling.  
The record belonged to my father and it always had a scratch in it.  
I only ever knew that the song sounded like this.  
I would always be waiting for that moment.

Just as she finishes the last sentence the needle skips and this time the song is allowed to continue to its end, 'be still my heart, calm my joy, no I have no regrets', a crescendo of passion, of feeling, of spirit, the body is at last allowed to follow through with the movements.

The film of the oscilloscope reading of song dissolves into the performer's heart beat pulsing across the screen.

What day of the week was I born on mother?  
Wednesday I think dear,  
Hold on and I'll ask your father.  
Tony, what day did Don come with the fish?  
Wednesday I think dear.  
That's right,  
You were born on Wednesday,  
The Day Don Came With The Fish.

The screen image slowly fades. The performer leaves the platform and returns to the Super8 film projector. She hangs the fragment of film on the fishhook, turns on the projector bulb so that the light shines on to the piece of film, and leaves the space.
Mortality

Those artists who have dedicated themselves to performance continually disappear and leave, "not a rack behind" it becomes increasingly imperative to find a way to remember the undocumentable, unreproducible art they made (Phelan, 1993, p. 31).

The Live Presence

The horizon of the show was the presence/absence of 'the moment just before...' – that impossible moment of mortality, of life changes, of natural catastrophe and of performance (Kuppers, 1999, p. 20).

The decision for this piece to be a live performance that incorporated film and video, as opposed to an entirely video or film based piece was deliberate. Not only did the manipulation of the technologies, the transposition of Super8 film to digital video and the concurrent immortalisation of video into digital code, symbolize differing mortalities in terms of the durability of the various image processing techniques, but live performance itself has a limited life span. It only exists in the moment, and although it may be repeated, reenacted, it will be different because it is live. It will never live in exactly the same way twice; it is unique to the moment, to the living presence, to those who perform it and those who bear witness, or in Phelan's words, 'performance's only life is in the present' (Phelan, 1993, p. 146). Intertwined with the mortality of the piece is the performers' mortality. For it to make sense, the film needs her body, her text, her life. Herbert Blau states that:
In a very strict sense, it is the actor's mortality, which is the actual subject [of any performance] for he is right there dying in front of your eyes.... Whatever he represents in the play, in the order of time he is representing nobody but himself. How could he? That's his body, doing time (Blau as cited in Acting to Performance, Auslander, 1997, p. 90).

For Elin Diamond, Blau's phenomenology is deeply invested in temporality and history:

The time of performance, he suggests is amortized, 'borrowing time from life, performance is the payback on a loan that cannot be repaid, which is why performance is always already a site of death. As we watch, the performer is dying before our eyes, even as s/he struggles to appear' (Diamond, 1997, p. 152).

An awareness of the performer's own mortality was central to The Day Don Came with the Fish, and was the reason that the piece manifested itself as a live performance. The piece is invested with the performer's mortality; her presence is as temporal as performance itself. She exists in both the live and the mediated performance and to make sense of the piece the live performance must be embodied by her. Both the film and the live performance are reliant on each other for their context and narrative. There is an immortality to film, but in this case it assumes a mortality, as it can only exist in conjunction with the performer and the performance. Live performance is unique to the moment in which it is performed; yet here it is also being predestined - 'directed' - by the film. The desire is to change the past; to re-live that moment that changed everything and thereby alter the future, yet this overwhelming wish is inextricably compounded with the inevitable inability to do so. Similarly, the engagement of a live audience witnessing the piece in the same-time
same-space further augments the sense of temporality for both performer and viewer. Diamond notes that:

Blau’s radical phenomenology, positing the empirical body in its dying, also helps posit the body in its lived experience; this is the real ‘relevance’ of the performer’s body; it’s precisely its dying that interrupts the ordered emplotments of aesthetic time (Diamond, 1997 p. 212).

The body of the performer marks time. It marks a time in the past and a replaying of that time in the present. There is a simultaneity of both the mortality of the performer’s body alongside the lived, experiential, here and now time that it charts, in Diamond’s words ‘The body’s emphatic (‘live’) presence is offered as a momentary habitus of what is not present.’ (Diamond, 1997, p. 150).

**Memory in body/ on body/ of body**

In *The Day Don Came With The Fish* memory which is embedded in the celluloid is consumed and embodied. Just as the skin of the paper spheres encompassed the images of Paul, of the ruined castle, the performer surrounds them with her body. In turn the audience surround the performer for in order to see the action the audience have to stand very close to each other, in a tight group, side by side, bodies touching. Their nearness to each other and to the performer makes public private. Barthes states that, ‘Photographs... are looked at when one is alone. I am uncomfortable during the private projection of a film (not enough of a public, not enough anonymity)’ (Barthes, 1981, p. 97). Here, however, the
closeness of the audience to the film, to the images, to the body of the performer, and to each other's bodies, accentuates the personal, the interchangeability, the corporeality of the moment. For Stephen Heath:

The film poses an image, not immediate or neutral, but posed, framed and centered. Perspective-system images bind the spectator in place, the suturing central position that is the sense of the image, that sets the scene (in place, the spectator completes the images as its subject). Film too, but it moves in all sorts of ways and directions, flows with energies, is potentially a veritable festival of effects. Placed, that movement is all the value of film in its development and exploitation: reproduction of life and the engagement of the spectator in the process of that reproduction as articulation of coherence. What moves in film, finally, is the spectator, immobile in front of the screen. Film is the regulation of that movement, the individual as subject held in a shifting and placing of desire, energy, contradiction, in a perpetual totalization of the imaginary (Heath as cited de Lauretis 1987, p. 118).

By consuming the film the performer literally embodies the film from the beginning. She is both externally and internally the screen for the image, like some unholy communion she consumes the blood and the flesh of the image, her Mass the ruined castle on a desolate coastline and the story it holds within its walls. She consumes the face, the body of Paul, she consumes the virus. She consumes the past.

Rather than simply using film as a medium to record and display the body, Paris develops a physical relationship with the media she works with and incorporates it into the performance: threading the film reel, eating projected images, illuminating her mouth with the naked bulb of the projector, declining to edit human errors out of the footage - traces of breathing, a momentary loss of balance (Hill, 1999).

As the audience watch the rest of the film play itself out on the screen it is as if they are accessing it through the body of the performer, not only
enabled through her live presence literally through her body; she has digested the images and through the projector light which she let stream into her open mouth which now can project the images that are inside her.

For Phelan:

The enactment of invocation and disappearance undertaken by performance and theatre is precisely the drama of corporeality itself. At once a consolidated fleshy form and an eroding, decomposing formlessness, the body beckons us and resists our attempts to remake it (Phelan, 1997, p. 4).

The 'drama of corporeality' play out throughout the piece; with text of a baby gasping for breath; the images of a man, of a castle, of a bright blue sea which disappear into the body of the performer; with the film itself which burns and scars and even with the audience who bear witness to what is invoked. To what disappears. The audience move further into the space, following the performer, led further into the story, deeper into the body. The piece starts as the audience enter the space. The focus is on the mouth, the point of entry, where the words begin. Gradually the action moves to the middle of the space, to the lungs where the performer literally forces the story from the last recourses of her breath. This moment is described by Leslie Hill as:

The story of mother and child running for life, told on one breath, is choked as the performer's lungs deflate and she pushes out the final words in a rasping, unfamiliar voice from deep within the body's last resources (Hill, 1999).
Holding out her hand, the performer ‘holds’ the projection of her heartbeat and is drawn by it to the far side of the space, to the platform, to the film screen, the framelike structure as a ‘square mouth’, paralleling the mouth of the performer who has swallowed the film that the screen now displays (see Derrida, 1981, p. 297). This pattern is re-marked at the end of the piece as the audience returns through the body to the exterior once more, the projector is turned on and spills empty light onto the fragment of film, caught on the fish hook, a moment suspended, brought to the surface, an external presence marking time and allowing the performer to disappear. We have entered the body of the performer, through her consummation of the images, through the film projector focused into her mouth as she tells of the moment of her birth.

It is interesting to note the deliberate hybrid of the body and technology in these ‘speechless moments’. Heightened, often violent physicality is a trademark of Paris’s work, refreshing in relation to her use of technology and her interaction with and control over these mediated moments (Hill, 1999).

As the silent Super8 tells its story in soundless images, in wordless circles full of meaning, we hear the child, silent, its breath caught, a moment frozen between life and death, we hear the silence of the mother unable to speak. We hear the about ‘first kiss’ through a breathless, breaking voice, the very sound of its telling is painful and hangs in the air as a poignant tribute to what is to follow.

Temporal Memory
The awkwardness of the performer's voice is followed by the projection of the irregular heart beat and the faltering Piaf song. This invocation and disappearance, this on/off motive flickers constantly throughout the piece: an appearance, a disappearance. The on/off flicker continues with the projection of the oscilloscope reading of the performer's asymmetric heartbeat and then the faltering Piaf song. For Hill:

The moment the record is damaged, and from which it will never play smoothly again, is recreated and heightened in the broken audio track, the sign language repetition of the same half-gesture twelve times, the looping visual image of the gash in Edith Piaf's voice on the oscilloscope.... This 'speechless' moment is at the heart of the piece in various manifestations: a scratch in the record; a gap in the information; a scorch in the celluloid; an irrevocable physical action – the split second of eternity between ejaculation and infection (Hill, 1999).

As with the grainy, flawed body of the Super8 film, the faltering translation of the song, the irregularity of the performers heartbeat, and the 78 RPM record, vinyl sealed with its imperfection, all chart a fragile path through the piece. These tears in the fabric of the performance are markers of time. With every textural utterance, with every image, with every interplay of live and mediated enactment, time is constantly being marked, conducted by the mute gestures as the performer cuts silent words into the air, embodied words, embodied images made visible by the subtitles, by the film. The images which the performer consumes at the start of the performance are to be repeated in different guises, at different speeds and resolutions and within differing contexts, throughout the performance. The images tell the story. Clarity comes with the
passing of time, as the stories unfold through the performance. It is only later that the audience realize that the silent footage of the face of the man projected onto the rice paper is Paul, a central figure in the piece, and the romantic ruins of the castle document the site, ten years previous, of his HIV infection, the ruins of Dunluce Castle. For Diamond:

In current feminist performance art the challenge is to transform performance time into temporality. By temporality I mean a shifting time-sense, a receptivity both to the contingency of the present and to mimetic figurations of what we might call historical experience (Diamond, 1997, p. 142).

Time is fractured and disjointed, lines marking past, present and future are blurred. Exact, profound fundamental moments of conception, of birth are marked, and held in the brain’s memory by particular signifiers. The mother remembers the day of her daughters’ birth by locating the day every week when the local fishmonger delivered the fish. Even the very moment of her conception and birth can be placed: ‘I was conceived on Guy Fawkes night, my mother remembers. After my mother had me she had a cup of tea then she threw up.’ Like photographs these moments are frozen in time, markers of events seen again in the minds eye:

Tactile, kinetic...Paris worked with the presencing of memory – the relationship between time and body, perception and materiality. Screened images merged with her performing body: she sensuously swallows small circles of rice paper on which Super8 ‘memory bites’ were projected, and enacts physically through sign language an old Edith Piaf recording, allowing the materiality of listening and remembering to emerge in the laying of them, now, and in-betweenes (Kuppers, 1999, p. 20).
Jim Cambell’s piece entitled *The Memory Works* (Black/white camera, five CRTs, 286 computer, custom electronics) revolves around personal emotion. Each small work is based upon a digitally recorded memory of an event. These electronic memories are manipulated, contained within a box and then used to transform an associated object. In *Photo of my Mother*, a photograph of Campbell’s mother slowly transforms from foggy to clear at the rate of his breathing electronically recorded for one hour, as though he is breathing on the glass in front of the piece. In *Portrait of my Father*, his father’s image flashes in and off at the rate of Campbell’s heartbeat recorded over an eight-hour period. These complex works about the artist’s familial relationships evoke collective memories and experiences, through the nostalgia of the aged photographs (Lineberry, Exhibition Leaflet, *Transforming Time*, ASU Art Museum, 1999).

A comparison can be drawn between these imperfect, broken moments in performance and Barthes’ notion of the *punctum* in photography. For Barthes’ *punctum* is a seizure, the rip, the tear, the wound that on the flat surface confirms an interior depth (Blau, 1992, p. 148). Barthes describes the punctum as:

> When the effect is certain but unlocatable, it does not find its sign, its name; it is sharp and yet lands in a vague zone of myself; it is acute yet muffled, it cries out in silence. Odd contradiction: a floating flash (Barthes, 1981, pp. 51-53).

In *The Day Don Came With The Fish* what is revealed by the ruptures of the vinyl, the tears in the rasping voice of the breathless performer, the burn
in the celluloid is, ultimately: mortality. Time itself stares through the
gashes, the mortality of the worn 78” record, the mother racing against
time. With the meta-punctum the tear in the flesh itself. Barthes makes a
connection between the Photograph and Time when he recalls that, ‘at
first photographic implements were related to techniques of cabinet
making and the machinery of precision: cameras, in short, were clocks for
seeing’ (1981, p. 15). Within the notion of the moment of punctum, within
the moment when the clock stops, and strikes, lies the HIV virus itself, ‘the
split second of eternity between ejaculation and infection’.

Jacques Derrida, in his dissemination of Philippe Sollers Nombres writes
about the impossibility of the pure present, which for him would be the
‘untouched fullness, the virgin continuity of the nonscission’ (1981, p.
302). Derrida posits that presence is never present, that:

The presence of the present only forms a surface, only enters
squarely on stage, only institutes itself as something face-to-face –
something present –, only triggers off discourse –, speech in praesentia –, only unclenches its teeth, in the play of this cut, this
scission (Derrida, 1981, p. 303).

In relation to The Day Don Came With The Fish, once more a comparison
can usefully be drawn to Derrida’s ‘play of the cut’ and Barthes, notion of
the ‘punctum’ a ‘stigmatum’ as both expressions viscerally, violently
describe a moment of intensity, a ‘lacerating emphasis’ (1981, p. 96), when
the real appears more real, palpable:
Presence and life, the presence of the present and the life of the living, are the same thing here... the scission, the decision – which is both deciding and decided -, the shot/throw/blow [le coup] parts the seed as it projects it. It inscribes difference in the heart of life (Derrida, 1981, p. 304).

The comparison between the two is further marked by Derrida’s reference to the word aperture, to refer to the notion of a fissure, a cleft, ‘The aperity – the letting-be, the truth that lifts the veil,’ which resonates with the aperture of the camera.

Analogue

You can’t repeat the past,’ he said. I said, ‘of course you can’ (Fitzgerald, 1990, p. 106).

The desire to stop the clock, to freeze time is inherent throughout the piece, from the mothers’ breathless run with her asphyxiating child, ‘suspended in time,’ to the jar in the record causing it to stay only in one place, to the freeze frame images of Dunluce Castle, the site of the storm, of the infection. The desire to suspend time, go back and change things manifests itself most strongly in the cliff path walk sequence, in the manipulation of the film as well as in the accompanying text. The line:

‘You can’t repeat the past,’ he said. I said, ‘of course you can’

is a direct reference to the communication between Nick and Gatsby in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby. Similarly, another line of text in this section, ‘anything can happen now that we have crossed...’, refers to the moment when Gatsby and Nick drive over the Queensboro Bridge:
The city seen from the Queensboro bridge is always the city seen for the first time, in its first wild promise of all the mystery and the beauty in the world.... Anything can happen now that we've slid over this bridge...anything at all (Fitzgerald, 1990, p. 67).

In this moment, Fitzgerald, through the romanticism of Nick's character, allows a re-living, a re-experiencing of a brave new world, untainted, of a moment when life seems full of potential, 'the moment when everything is ok, the moment when everything is going to be alright.' Yet it is a moment that by the very experiencing of it, it disappears, by the very crossing of the bridge it is already altered, it is in the past. The camera in the performance can take the moment back, rewinding to the moment on the path before the truth was told, the moment before the body was infected.

'You can't repeat the past,' he said. I said, 'of course you can', references what is the crux of The Great Gatsby, namely Gatsby's dream, the American Dream, fated from its very conception, to re-encounter the fresh green breast of the New World, Nick says to Gatsby, and 'You can't repeat the past.' To which Gatsby's response is:

Can't repeat the past?" her cried incredulously. ‘Why of course you can!’ He looked around him wildly, as if the past were lurking here in the shadow of his house, just out of reach of his hand.... He talked a lot about the past, and I gathered that he wanted to recover something, some idea of himself perhaps, that had gone into loving Daisy. His life had been confused and disordered since then, but if he could once return to a certain starting place and go over it all slowly, he could find out what that thing was... (Fitzgerald, 1990, p. 106).
Gatsby's belief that he can revisit and alter the past is the tragedy of the novel, and symbolic of the failure of the American Dream which he symbolizes. It is included, fragmented within the text of the performance, at this point as a signifier to the futile desire, but a desire nonetheless, to revisit and change the past, to return to the moment that changed everything and change it. The manipulation of the film seems to make this a possibility; providing in its freeze frames the fantasy of what could be juxtaposed with the reality of what is. But it becomes clear that, finally, the film will run on, the journey down the rocky cliff-pass will be taken and with it the news, the reality about the HIV status. The live performer stands stationary in the projected image in an attempt remain in the freeze frame of the moment before the moment that changes everything, yet the film runs through her, she is propelled forward. She is back on the path again with the film path moving her forward into the picture, onto the past, repeating the unrepeatable. Then, with the burn that scorches the celluloid at the end if the cliff-walk sequence, it is as if trying to repeat the past ultimately destroys the film. This is often a practical reality of the 'immortal' film – that the more you replay Super8, the more likely you are to damage or destroy the film. In the moment in the performance when the film burns the fragile Super8 film reveals its own mortality. The images captured within the celluloid seem permanent, immortalized within the frame and yet the body of the film suddenly reveals its temporality.
This ruptured moment in the film is one of the strongest examples within the piece of the fragility, the mortality of the medium of Super8 film. Super8 filmmaker Kathy Geritz writes that:

Like all film, small gauge films guarantee the presence of an absence. But they have the heightened charge of often being one-of-a-kinds, outside of mechanical reproduction. They regain an aura, but at the cost of immortality. Each run through the projector has the potential of being the last – what if a splice breaks? the film gets chewed?! (Geritz in Kilchesty 1999, p. 47).

The burn in the celluloid can be seen to foreshadow the end of the performance when the performer holds up the tiny fragment of film reel, broken by the projector. As well as speaking of the fragility of the film, many of the Super8 filmmakers write about the visceral, flesh like nature of the medium, which is of particular significance to the content of The Day Don Came With The Fish. Bradley Eros describes Super8 film as the, ’cinema of the thorn, scratching traces into the flesh of film, drawing blood and images from under the skin the prick of amnesia that replaces memory with its record, (Eros in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 33). Similarly, Nina Fonoroff writes of the film stock in terms of the flesh:

For me the Super8 camera was not an extension of the eye; rather, the Super8 image was a second skin. At once precious and expendable, the footage I amassed over the course of months was like layers of time I could shed. Only by peeling and stripping away inessential matter (the inevitable outcome of excessive documentation) could I proceed to the heart of the matter (Fonoroff in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 83 ).
The burn in the celluloid is the scar in the skin, the mark that bears sign of
the site of damage, the place of infection. Hill writes:

For Paris, film imagery isn’t simply a medium, but a physical entity
to be grasped, cut, eaten, held. This is the intuitive artistry, in form
and content, of her treatment of the fateful instants, the glitches, the
scratches, the sears, the moments just before and the moments that
change everything (Hill, 1999).

The parallel lives of the susceptible body of the Super8 with the diseased
body of the flesh are further compounded by comments such as:

Since the time we began making Super8 films there’s been this
cloud of doom that what we’re doing is going to become obsolete
or worse, nonexistent in a matter of years... . It’s a little like being
with someone who is terminally ill and being committed to them...
(Kilchesty, 1999, p. 48).

Or, Lenny Lipton’s statement that:

It seems to me that the threat of an entire new medium retarded the
progress of Super8. Super8 died an early death. It never really had
a chance because of the onset, or the threat of the onset, of
videotape (Lipton in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 49).

Although the Super8 film footage shown in The Day Don Came With The
Fish has been digitized, the final cut was output to analogue video which
it plays off during the performance. Is the video used in The Day Don
Came With The Fish the life support of the Super8 footage? In his article,
entitled, ‘Ah, Kodachrome 40. The End is Here’, Willie Varela states:

Yes Super8 is nearly on life support; Super8 filmmakers have
known for some time that the end is near. It is now almost here.... .
There are now many defectors to the camp of the electronic image,
to the image that is more “real” than real, to the image that can be
both cold and indiscriminately profligate... Video is everywhere. Video is the hard future and way too accessible. This accessibility is one of its strengths and one of its great drawbacks. How to make art with a tool that was designed for everything but...? That is the task of the moving image artist. Video is perhaps our only hope, and our only way of continuing to work with the moving image (Varela in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 98).

Or is it the guillotine? Or is video, rather than being the ‘hard future’ as Varela states, similarly threatened by the encroachment of new(er) media on the limitations of its own form. In Illuminating Video, Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer describe video as having its own ‘temporal agenda’ (1999, p. 20), that videotape ‘rapidly disintegrates’ (1999, p. 15) ‘more and more tapes disappear, their surfaces oxidizing with time’ (1999, p. 16). Mary Lucifer uses similar visceral terms, such as ‘burn scar/scar tissue’, in writing about video. In Illuminating Video Hall and Fifer state that for Mary Lucier the concept of video as a conduit to human consciousness and memory is expressed through the metaphor of the mark. In the video installation Dawn Burn (1975-76) Lucifer describes how the repeated recordings of the rising sun:

engrave a signature of decay onto the technological apparatus. The mark also represents the passage of time in which the burn is only a residue. It is not, after all, the look of these disfiguring scars to which we respond. We are moved, instead, by an allusion to the poignancy of decay, the movement of light toward dark, and the mortality of vision (Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 26).

Similarly, the idea of repeated use of the medium leading to its eventual demise resonates within analogue video as much as with Super8. For example, Auslander cites Cubitt’s statement that:
The phenomena of lost generations' resulting from the various stages of life a video image is likely to pass through, 'from master to submaster, to broadcast, to timeshift, where it begins to degenerate with every play' (Cubitt as cited in Auslander, 1999, p. 45).

Auslander states that, 'Since tapes, films, and other recording media deteriorate over time with each use, they are in fact, physically different objects at each playing' (1999, p. 45). He goes on to say that every time he watches a videotape is the only time that he can watch it in that state of being as the very process of playing the tape alters it. 'The tape that I initially placed in my VCR or audio player started disappearing the moment I began watching or listening to it' (1999, p. 45). Likewise, Mary Lucifer's article about analogue video in Illuminating Video is entitled 'Light and Death,' making a direct reference to the mortality of video and it is a theme that carries through into the next article in the book, by Bill Viola entitled 'Video Black – The Mortality of the Image,' in which Viola writes:

The viewer sees only one image at a times in the case of film and, more extreme, only the decay of a single moving point of light in video. ...In either case the whole does not exist (except on a dormant state coiled up in the can or tape box), and therefore can only reside in the mind of the person who has seen it, to be periodically received through their memory.... Sitting in the dark room, we sense a strange familiarity – an image is born, flashes before our eyes, and dies in blackness. Once there was a train of images sequentially unfolding in time, there was a 'moving image' and with it, by necessity a beginning and an end; mortal images, with the camera as death. As long as perpetual motion remains an unrealized dream, there will always be a last image, usually with darkness as a final punctuation. Fade to black (Viola in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 483).
Marita Sturken writes that, 'Artists can only express something visually according to the limits of a given medium's technology (Sturken in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 103). Raymond Bellor describes how in Hollis Frampton's work *Nostalgia*:

Photos are consumed one by one in front of the lens, traces of a life recaptured in voice-over each time after the photo has already disappeared. In Nostos II (1984) the image burns in its very essence, the return of the return of nostalgia, up to the insupportable. Six years ago in Nostos I (1979) Thierry Kuntzel began his work on the traces that memory leaves behind, wipes out and recaptures again, the agitation and pain of a memory at work (Bellor in Hall and Fifer 1999, p. 422).

In this way a clear reciprocal form and content relationship is at play; a working both *within* and *with* the characteristics of the medium – it is the message. Phelan writes that the film *Silverlake Life, The View From Here*, by Tom Joslin and Mark Massi about Joslin's life and eventual death from AIDS, 'Resolutely and imaginatively re-examines the link between the temporality of death and the temporality of cinema' (1997, p. 156). Similarly, Hall and Fifer state that, 'By equating duration, consciousness, and death to the phenomenology of the video, Lucifer and Viola state a belief in video's ability to express meaning through its own qualities' (1999, p. 26).

Johannes Birringer states that:

In a culture of afterimages, with collective life following death lying at the heart of simulation, the electronic imaging process – in extension of the whole spectrum of audiovisual media
(photography, film, television, radio, graphic design, etc.) epitomizes the potential for an endless circulation of fetishized lost objects. It is significant for our understanding of postmodernism that today's mediated bodily practices, and all models of the body, can be said to await their own negation or reversal in an infinite referral process resembling the design logic of video technology. The latter's technical range of image manipulation, modification, and recomposition is almost limitless, while the materiality of video is elusive (Birringer, 1991, p.210).

Birringer makes a direct comparison between the body and technology, positing an almost kinetic, tactile relationship between them, the moments when technology highlights the humanity and where the humanity, mortality of the technology is similarly highlighted. As shown above filmmakers and videographers have actively incorporated the specific characteristics of the mediums with which they work to inform the content of their work. Artists also actively manipulate the medium, accentuating its shape, its texture, its malleability and its fragility. For example Jette Jensen writes that:

Other filmmakers work on the emulsion by scratching the surface – obliterating part or all of the image, and creating designs or random drawings with markers, dyes, and paint – or writing actual words on the filmstrip. In this way the physical relation to the material becomes tactile and integrated as both form and content: the projected image literally bears the marks of the maker (Jensen in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 18).

In Carolee Schneeman's film Fuses, (1964/65) the form and content relationship is strongly evident; in a film about sex the film is visceral, physical. Rebecca Schneider describes it as, 'slippery and messy, as if the celluloid were wet. Her painterly texturing, scratching and dyeing of the celluloid' (1997, p. 76). Schneider cites David James description of the
work as showing, ‘the touch of her hand on the film’s flesh’ (1997, p. 76)
going on to state her self that this:

creates an insistent visual tactility and perceptual disorientation
that mimics and reproduces the sensuous encounter which Fuses
documents, allowing the medium to become both apparent (the
film, scratched, becomes visible as film) and, even more strikingly,
participant (Schneider, 1997, p. 76).

At the point in the performance when the celluloid burns, the performer
makes the audience aware of what happened, ‘At this point the heat from
the projector burnt some of the film.’ Textually this remark comes
immediately after the performer has told the audience about the discovery
of Paul’s HIV status and the death of Kenneth. In a sense it becomes a part
of the account rather than an aside, once again linking the mortality of the
body of the film with the mortality of the lives it holds. Similarly, as the
audience then watch the slow fade from the burned frame to the next
frame, the performer’s face, her life, her mortality are linked to the film;
and yet, in the same moment, as the live performer steps in front of the
screen, providing a projection surface for her own face, her live presence
enabling this repeating of the past.

The burnt image dissolves to become the face of the performer, as color
film footage of the performer, seen standing in front of Dunluce Castle,
Northern Ireland, fills the screen. She is shouting against a gale, the
audience can see the strain in her face as she forces out the words, and yet,
because of the soundless Super8 film, nothing can be heard. Her act is
The mortality of the medium is once more referenced as Super8 sound film is no longer made, although many of the existing Super8 cameras still have the capacity to record sound. Saul Levine states that, 'Kodak wrote off photo chemistry, and you can see why – there haven't been any Super8 cameras made in a long time... the elimination of sound stripe film is like someone ripping out my tongue...' (Levine in Kilchesty 1999, p. 62). The live presence of the performer is needed working with(in) the film to give it sound, to give it sense.

Just as the moment when the celluloid burned is deliberately included within the performance, so is the moment when the filmed performer, shouting against the wind, makes a mistake and says stop. This was a 'real' moment within the filming which, rather than becoming one of the outtakes is kept in and highlighted within the body of the film. The audience enters a distorted world wherein the live performer is word perfect and it is her filmic counterpart who makes the mistake, the fallibility lies within the prerecorded as opposed to the live enactment thus obscuring what is 'real', the 'celluloid memory.' Once more there is an awareness of the punctum, the tear, the rip. The manipulation of the film which freezes on the imperfection contained within its frames, rewinds and replays, as if rewinding the film will in some way change the mistake, as if repeating the past will in some way alter the mistakes made in the future. There is an awareness of this moment for the audience in which they perceive the 'off camera' performance, and a further questioning as to what is 'real', seeing the frailty within the celluloid,
previously witnessed with the burning of the body of the film itself and now with the actual mistake in the action. Allowing the audience the differing perspectives on the filmic action is a comment on the filmmaking process itself, showing the composition, presencing the person behind the camera, capturing the ‘real’ performer in a moment of life lived outside of the directions but still within the frame. Super8 filmmaker Fred Camper writes:

Most Super8 cameras are much lighter than 16’s or double Super8’s, and most have pistol grips; the cameras can be held, and moved, with the wrist and forearm alone. The result is that the hand-held “look” of Super8 is very different from that of 16mm. Hand-held movements can be jerkier, and the camera is more susceptible to random jiggles. There is a long tradition, from Leacock to Brakhage, of the filmmaker adding his bodily presence to the scene, through the inevitable small random movements of hand-held imagery; in Super8, those movements tend to be accentuated, and what is often an undercurrent becomes a major aspect of the imagery, another kind of ‘scrim’, similar to the grain and the dust and the scratches, through which the subject matter is seen. In this, as in other ways, Super8 films tend to almost necessarily incorporate an acknowledgement of the materials and conditions of their making. Just as in a diary the actual act of writing the dairy entries is often as much the subject of the writing as the incidents described, so Super8 films are partly about their inevitable distance from the world they purport to depict (Camper in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 29).

The Shipping Forecast, a guide for safety, warning against possible peril, presents itself as a abstract indecipherable code of vector waves over the filmscape of two previously catastrophic moments, while the filmed performer valiantly shouts warnings into gale force wind, only to be silenced by the limitations of the silent film camera. The live performer fills the void, supplying the missing words, but it is too late – the moment
has passed, the storm has struck, the skin is broken’ (Hill, 1999). The live
performer is no longer ‘safe’ within the performance space as the Shipping
Forecast once more fades in and becomes steadily louder, in order to be
heard, like her filmic counterpart, she has to battle against the noise. In
this way the film and the live performer both are struggling to be heard
against the ‘weather’ as if the weather has permeated the membrane of the
screen between them. Again there is a transference between the live and
the filmed performer as the live performer is engulfed by the image of the
large, squally green vector waves, engulfed they erupt across the coastal
filmscape. The image correlates with the sound as the monotonous drone
of the BBC Shipping Forecast, foretelling storms ahead, fades in steadily
until it drowns the voice of the performer completely. The elemental
power of the weather to suddenly change a landscape, an environment
totally, and often unalterably with sometimes devastating results provides
a poignant metaphor for the content of the piece. It is a recurring theme
throughout the piece played out in various ways; the Shipping Forecast,
the waves in the sea, and within the text. The Shipping Forecast is a
guide for safety, warning against possible peril, yet for the uninformed, its
messages are abstract and cryptic. This presents a conflict, a frustration
inherent in the content as well as standing as a metaphor for the simplicity
and complexities of the HIV virus. The use of material, which is instantly
recognizable as only living usually through the radio, is significant. In
radio, the body is reduced to voice and ear, at the same time both
impoverished but enlarged, live but remote, and there is a
dematerialization of material, of the body. The radio focuses on the
projection of a world deprived of the support of visual representation.11

The ‘spoken’ and the ‘unspoken’ in this piece are passed like batons
frequently from live performance to film, resulting in a particular
fascination with the unspoken, the silences and an unusual
attention to Paris’s sparse text. At times the baton is dropped
completely, always in relation to pivotal or ruptured moments in
time (Hill, 1999).

Immortality

Cinematic ‘documentation’ appeals to us because it seems to give
us another chance, another way to order our time. The reversal of
time is made apparent through the visual reversal of action. With
the epistemology of cinema it may well be that we die more than
once; perhaps we do indeed survive our own deaths. Perhaps
dying happens not at the singular end of living, but, if not
frequently, more than once. And perhaps that is why we like to go
to the cinema: if we can re-project the film, maybe we can play the
films of our dead and of our death over and over again (Phelan,

Digital Memory On again/Off again

Notions of disappearance and appearance manifest themselves within the
themes of the piece and in confrontation with the media, analogue and
digital. The very differences inherent in digital and analogue became
integral to the content of the piece:

You can always tell when people are using a digital watch. Ask
them the time and they will invariably say something like, ‘It’s
4:41.’... An analogue watch user will just glance at the time piece
and say, ‘It’s about a quarter to five.’ In digital time keeping it’s
always one time or another. It’s never ‘about’ anything. However,
there is an instant when a digital watch is speechless. When the
display flashes from one second to the next there is a tiny gap in the
information. So, although the watch seems to supply a constant and exact reading of time, it is in fact a discontinuous display sampling individual moments of time and displaying them (Feldman, 1997, pp. 2-3).

The fundamental nature of the analogue world is that there are, ‘no gaps in the information. It is a continuous flow’ (1997, p. 3). Tony Feldman describes analogue as, ‘The continuously varying intensities of natural light, the meanders in an audio records groove, the variations in an electrical current and the mechanical fluctuations in the air which we interpret as sound’ (1997, pp. 1-2). For Feldman, digital information, on the other hand is essentially discontinuous, ‘Far from reflecting continuously varying values, digital information is based on just two distinct states. In the digital world, things are there or not there, ‘on’ or ‘off’. There are no in-betweens’ (1997, p. 2). This seamless flow of analogue was not only placed in juxtaposition with the off’s and on’s of the binary code of digital with its 0’s and 1’s, its bits and bytes in The Day Don Came With The Fish, but there is a transmogrification inherent in the piece in which analogue became digital with all the limitless possibilities available to that medium. Feldman states that, ‘By taking information out of the analogue world - the ‘real’ world, comprehensible and palpable to human beings – and translating it into the digital world, we make it infinitely changeable’ (1997, p. 4).

Transferring the Super8 film onto video, allowing it to be digitally edited, enabled the addition of subtitles. The use of subtitles references two issues. The requirement of some sort of translation in order to
comprehend, alludes specifically to the complexity of the HIV virus itself, and this complexity is referred to throughout the piece for example, with the inclusion of the 'indecipherable code' of the Shipping Forecast. Secondly, the use of titles can be seen as indirectly referencing silent film, which incorporated text only through 'moving text.' In his article, 'Hot Spots: Text in Motion and the Textscape of Electronic Media' Frieling writes, 'What kind of text are we reading when nothing is fixed anymore in 'black on white' (or 'white on black')?' (Frieling in Hershman Leeson, 1996, p. 267). From the physicality of an interactive installation to the immateriality of the lonely reader surfing the Internet – are we still reading or are we looking at images that appear and vanish before we have had time to grasp their potential meaning? Our eyes are continuously scanning the surrounding world for hidden information and clues to a better understanding of its chaotic surface.

In tandem with Frieling's comment about the unfixity of text, William Gibson questions what happens to the film/ performance relationship when the very nature of film changes. It is interesting to note that his own coinage of the terms 'cyberspace' for the imaginary space that exists entirely within a computer, in his science fiction work, Neuromancer has become such an intrinsic part of the lingo of digital communications. Gibson's article, entitled 'Life after Hollywood: Filmless Festival, a Long Flickering Weekend with the Ghosts of Cinema's Future', states that that:
Digital video strikes me as a new platform wrapped in the language and the mythology of an old platform... The way we still 'dial' on touchpads. We call 'movies' film but the celluloid's drying up... Digital cinema has the potential to throw open the process of filmmaking, to make the act more universally available, to demythologize it, to show us aspects of the world we've not seen before. In that sense it will be the 'eyes' of the extended nervous system we've been extruding as a species for the past century (Gibson, 1999 pp. 228-229).

Gibson states that, with these new digital technologies, 'We are building ourselves mirrors that remember - public mirrors that wander around and remember what they've seen' (1999, p. 229). The notion of recording, reflecting, capturing everything about us, every lived experience and every imagined one connects on a fundamental level with our mortality. The images we compile immortalize our experience through endless impermeable pixilated reflection and at the same time, make more poignant our mortality. For Baudrillard:

At this millennium end, we have all, in fact become millenarian: we desire the immediate attainment of existence without end... this compulsive desire for immortality, for a definitive immortality revolves around a strange madness – the mania for what has achieved its goal. The mania for identity – for saturation, completion, repletion. For perfection too. The lethal illusion of perfection: hence these objects from which wear-and-tear, death or ageing have been eradicated by technology. The compact disc. It doesn't wear out, even if you use it. Terrifying this. It's as though you'd never used it. It's as though you didn't exist. If objects no longer grow old when you touch them, you must be dead (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 101).

In making a film/performance piece concerning HIV and AIDS there was an awareness for myself of what images I wanted immortalized on film for my own memory.
In *The Day Don Came With The Fish* the two contrasting images of black and white and color Super8 film along with the live presence reflect the notion of past and present and future. The film reflects the past, what cannot be changed; the bleak castle standing through the centuries marking all that has taken place there. The past has been revisited and through the manipulation of the film, the use of time lapse and freeze frame time has been altered. Through the changes from color footage to black and white past and present seem interchangeable and in the speeding up through the time-lapse photography, time is challenged, reality is questioned. A day has become a moment, chrystalised to the moment, to the day when the storm struck at and destroyed the castle walls, when the virus struck at and entered the body. According to Phelan:

Cinema, as against still photography, has a more complex relation to narrative and causality. Projected, seen, and made visible across time, cinematic time occupies two distinct temporal fields: diegetic time and the time of the film’s projection. Moreover, the technological possibilities of the movie camera, especially those of reverse, slow and accelerated motion, reveal a view of time that are optical and psychic possibilities, but, as far as we can tell, not actual ones. Thus cinematic time forces us to wonder what we actually mean by actuality; just as psychoanalysis forces us to wonder what we actually mean by reality (Phelan, 1997, p. 157).

**Temporal Memory (rpt)**

Film embalmed time and resisted its passage (Rees, 1999, p. 5).
In *The Day Don Came With The Fish* the weather permeates the images and moments in time are punctured within the memory. Whilst the camera charts the geography of the body there is the sound of Radio 4 pips going off, the sharp signals which mark every hour on the UK radio program, which precede the international events which have happened that day. Again the audience is aware of time being marked – though precisely what time is not clear, what news is being heralded? Similarly the repeated presence of the harsh sound of the medication beeper going off for 12 counts with oscilloscope images of soundwaves charts a different kind of time-marking through the piece, the(-)round(-)the(-)clock dosage of the protease inhibitors and the other HIV/AIDS drugs.

Artist/Engineer Jim Cambell’s work is interesting to reference in relationship to the manipulation of time in *The Day Don Came With The Fish*. Cambell’s work incorporates electronic memory, pre-recorded images and live images to create environments in which the viewer’s reflected response to a work becomes a fundamental element of the work itself.12 Lineberry states that Jim Cambell ‘uses the capabilities of his medium to explore personal and collective memories, time and space, illusion and reality.’ (Lineberry, Exhibition Leaflet, *Transforming Time*, ASU Art Museum, 1999). For example in Cambell’s *Digital Watch* (Black/white video cameras, 50 inch video monitor, custom electronics, watch) live and delayed images are layered with the magnified movements of a clock. The viewer simultaneously exists in at least three
different times and places: visually captured in both the present and immediate past, and physicality standing in front of the camera. Cambell’s work can be seen to work both with themes and forms of mortality (as referenced in the mortality/time section above) and immortality, depending on what kind of formal and conceptual decisions Cambell is making and on how theses are processed by the audience.


Michelson explores his extensive use of reverse motion in terms of a new epistemological achievement: reverse motion renders causality visible. Vertov reverses time by playing action – motion – backwards. Thus we see an image of a train entering the station, and then immediately thereafter we see the camera man and the camera on the track shooting the image – not the simple reverse motion which would show the train pulling out of the station, but the reversal of the order of composition. First we see the composition of the shot fully manifest (in other words we see the completed image first), and then we see the past – - the process of staging the shot that preceded the image in time, the past that made the shot come into being. The first shot we see, we realize retrospectively is in the past of our viewing and in the future of the process of composition that Vertov methodically exposes to our view as well (Phelan, 1997, p. 158).

This witnessing of causality enabled through the technique of reversing the film is a motif that plays through out the piece, at key moments, with the footage of Dunluce Castle, the sea, the cliff pathway – sites where significant causal relationships have taken place. The filmic epistemology allows the audience to see behind the camera, behind the performance and further intertwines the live body with the prerecorded one,
confounding identities of live and mediated bodies, shifting notions of presence and absence and yet again marking and remaking time, taking everything back to the moment just before...

Vertov’s composition helps us see that a fundamental drive of moving photography is to create cinematic memory.... Behind the image of the train that the spectator sees is the previously positioned camera, and behind that, another previously positioned camera. Behind the present image then, a past and behind that another past (Phelan, 1997, p. 158).

Repetition of text, film images and gestural movement throughout the piece give a sense of distorted, extended time. Time repeated, time frozen, time passing and returning. Within the text that repeats itself there is also a sense of time being distorted:

I haven’t pricked it yet she said but I soon shall. When I fasten my shawl again the brooch will come undone directly.

Pain that happens and is simultaneously always on the point of happening. Pain that is both past, present and future, manifested within the piece in the episode on the cliff walkway as the performer attempts to return to the place of not knowing, of before pain while already knowing that pain. Moving to remain motionless. ‘In this country said the red queen it takes all the running you can do just to stay in the same place.’ Again within the text about the Red Queen there is an awareness of time, but it is time very much out of joint. The direct reference to Lewis Carroll’s Alice Through The Looking Glass posits a disorientation of time and
worlds, an absurdity, a world that no longer seems to make sense. The White Queen feels the pain in her finger before she pricks it; time is no longer linear. Within this is the idea of reshaping the past combined with the knowledge of the impossibility and absurdity of the notion. Mulvey writes that:

Playing on the tension between film as controlling the dimensions of time (editing, narrative) and film as controlling the dimension of space (changes in distance, editing), cinematic codes create a gaze, a world and an object, thereby producing an illusion cut to the measure of desire (Mulvey as cited by de Lauretis, 1987, p. 118).

Film engenders that playing with past, as if what happened can somehow be altered, the presencing of the past seemingly positing a potentially altered future.

In the sequence in which the close-up shots of Paul's body, caught shining golden for a moment in the sunlight, dissolve into black and white footage of the tide crashing in over rocks at the foot of the cliff while simultaneously The Shipping Forecast fades into Je ne regrette rien image, sound and performance work together to manipulate time. Through the filmic manipulation, dissolving the image of the body into the image of the pounding waves of the sea and the text that collides with image warning of tides and currents the body becomes the sea and with it the site of danger as referenced by the Shipping Forecast, the indecipherable code that must be deciphered in order to avoid danger. Tides are dependent on the passing of time yet within the film the digital editing
techniques have slowed down the tide. The audience watch each wave on its journey inching towards the shoreline conscious of the reality of the impossibility of slowing down the tides, of inherent reference to the tides of time that wait for no man. Hill states that:

As an artist, Paris scavenges these fragments and uses them as the raw materials to build extensions onto reality, unfolding the remnants and stretching them into canvasses upon which to work. For Paris, the scratches seem to occur most frequently in fateful moments of palpable physical contact: razor with skin; heat with film; virus with blood; storm with landscape, whereas the unfolding process, the habitation of these moments takes place in the overlapping of the body with another media – silent film reels, oscilloscope sound images, digital editing techniques that can isolate, stretch, slow down, freeze, repeat and reconfigure (Hill, 1999).

There is something Photographic about this stilling of the waves, this capturing imperceptible movement. For Barthes, ‘In the Photograph, something has posed in front of the tiny hole and has remained there forever; but in cinema, something has passed in front of this same tiny hole: the pose is swept away and denied by the continuous series of images: it is a different phenomenology’ (1981, p. 78). Here there is the feeling that what has posed in front of the camera moves away only to replace itself, constantly what disappears reappears has been a theme throughout the piece. The film is never broken; the oscilloscope readings of the performer’s heart beat flood into Piaf’s voice, which dissolves into the image of the sea. The seamless flowing of image into image creates a circulatory system of interrelated images; bodies, nature, weather, all leave their residue as they intermingle with each other. Like the thin
layers of the rice paper used at the beginning of the piece; it is as if an image is itself and more than itself. The film moves and it is at the same time frozen, crystallized into one sea/body/landscape of sound, of flesh, of silence and of time.

This sequence leads into the walk down the cliff-path, the moment when the news about the HIV status is given. After the truth is known it can never be unknown. From this point it will be an unescapable reality. Thus the manipulation of the film, freeze-framing and rewinding are both attempts to deny this moment taking place yet at the same time they re-live it. Marita Sturken points out that it has been noted by such theorists as Roland Barthes that the photograph is always coded as the past, the what-has-been. Cinema, on the other hand, while it represents a kind of movement into the present, has increasingly come to evoke history. ‘A grainy black-and-white or faded color film, for instance, is immediately read as representing history and memory’ (Sturken in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 120). There is, then, something irrevocable about the use of the black and white footage in The Day Don Came With The Fish – this is what happened – as much as history ever represents the truth, this is how it was and always will be. The film and manipulation of it make visible the mind of the performer, backtracking to the moment just before the moment that changed everything, the desire to change the past, and simultaneously, the re-experiencing of that moment that did change everything.

According to Phelan:
The movie camera can manipulate time: it slows time down, speeds it up, and perhaps most spectacularly, reverses the sequential, forward direction of time. In the age of AIDS, an incomparable, an unhoped for, grasp upon the nature of causality is of more than cinematic interest (Phelan, 1997, p. 159).

In *Mourning Sex*, Phelan takes as her subject mediatization, mortality and live presence. She states that:

As our current cultural moment is buffeted on one side by the claims of virtual reality and electronic presence, and on the other by a politicized and commodified spirituality... it behooves us to think more seriously about what theatre and performance have to teach us about the possibilities and perils of summoning the incorporeal. To what end are we seeking an escape from our bodies? What are we mourning when we flee the catastrophe and exhilaration of embodiment? (Phelan, 1997, p. 2).

The final chapter in *Mourning Sex* is entitled ‘Infected eyes: Dying Man With a Movie Camera, Silverlake Life: The View from Here*. *Silverlake Life: The View from Here* is a film made by Tom Joslin in video diary format in which Joslin documents his life with AIDS. Joslin died in 1991 and the film was edited by his former film student, Peter Friedman, and released in 1993. Phelan writes:

We know people die. Most of us have already been a witness, sometimes eager, sometimes reluctant, to someone else’s death. The uncanniness of the encounter staged in *Silverlake Life*, however, derives from the fact that it occurs across, through, and on the body of the film. Meeting within the luminous space of the filmed image, Joslin and the spectator engage in a transference/counter-transference dynamic that transforms the film from documentary into a new manifesto for a politically motivated talking cure. *Silverlake Life* renders Joslin’s consciousness about his death palpable, factual and formal. Positioned as a witness to the return of the culturally repressed body, the spectator watches a film that
eventually is not visibly, materially, 'there'. The film insists that the spectator look at a body, a phantasmal body that cannot be, and therefore is not, screened. (The spectator is asked to look as a body that cannot be – a phantasmal celluloid body that can be generated in film but perhaps not in actuality). Joslin's screened body becomes a means to expose the spectator's screen memory of his or her own encounter (in the temporal phantasm in which past and future are one) with death (Phelan, 1997, p. 155).

There is a certain autonomy when working with film to change time. What is filmed at the beginning of the process can be the shot, which is used last. Shots can be repeated, and their playing speeds altered. They can be cut and pasted forming sequences that never existed, as if different effects are caused by happenings that they bear no relation to in 'real life'. The whole area of causality is of course fundamental to the content of the piece, and to the tragic chain of events that lead to the passing on of the virus. Phelan references the area of causality within Silverlake Life when she states that:

Friedman's conversation on the couch with Joslin's partner, Massi, was the last to be shot and the first to be seen... the end is given in the beginning of a film that goes on to discover even earlier beginnings and later endings (Phelan, 1997, p. 161).

There is an empowerment in this manipulation, in both the experiencing of and the making of the film. Phelan writes that, 'Like psychoanalysis, Joslin's film gives time to his body. Transferring his life to film, Joslin renders his body a body of film. His body can be edited, replotted, revised (1997, p. 155).
Likewise, in the second shot of Paul and the performer in the sea, which the audience are aware that they have already witnessed, again playing both on the screen and captured on the white shirt of the live performer, the film now plays in reverse so that the figures slowly move back out to sea. There is an instant reversal of effect derived from the image, what was a scene representative of halcyon joy and laughter is now filled with foreboding, the figures being drawn out to sea, in search of re-finding that carefree moment:

The imposition of a filmic epistemology on performance places the spectator in a critical position...the audience becomes a camera and operates on the material of the performance in a manner akin to Benjamin’s description of the close-up: “the film, on the one hand, extends our comprehension of the necessities which rule our lives; on the other hand, it manages to assure us of an immense and unexpected field of action (Murray as cited by Auslander 1992, p. 49).

For Phelan:

Theories of photography, and especially those proposed by Susan Sontag and Roland Barthes, have emphasized the link between death and the still image captured by the photographic camera. Surprisingly, however, theories of cinema have been reluctant to link the moving image to death, presumably because death, like photography, stops the body, arresting its movement through time (Phelan,1997, p. 156).

In The Day Don Came With The Fish the moving film is manipulated in attempts to freeze or replay time but each time the attempt is thwarted. The rewound film eventually must play to the end and the captured moment of the two laughing figures in the sea slowly, slowly fades away.
As the figures in the sea slowly fade into a sea blue screen the performer says:

I used to love watching old films.
I would gaze in adoration at the actors and ask my father to say which ones were dead
Often it could be the whole cast.

Against these lines of text which reference the god-like immortality of film, the audience witness the disappearance of the figures on the screen, engulfed into the blue of the sea. Seemingly unthreatening, unlike the previous, chaotic stormy image, it is the dazzlingly blue sunlit sea that swallows the figures. For Barthes:

The (fictional) Cinema combines two poses: the actor’s ‘this-has-been’ and the role’s, so that I can never see or see again in a film certain actors whom I know to be dead without a kind of melancholy: the melancholy of Photography itself (I experience this same emotion listening to the recorded voices of dead singers) (Barthes, 1981, p. 79).

Phelan, referencing Silverlake Life states that:

If still photography takes moments out of time, movie cameras take histories. Part of the allure of the movie camera, as against the still photograph, is that it makes visually evident the possibilities of reversing time, of having history back. Employing cinema as a way to grieve and to confront the physical and psychic limits of dying, Joslin challenges the cinema to give time, his time, to the living (Phelan, 1997, p. 160).

In The Day Don Came With The Fish history is brought back. It is relived by the performer whose presence exists in both the relived past and lived
present. The film gives a second chance to review, to relive to repeat – but not to alter. The words the performer stumbled on as she gave the weather forecast will always trip her up no matter how many times she rewinds the tape. But she can keep rewinding the tape.

Photographs and Time

As already alluded to within this chapter is the notion of photographic time, the immortality of the photographic image, encapsulating a moment in time, holding memory, the truth of the past in the present. In *British Photography in the Nineteenth Century* Doug Nickel writes:

> Were not photographs true? Lady Elizabeth Eastlake in 1857 knew that photographs 'give evidence of facts, as minutely and as impartially as, to our shame, only am unreasoning machine can give.' While painters worked to the pulse of the beating heart, did not cameras objectively reflect the outer reality? Were not albums and mantle pieces emboldened with sincere images of sincere people made abruptly immortal? Were not lockets and loveletter stuffed with black-and-white pictures as totems of unswerving honesty and undying devotion? (Nickel as cited by Schwartz, 1996, p. 96).  

This notion of immortalizing the live moment can be seen throughout *The Day Don Came With The Fish*, for example, in the film sequence where the figures of Paul and the performer are in the sea. The figures move towards the camera, laughing, splashing each other, the sunlight bouncing off their skin. When they get closer to the camera the film freezes. The moment is captured. It is a moment of pure *joie de vivre*. A moment to be
relived in the memory. A moment to long to return to. 'Capture your children exactly as they are today – your mother just as she is today,' ran the promotional copy for the Kodacolor home movie camera in 1930. 'The company capitalized on the problematics of visual memory and the joy of the re-view' (1996, p. 199). The movie camera made people 'alive forever in 60 seconds you'll never forget' (1996, p. 199)\textsuperscript{15}. This idea of halting the present, suspending it in time, are fully explored in *The Day Don Came With The Fish*, not only through the use of Super8 film and the manipulation of the image through freeze and rewind functions but within the repetition of the text and movement of the performer. Everything is about repeating the past, keeping people 'alive forever' whilst reality and time hurtle on, fast forward.

In *The Soft Edge*, Levinson writes that:

A sad but instructive fact about the first decade of photography is that its most frequent subjects were deceased children, the grief stricken parent thinks, 'what, other than my memories, have I to keep of my child? Might not a photograph provide such a recollection outside of my head?' (Levinson, 1997, p. 44).

Photographs were a way of remembering, a way of bestowing a kind of immortality, 'alive forever.' In *Photography: The Early Years, A Historical Guide for Collectors* by George Gilbert, Gilbert quotes Gabriel Harrison, an operator for the Plume Gallery in New York City, writing in the March 1851 issue of *The Photographic Art-Journal*, who 'leaves us a memorable glimpse of the new experience that photography provided' (1980, p. 10). Gilbert includes Harrison's account of a particular incident when he was
asked to photograph a dead girl so that her mother could keep a visual memory of her. I include the account in full to show the whole ritual of the picture taking and the inference that this photographic ritual engenders a type of momentary resurrection:

Oh! How sad was the face of the first customer who saluted me on entering the Gallery. Her pale lips, though motionless, spoke despair — her dark sunken eyes told of intense suffering, and her black tresses raggedly gathered over her broad white temples indicated the agitation of her mind. Her garments coarse, but neat, loosely encircled her well shaped frame. When she spoke, her tremulous, anxious voice sent a thrill like an electric shock through me. In wild accents she addressed me.

‘Oh! Sir, my child Armenia is dead, and I have no likeness of her: won’t you come immediately and take her picture?’ On a scantily furnished couch lay the victim of the fell destroyer, marble like and cold — the mother, on her knees beside the bed leaned over her darling, her only child, with her face buried in her hands, and giving way to low heart rending choking sobs. For a moment I dared not disturb that mother’s anguish. ‘Madam,’ ‘You here,’ she said, as she started to her feet. ‘Oh! A thousand, thousand thanks!’ gently we moved the death couch to the window in order to get the best light, though but a ray... The mother held up a white cloth to give me reflected light to subdue the shadows. All was still, I took the cap from the camera. About two minutes had elapsed, when a bright sun ray broke through the clouds, dashed its bright beams upon the reflector, and shedding, as it were a supernatural light. I was startled, the mother riveted with frightful gaze, for at the same moment we beheld the muscles about the mouth of the child move, and her eyes partially open — a smile played upon her lips, a long gentle sigh heaved her bosom, and as I replaced the cap, her head fell over to one side. The mother screamed — ‘She lives! She lives!’ and fell upon her knees by the side of the couch. ‘No,’ was my reply; ‘she is dead now, the web of life is broken’ (Harrison as cited by Gilbert, 1980, pp. 11-14).

For Barthes, ‘Every photograph is a certificate of presence’ (1981, p. 87). The use of film whose raw material is photographic accentuates this reality whether the presence is present or absent, the oppositions that formed the crux of the piece, again for Barthes, ‘The photograph can
capture the body, guaranteeing its absence as presence' (as cited in Birringer, 1991, p. 210). In *The Don Came with the Fish* I wanted to encapsulate the essence of Presence, be it filmic, live, mediated. A presence strongly marked by an absence, both ‘real’ and other worldly, an aura of being. For Barthes, ‘In Photography, the presence of the thing (at a certain past moment) is never metaphoric; and in the case of animated beings, their life as well’ (1981, p. 78). This notion of presence is particularly pertinent in *The Day Don Came With The Fish* where lens based media intertwine with the live presence of the performer. With her presence the audience cannot deny what is happening *before their very eyes*. It is interesting that one of the aspects attributed to the camera is that it never lies. It does not stand for something else, it bears witness to *itself*. The audience members bear witness to the live performance, they see the images on the rice paper disappearing into the mouth of the performer, encapsulated by her body. They see the castle projected onto her body and hear her speak of what happened there and know that it is not metaphor. It her truth. It is her life as well.

Death, As the Ultimate Form of Negativity – The work of David Wojnarowicz¹⁶

Barthes has established that...recollection is the very essence of the photograph - In a blink, light is transformed into memory, the true subject of the photograph is ‘the lacerating emphasis of the *noeme* (‘that-has-been’) (Barthes, in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 46).

The work of artist David Wojnarowicz made direct correlations between the nature of the medium of photography, its form, in particular the
negative, in his work focussing on the living and dying (male) AIDS body. In his chapter 'Seeing Death: The Photography of David Wojnarowicz', Robert Sember writes about how the artist, suffering from an AIDS related illness buried himself in the desert sands of Chaco Canyon in New Mexico, leaving only his face exposed. He was then photographed by Marion Scemama, eyes closed, lips slightly parted in a final self portrait (see Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 31). Wojnarowicz described his experience of being buried in photographic terms:

> When I move my eyes very slowly from left to right while sitting still, I can feel and hear a faint clicking sensation suggesting that vision is made up of millions of tiny stills as in transparencies. Since everything is generally in movement around us, then vision is made up of millions of 'photographed' and recalled pieces of information (Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 34).  

Wojnarowicz died in July 1992 from complications from AIDS related illness. Sember points out that the Chaco portrait is dated 1993, suggesting that it was printed after his death to be seen only by those who survive Wojnarowicz:

> This dramatizes how our witnessing of his death is doubled by the shifting time of the image: we see his death from before and after. Death, therefore, effects a cleavage in the photographic moment. While the record of a moment, the image splits the instant to recall a past when Wojnarowicz was still alive while also projecting a future when he will be dead. Thus the photograph contains a second moment in addition to the one visible in the image. This second moment narrates Wojnarowicz's movement toward death (Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 35).

In this way, Wojnarowicz suspends his work between the mortal and the immortal, his body combines the mortality of the flesh and the
immortality of the film creating photographs ‘awash with time’ (Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 46), which bring to the surface the ‘memory of contact’ (Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 46). This superimposing of the artist with the medium, the mortal and the immortal manifests itself within the development process:

While the negative was created while Wojnarowicz was alive, the development – the second exposure and submersion in the developing and fixing fluids – of the photograph may not have come until after his death. The second flash of light needed to produce the positive photographic image recalls the first flash since this image anticipates the death of its author, this photographic recollection takes on a prophetic function. The light promises only death. This effect emerges at the point where the image of Wojnarowicz and the photograph’s surface’s touch in a chemical fixing of time (Sember in Phelan and Lane 1998, p. 36).

This notion of the medium playing a prophetic function or role can be seen within The Day Don Came With The Fish. For example, the part in the film when the audience see the Super8 film burning and melting, coincides with the revelation of Paul’s HIV status. In a sense there is a fatalistic projection into the future, what is feared by the announcement that has been made on the cliff path and at the same time we are aware of a palpable death, that of Kenneth. The camera’s path, traveled twice, from the cliff top, down to the path where Paul sits out to the rocks in the sea and culminating finally in the burning of the celluloid. The burning becomes invested within the action – what is Paul thinking as he looks out to sea? About Kenneth’s death? About his own mortality? The very materiality of the film manifests itself and becomes a part of the filmic
narrative – as with the body of the performer, the body of the film plays out its own role.

This notion of the film playing out its own role is further manifested when the performer holds up the tiny shard of film at the end of the piece. The curl of film, a tiny fragment, is carefully held up and presented to the audience. The larger than life moment they have witnessed on spools through the fingers of the performer, fragile, minute. The text points to the fragility of the film, like flesh, it can easily tear and break. Parallel with the distortion of time by the manipulation of the film, the text rearranges time, as the performer speaks of the past in the future tense, ‘Tonight, for example, the film won’t feed properly and a full thirty frames will be severed. The severed moment will only be a couple of inches long.’ The future is predicted, but cannot be changed, echoing the text about the White Queen, preparing the plaster on her finger ready for the pain she knows will come. The Performer tells the audience exactly what is captured in the filmic moment, the torn fragment of time she holds in her hand. ‘This is the moment when my father points to something in the distance and my mother and I follow his gaze. I especially like this bit.’ As she speaks she enacts the gesture of her father, pointing to something in the distance. This is a moment that audience will not see projected on the screen; instead they see it projected through the performer. Phelan writes that:
What is preserved in the still image, and the 'instamatic' photograph in particular, is the compression of the present and the resistance to releasing the moment into the past without securing its return... The photograph serves both to 'conjure' the moment, the scene in which the photograph was taken, and to take the moment out of time – to render it the subject of new narratives, to give it a new temporal logic, a new causal relation to the autobiographical, in the largest sense of that term (Phelan, 1997, p. 157).

In a sense, *The Day Don Came With The Fish* allows for the reconjouring of the moment out of time. Within the life span of the live performance witnessed by the audience the events, the images, the histories can reinvent themselves. The castle can time-lapse through days in a matter of seconds. We can return again and again to the moment just before...

Sember states that:

> Photographs are particularly powerful mourning surfaces because of the temporal contradiction that lies at their heart. They perform both an evidential - frequently mistaken for a truthful - and an aporetic function, that is, they suggest that objects are present while simultaneously confirming their absence (Sember in Phelan and Lane 1998, p. 37).

Sember goes on to argue that for Walter Benjamin this paradox is the 'aura,' a temporal haze clouding 'the indiscernible place in the condition of that long past minute where the future is nesting, even today, so eloquently that we looking back can discover it' (Benjamin as cited by Sember in Phelan and Lane 1998, p. 37). In Sember's words:

> The aura is closely related to death, as Benjamin confirms when he refers to the condition of photographic time as *überleben*, a term de Man translates as 'liv[ing] beyond your own death in a sense'. In this beyond, the photograph returns to our sight a moment that has
been, yet it also ‘doubts’ the loss by ‘living’ its afterlife (Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 37).

The notion of liv[ing] beyond your own death engendered by the photograph is strangely reminiscent of Blau’s notion, referenced in Chapter One, of the actor dying before ones very eyes. Here, in The Day Don Came With The Fish, the melange of live performance with recorded lens based media allows and encourages the existence of both; an accelerated death and an augmented life.

Both The Day Don Came With The Fish and the Wojnarowicz Chaco photograph can be seen as site specific in that place plays a determined role in the action. Dunluce Castle represents both the site of infection as well as a marker of its own history, its past, the fateful storm it half survived. The remains of the castle in the cliff top, still resisting the storms that buffet it pays a tribute to its own immortality. It is portrayed both in black and white film, giving a sense of its past, its history, and color film, giving a sense of the present and the future. Within the context of The Day Don Came With The Fish it is shown as memorial to both. Chaco Canyon is in the New Mexican desert and holds the remains of the dwellings of the Anasazi, the ancient ancestors of the Southwestern Native Americans. These points about position and history matter. For Sember:

Wojnarowicz undertakes a number of substitutions within the Chaco portrait that enables him to play across the photographic paradox of presence and absence, past and future, and to engage in
the excavation of the moment. He forgoes most particularly a clear relationship between himself and the location, which, in its position as a national historical site, suggests a past for which we have no clear narratives. Without a 'history,' the ruins are both disturbingly present and uncomfortably silent. They too lie at the border we are inclined toward thinking of as the moment of death, the place where history shifts into nature (Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 40).

In both The Day Don Came With The Fish and the Chaco photograph place is also very much located within the body. The present body. The absent body. The not yet absent body. The body that consumes the rice paper image, the body entombed by the desert sand. The positive body. The body in negative. 'When I put my hands on your body on your flesh I feel the history of that body' (see Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 42).

This is the opening line of text of the piece Wojnarowicz made in 1990 entitled, When I Put My Hand on Your Body. Sember writes that, for him the most striking but least commented on characteristic within this work, a series of gelatin-silver prints with silk screened text, is the use of the negative:

The negative is Wojnarowicz's primary subject and that his principal material is the history of the surface of the photograph, which he strips away as he did the surfaces of the lover's body in When I Put My Hands On Your Body (Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, pp. 44-45).

Sember points out how the composition appears to explicitly mimic the photographic aura defined by Benjamin in that it holds one moment in the other (Sember in Phelan and Lane, 1998, p. 45). Baudrillard's statement
about photographic 'negativity' countered with digital contagion is also interesting to include at this point:

Photographic or cinema images still pass through the negative stage (and that of projection), whereas the TV image, the video image, digital and synthetic, are images without a negative, and hence without negativity and without reference. They are virtual and the virtual is what puts an end to all negativity, and thus to all reference to the real or to events. At a stroke, the contagion of images, engendering themselves without reference to a real or an imaginary, itself becomes virtually without limits, and this limitless engendering produces information as catastrophe (Baudrillard, 1994, pp. 55-56).

Inherent to the decision to incorporate photographic and digital means of image processing within The Day Don Came With The Fish were the comparisons between the varying formats and the HIV virus itself. Tony Feldman states that, 'Computer systems do not care very much about what bits and bytes - the building blocks of digital information - actually represent. They care even less who they belong to' (1997, p. 80). This impartiality of digital information, compounded by computer viruses which plague hard drives present an apt and poignant analogy to the HIV virus. Baudrillard’s statement about photographic ‘negativity’ countered with digital contagion could be seen to reiterate this analogy.

In the sequence towards the very end The Day Don Came With The Fish, when the screen appears to be empty, black, the sound of the film running through the projector is acutely audible. The silent film here presences and presents itself by its sound, a palpable silence, a negative, a positive:
The uncanny achievement of Silverlake Life is the creation of a cinema for the dead. What the film suggests is that the cinema for the dead contains images of the past that flow and unfurl in the vast expanse of a time that no longer moves. The films of one's life no longer run forward or backward: all the images are off their reels (Phelan, 1997, p. 157).

With this moment that the screen is black what images replay in the minds of the audience? What does the audience re-view in their heads? Barthes returns to his notion of a punctum, 'Not surprising, then, if sometimes, despite its clarity, the punctum should be revealed only after the fact, when the photograph is no longer in front of me and I think back on it' (1981, p. 53).

In her early critical text, Alice Doesn't, Teresa De Lauretis asks:

By what processes do images on the screen produce imaging on and off the screen? How are images perceived? How do we see? And do those meanings remain linked to images? What about language? Or sound? What relations do language and sound bear to images? Do we image as well as imagine, or are they the same thing? Finally, what are the 'productive relations' of imaging in filmmaking and film-viewing, or spectatorship – productive of what? Productive how? (De Lauretis, 1984, p. 39).

The audience stands before a screen that plays – nothing – and yet they are aware that the nothing represents something, as they hear the sound of the film still rolling. The fragmented sentences of the performer create the images for the screen, the blue sky, the three figures, the beach in the Summer. The audience slowly becomes aware that they have already seen this picture, at the beginning of the piece, the family on the beach. The film
which reruns plays in their heads, a moment captured, replayed, stored, returned to, not lost. The performer then holds up a severed piece of film and shows it carefully to the audience, and states that on it the are the very figures she has screened for the audience, images embodied in the celluloid (see Phelan, 1997, p. 167).

At the Visceral/Virtual Performance studies international conference March 2000, artist Toni Dove stated that artists should begin examining the apparatus we are being threaded through. ‘We need to begin redefining where the edges of the body lie – the extension of the body past the skin’ (Toni Dove, Going Virtual: Using Interactive Technology to Facilitate Performance, March 2000). Film defines time in terms of the cut but with digital technologies we enter a space without edges¹⁹, which allows for seamless morphing. At the end of The Day Don came With The Fish the performer runs the small fragment of film through her fingers, becoming in that moment the spool, the apparatus threading the film. At the beginning she swallowed the images whole as if the film that then ran through her. Appearance and disappearance. On/off. Mortality. Immortality.

**Finale: Analogue/ Digital (Im)mortal spurs, lieux de memoire**

In the final film sequence of The Day Don Came With The Fish, the film on the screen jump cuts to a morning to night time-lapse of Dunluce Castle. This time the time-lapse is slowed down as the audience is taken for the last time through one day in the life of the castle which has existed since
the 1300’s, one captured moment in all those years. The show is ending as it begun, with the footage of the castle, the marker to all that has happened. Phelan remarks that:

Science tells Joslin that he will die. Filmmaking promises him that he will be preserved on film – walking, talking, eating, sleeping. He will become a filmic body. (‘I am desperate to make Silverlake Life. Not to take my pills.’) The film presents two narratives with different temporalities: cinematic narrative, which contains a finite number of events that can be projected either in a forward motion (insynch with linear time) or in reverse motion (which runs time backwards). The spectator reads this temporality as a truth specific to the culture of cinema, a culture he or she can visit but cannot fully inhabit. The spectator is prevented from inhabiting cinema by a previous belief, a higher faith one might say, in the ‘truth’ of the narrative logic of scientific biology. Biological narrative operates in a non-cinematic temporality, one that only moves forward (Phelan, 1997, pp. 169-170).

There is a feeling of triumph with this moment. The future has been reshaped, and indeed has a future, rather than remaining forever trapped in the moment. The song is not only relevant because of its scarred body, the mortality of the dead singer immortalized in the vinyl, but also because of its words: No, no nothing, no I regret nothing. Rather than being a tragic accompaniment to a fatalistic piece, the lyrics emphasize the piece as positive memorial, if it has been a cinema for the dead it is also memorial for the living. ‘The focus of the film is on cinematic time. The ‘theory’ of time proposed by Silver Lake Life is one that raises a general question about the status and function of art as memorial’ (1997, p. 56). Once more, though I did not have her work in mind when making the piece I think of Phelan’s performance theory as I analyze my own work in retrospect. Phelan remarks that:
Within the temporalities of biology and cinema Joslin's body comes to an end, or at least to an end of what we can know about it.... It is an act, a performative undertaking that requires interpretation. The technologies of death...are interpretive machines that suture the gap between biological and cultural definitions of death. Joslin suggests that cinema is one of the sweetest, most comforting machines to assist us with the editing (Phelan, 1997, p. 170).

The imagery of the oscilloscope reading of song dissolves into the performers heart beat pulsing across the screen. The filmic image is unbroken, the vibrations of the song, of Piaf's immortalized voice, connect directly to the performers heartbeat, again what is absent is present, death flows into life, a pulse of life that plays out across the performer's body, her arms outstretched, embracing it. Kuppers connects this image with the earlier information given by the performer telling us how she stopped breathing as a child, and received the kiss of life from her mother - later, the green blip of a medical heart scan runs across the large projection screen behind her, and traces its path across her outstretched arms. 'The narrativising of life has started to layer itself across the performing body' (1999, p. 20).

As the heartbeat pulses across her body, this same unbroken filmic current that has been the voice of Piaf, the reading of the shipping forecast and the Radio 4 time signal and the piercing alarm of the pill box has come full circle. It is embodied by the live performer in this final image, as she repeats the text from the beginning of the performance, now imbued with a myriad of other meanings:
What day of the week was I born on mother?
Wednesday I think dear,
Hold on and I’ll ask your father.
Tony, what day did Don come with the fish?
Wednesday I think dear.
That’s right,
You were born on Wednesday,
The Day Don Came With The Fish.

The lines are identically to when they were first uttered, as if an echo from the past, still repeating itself like the scratches in the analogue record, the endless duplication made possible by digital technology. Repetition of certain lines has been a theme throughout, as if replaying time, returning to the moment when the words were first uttered and reliving it as the words are said anew but already in the past. This particular repetition of the words that started the piece can almost create a feeling that time has been suspended between the first and final utterance, or as if the last is the first and what has happened has never happened. And the lines themselves? They remain embedded within the memory of the mother, signifying the birth of her child, to the day, to the moment.

Conclusion
The final fragment of film, suspended where the paper screens hung before, bear’s witness to the moment that has passed, the moment of the performance, trapped within an irregular heartbeat. The images that were inside the piece, within the performer, consumed at the start so that through her live presence the audience could see them are now exhumed, they return to the outside, but are still suspended. Time remains
crystallized and swaying gently in the light of the running projector. The projector is empty and projects only that which is already there—pulsating light on to the fragment of film so that the images, once larger than life on the screen, are now tiny, but just as present, and still bearing witness to a moment, Summer, on the beach, three figures, three smiles. Barthes states:

In the Photograph, what I posit is not only the absence of the object; it is also, by one and the same movement, on equal terms, the fact that this object has indeed existed and that it has been where I see it... It is not there... but is has indeed been (Barthes, 1981, p. 115).

Radio 4 pips are heard, signaling the time but without the usual announcers voice after the beeps stating the hour. What time then do they signal? Is it the end of the performance? Or the beginning? Has time passed or just begun? Phelan writes:

The film (Silverlake Life) suggests that time stops without a living, moving body, but the body itself does not stop moving; cinema is one place where the still-moving body leaves a trace (Phelan, 1997, p. 156).

_The Day Don Came With The Fish_, as a performance in process—made and still being remade in full analysis—aims to explore the limits and potentials of the body: communication; frustration; boundaries; and sex; death; and notion(s) of time—how one moment can change everything. The work revolved around themes of mortality and immortality, causality
and inevitability in its examination of pivotal moments in life, in particular, 'the moment just before...'. By utilizing both the potentials and particular characteristics of Super8 film, video, digital technologies and live performance the piece revealed a mutual dependence of each of the forms on the other: the film dependant on the live performance to make sense; the Super8 immortalized by its transference to digital code and yet its very mortality telling the story, Leslie Hill states that:

The film and performance aspects of the piece exist as Siamese twins, reliant on each other for their lives. In this way, Paris investigates the ruptures, the cracks, the silences by suturing living flesh with synthetic media in a piece which constantly juxtaposes and re-examines the boundaries and the glitches between the body and technology (Hill, 1999).

The process of this piece, the exploration of the mortalities and immortalities of performance and old and new media continue to engage. The exploring, re-editing, rewinding, rehearsing continues. Process delaying finality. The ultimate finality.

At the end of the performance it is the fragment of Super8 film that remains in the space after the performer has left. Suspended. Fact and Artifact. Swaying slightly, in response to the breath of the audience members who surround it, as they surrounded the performer at the start of the show. At the beginning of the piece they pushed to see her, to hear her. Now it is to see if what they saw, what they heard, was true. To see what is really held in the memory of that sliver of celluloid. To see that it
is just as she said. Three figures, tiny, one, his arm outstretched, pointing
to something in the distance. ‘It was all true.’

Donna Cameron, writing about the fragility of Super8 stock says: ‘if you
don’t ever show them you don’t take them out of the can. Then the
oxygen won’t get to them, and the polluted air doesn’t catalyze their
disintegration’ (Cameron, Big As Life, 1999, p. 54). A life lived ‘out of the
can’ is bound to incur damage – but it is a life lived. Mortal. And
Immortal. ‘Je ne regrette rien...No, I have no regrets. This is the moment
when...anything could happen.

1Commissioned by The London Filmmakers Co-op, Performed at The Lux, London, Dec.
1997. See A.L Rees account of the history of the London Filmmakers Co-op, its
emergence in the late 60’s and its impact on British independent filmmaking (Rees, A
History of Experimental Film and Video: From the Canonical Avant-Garde to Contemporary
British Practice, 1999, p. 77).

2 Taking Walter Benjamin’s The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction as a
starting place, Chantal Pontibrand discusses the relationship between live performance
and mediatization, and, claims that, ‘mechanical reproduction (mediation), as described
by Benjamin, offers a means of eschewing presence. Pontibrand examines the
proposition first in its most literal sense, that incorporating technological mediation into
performance counters presence: ‘The more performance is expressed by technical means,
the more chance it has of being removed from the theatre’s theatricality; the more it
withdraws from representation into simple presentation; the more it draws away from
aura into simple actuality; the more it draws away from classical presence to assert a new
and different presence, a radical presence.’ Within her argument Pontibrand goes on to
makes comparison not only between film and performance but also between the film
audience and the performance audience. In this way the embodiment of film into
performance seems like a perfectly natural second step when making live work” (For a
full account of the discussion see Auslander, Presence and Resistance, Postmodernism and

3 For example, in C’est La Vie, performed at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London
1996, as performer I am placed alongside large-scale video projections presenting
outsized spectra analogous to the oppressive construct of the monstrous feminine
archetype. Dwarfed by the screen and distorted projections the performer interacts with
and reacts with the video image which looms behind her, representative both of her fears
which threaten to engulf her, and of the patriarchal society which threatens to incarcerate
her. In this way the incorporation of mediation can be seen to inform and accentuate the

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content of the live performance, by using not only the capabilities of the medium (to project the video) but also the particular characteristics of that medium (i.e. the possibilities of large scale video projection in C'est la Vie).

An alternative would perhaps have been to use the terms immediate performer and mediate performer following Auslander who posits a symbiotic relationship between live and mediated inherent within the root of the words mediate and immediate, stating that: 'That the mediated is engrained in the live is apparent in the structure of the word immediate. The root form is the word mediate of which immediate is, of course, the negation. Mediation is thus embedded within the immediate; the relation of mediation and the im-mediate is one of mutual dependence, not precession' (Auslander, Performance and Cultural Politics, Elin Diamond (ed.), p. 199). In terms of writing performance, Phelan expertly enacts phenomenology of the writer and Ze performativity of the act, Mourning Sex itself becomes a performance, 'This book is necessarily a piece of theatre, a staging of an encounter that may or may not take place between two characters I might name, 'me' and 'you... ' One character is framed by the architecture of this book's proscenium stage (Phelan, Mourning Sex, p. 17).

5 See Elin Diamond, Unmaking Mimesis, where she writes that, 'Feminism's queries and practices also require context, and are strongly shaped by the desire to remember, to represent and as Barbara Johnson puts it, to 'imagine the present' (Diamond, Unmaking Mimesis, p. 144).

6 In terms of this idea of the corporeality of space I would like to include a quote about the piece by Petra Kuppers, reviewing the performance The Day Don Came With the Fish shown at the Performance Studies International Conference in Aberystwyth, 9-12 April 1999, the theme of the Conference being the mapping of hinterlands. For Kuppers The Day Don Came With The Fish, 'reinserts the materiality of performance through intricate manipulations of the audience's relationship to video technology. The living encounters between space, time, bodies and media created borderlands (on which the performance studies conference (Aberystwyth 9-12 April 99) could map itself' (Petra Kuppers, Liveart magazine, issue no.26, Oct. 1999, p. 20).

7 Mary Lucifer writes that, 'Video technology made it safe for the human eye to look directly into the source of power but, at the same time, showed us that such an act of hubris is not completely without penalty. The price one paid, until recent technology replaced the camera's vacuum tube with state-of-the-art chips, was an irrevocable marking if the image-recording element itself, a permanent burn-scar in the phosphors of the vidicon tube. The scarring of the anthropomorphic camera eye serves as a graphic metaphor for the surrogate relationship between the lens/tube/VCR system and iris.retina/brain. The result of this primal encounter is a trauma so deep that its scars cannot be erased but, instead, accumulate on the image surface as a form of memory, and any picture subsequently recorded by that camera must be viewed through the scar tissue of prior trauma' (Hall and Fifer, Illuminating Video, p. 457).

8 Margaret Morse writes how early TV sculptures, 'rather than pretending to timelessness were subjected to the processes of mortality in a literal kind of deconstruction, submitting the object to destruction, decay and disappearance' (Morse, Illuminating Video, p. 62).

9 Phelan continues, stating that she will refer to 'diegetic time in Silverlake Life as 'cinematic.' Although the film was shot on video, Friedman transferred the video to film (as per Joslin's instructions). I am satisfied that everything I say here about the temporality of cinema applies equally well to this video, although perhaps not to all videos. It must be noted, however, that video is a much more intimate and personal form of memory-making than cinema, in part because it is hand-held and ever ready' (Phelan, Mourning Sex, p. 173).
The artist Marina Abromavic, when talking about technology in the shape of video phones in Japan stated that how for her one of the most interesting aspects of the medium was actually the flaw, the glitch between the human body and the mediation, the time delay whereby you could start a fight with your lover while watching them still smiling lovingly at you, the moment before the moment that changes everything.


14 See Schwartz’s account of Alphonse Bertillon, chief of the Office of Judicial Identification in 1888 in Paris, ‘convinced that no two faces were identical pioneered photographic procedures which mean that, ‘we have photographic miniatures of our selves which certify our correctness – national loyalty, financial solidity, academic standing, military-industrial trustworthiness, medical fitness, drivers probity. Without them, children are not adults and adults feel like children. None makes the pretense to harboring the spirit-double while the body decays, but without them hospital rooms are barricaded and burial anonymous. None is as permanent as the tattoo... but people carry them ‘on their person’ and hurriedly renew them when they expire. None is as distinctive as fingerprints, but when these miniatures are lost, uniqueness is at risk, identity questioned’ (Schwartz, Culture of the Copy, p. 98).

15 In 1935 Kodak had produced the Retina, a camera capable of thirty-six exposures ‘at lightening speed’ (see Schwartz, Culture of the Copy, p. 199).

16 See Sember, The Ends of Performance, p. 38.

17 Sember states that, ‘Time, Wojnarowicz’s construction of vision implies, does not follow image sequence exactly. To begin with, the ‘photographed; quality of perception suggests that the external image is empirically no less real than the image ‘taken’ with the eye; in fact, the ‘photograph may very well precede, even tutor, perception. More precisely, the perceptual moment is a repetition and recollection’ (Sember, The Ends of Performance, p. 34).

18 Sember states how Wojnarowicz made this piece in 1990 after he had lost a number of friends to AIDS and when he himself had been diagnosed with AIDS. This is undoubtedly one of the most piercing images of mourning produced in the AIDS crisis, not least because of its daring exploration of the intimate bond between death and sex: in the text layered over the skeletons, Wojnarowicz tells of making love’ (See Sember, The Ends Of Performance, p. 42).

19 As part of same PSi200 conference, Visceral/Virtual, Australian performance artist Stelarc screened excerpts from his recent endoscopy, where a small camera was fixed onto the end of an endoscope and inserted through his mouth down into his stomach. Viewed in conjunction with his other recent work, the mechanical arm, the third eye, etc, this ‘more subtle’ yet arguably more invasive piece seemed to confront questions
surrounding boundaries, extensions and the notion of limitless terrain's more so than the more obvious, external, physical extensions.

20Bruce Conner writes, 'There is something magical about affecting film as an artifact. This is the film that we buried, that we glued bird feathers to; this is the film that went through a camera at a specific place, at a particular time' (Conner, Big as Life, 1999, p. 48).
Random Acts of Memory

Institute for Studies in the Arts
Arizona State University
November, 1998
A Note on Body Memories to be Created in Reading and Viewing

Chapter Three

In this final chapter, which is divided into two parts, I progress the thesis argument by demonstrating the relationships, tensions and differences between live and mediated formats in relation to a broad spectrum of performance pieces and theories. In Part One, 'Live versus Mediated', I refer to the performance Random Acts of Memory (1998) while in Part Two, 'Form And Content/Live and Mediated', I refer to the web performance I never go anywhere I can't drive myself (1997) as well as to a selection of works made and views put forward by contemporary performance artists noted for their quite distinct uses of body architecture and technology, including Stelarc and Orlan.

I argue in this chapter that live and mediated formats each have their own unique roles and contributions to make to performance, whilst at the same time bearing a reciprocal relationship to each other which supports, extends and enables both to survive and mutate in ways which render them adaptable to survival in the new media age. I support this argument in Part One with detailed reference to original research into the field, including an analysis of Peggy Phelan's theories concerning the ontology of live performance, and in relation to my own performance practice as research (particularly with reference to my theory of an 'ontology of smell'). In Part Two, I support these arguments with reference to Philip Auslander's theory of 'liveness' in relation to wider understandings of the role of live performance in an age of increasing mediatisation, and also in the context of consideration of a number of related issues and trends in new media and live performance, including the works of artists Stelarc, Orlan, and Franko B.

The video contains a complete version of the performance of Random Acts of Memory. This, rather than serving as a document of the live performance, was performed and filmed specifically for the camera - for a
mediated viewing. The reader/viewer may choose to watch the entire video performance prior to the reading of the textual analysis in the thesis, or alternatively, may choose to watch the video in tandem with that reading. Similarly, images and text from the performance can be accessed via the CD-ROM in a 'random access' manner appropriate to the spirit and the letter, the form and content, of this thesis project. The CD-ROM includes documentation of the research and development of ARVID, the remote control video device used in the performance of Random Acts of Memory. It could be helpful to view this section on the CD-ROM prior to reading this chapter. I never go anywhere I can't drive myself, the live and virtual road trip taken on the old Route 66 and the new information superhighway simultaneously, is discussed in the second part of this chapter and is also documented on the CD-ROM. The 'drive' can be accessed under the menu 'Place and Placelessness'. The website can be accessed online at www.placelessness.com. Here again, the viewer/reader may find it interesting to navigate the site whilst reading about the piece. The video also contains a brief extract from the performance of BULL, the performance made in the wake of RAM (Random Acts of Memory). The reference to BULL starts on page 239 of the printed text and might best be contextualised with an interactive viewing of this performance extract.
The emergence of a genre of post-human actors does not mean the redundancy of ‘natural’ human characters but implies that it is likely that human and post-human theatrical spaces and performers will need to co-exist (Armstrong, 1996, p. 11).

One of the most alarming features of the discourse of the new technologies is its tendency to repress the existence of previous technologies. Yelling, ‘I’m new, I’m new,’ this new discourse, like most born-again devotees, forgets the technologies that preceded it and helped bring it into being. In the discourse of the new technologies, performance tends to be seen as a-technological, rather than as a complex technology refined across cultures and across history. Thus, in an electronic and mechanical age, it is increasingly difficult to notice the sophisticated technologies always already at play in live performance and theatre. Pointing to the brave new world of the electronic episteme, we do well to ‘remember the future.’ It’s right behind us, still breathing. We’ve been here many times before. It used to be called the rehearsal room (Phelan & Lane, 1998, p. 9).

Introduction

Within this chapter, which focuses on the relationship between live and mediated performance, I ask the following questions: Can there be a symbiotic relationship between live performance and technology? (How) does the visceral live beside the virtual? What is the role of live performance within a period of increasing technological advances in the world of wired and wireless communications, digital and screen arts? This chapter attempts to find answers to these questions, and also to put them as questions in evolution.
In this chapter I examine the nature of the culture of the copy: considering society’s fascination with replication, cloning, twins, and duplication. I explore the ways in which technology offers that twinning; the engendering of the eternally reproducible. In conjunction with this, I examine the philosophies of replication and authenticity as posited by Walter Benjamin, alongside Baudrillard’s concept of ‘the real’ and ideas surrounding the ‘culture of the copy’ as defined by Hillel Schwartz: all this in order to explore notions of authenticity and the notion of ‘the real’ as it relates to live and mediatised performance. As well as a discussion of technologies - old and new - this chapter considers some insights from technologists involved in creating and manipulating video and new media technologies within live performance, and offers my own unique ‘take’ on these issues accrued through my own embodied practice.

This chapter examines some of the aspects of live performance which make it unique, such as the engagement of the senses, its unreproducibility and its existence only in the present. It discusses a number of views posited by critic Philip Auslander which seem to refute such an ontology of performance and which posit instead a conflicting ontology of mediatised performance. I look in part at those ‘previous technologies’ (as cited by Phelan) often passed by in the digital age, such as photography, film, video and television, as well as new media technologies in an exploration of their similarities/differences, of each, to each other, and to live performance. In exploring the relationship between live and mediated performance, I use Auslander’s assertions as
expounded in *Liveness*, 1999, as a theoretical sounding board from which to propose an alternative theoretical view. I also show how the practice-based experience of the process and performance of *Random Acts of Memory* (my own performance piece made with Leslie Hill in 1998) reworks Auslander’s paradigm of live versus mediated into one in which live and mediated are placed in a position of inclusivity.

*Random Acts of Memory*, created and performed by artist Leslie Hill and myself at the Institute for Studies in the Arts, Arizona State University, 1998, investigated the relationship between digital and synaptic memory, between replication and interpretation, between live and pre-recorded, between mediated and ‘raw’, and between high tech and low tech moments and sensibilities. It was a performative exploration of the visceral in the age of the virtual, achieved through full employment of the visceral, live presence, the sensory; sometimes amplified, repeated, manipulated, distorted and/or obliterated by technological apparatus.

**Part One**

**Live versus Mediated**

In his book *Liveness*, Philip Auslander (re)examines the relationship between live and mediated performance. He states one of the major areas of contention as: ‘The common assumption is that the live event is ‘real’ and that mediatized events are secondary and somehow artificial reproductions of the real’ (1999, p. 3). Auslander’s ensuing argument is
predicated on what is essentially the foundation of his thesis, the prioritizing of mediatization within the current cultural economy:

At the level of cultural economy, theatre (and live performance generally) and the mass media are rivals, not partners. Neither are they equal rivals: it is absolutely clear that our current cultural formation is saturated with and dominated by, mass media representations in general and on television (Auslander, 1999, p.1).

His naming, however, of live and mediated as 'rivals' is arguably more contentious than Phelan's positioning of live and mediated in a position of opposition: a position which Auslander finds so problematic. Phelan states that: 'Performance honors the idea that a limited number of people in a specific time/space frame can have an experience of value which leaves no visible trace afterwards,' (1993, p.149). Auslander opposes this position, stating that, 'Some performance theorists see performance's evanescence and its existence only in spectatorial memory as placing performance outside the purview of reproduction and regulation,' a position with which he steadfastly disagrees (1999, p. 151). He specifically cites Phelan, stating that she, 'valorizes the unreliability of spectatorial memory because it gives rise to unrecuperably subjective versions of performance that are faithful to performance's ontology of disappearance' (1999, p. 151). Auslander disagrees with the validity of this statement, instead preferring to align himself with Derrida's suggestion that the recording of an event in memory is actually a form of reproduction, 'In order to escape regulation and the economy of reproduction, performance must not only disappear, it must also be excluded from memory' (1999, p. 156).

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Auslander argues against Phelan’s placing of live and mediated in a ‘life and death’ struggle where ‘virtuous’ live performance is menaced by ‘evil’ mediatization, and yet, in a sense he does the same thing from the outset. It is this oppositional stance, placing live and mediated as rivals with mediated as already declared as the victor, against which I argue in this chapter, and which I posit is not proved by Auslander’s own argument. Auslander positions a quote from the British performance company Forced Entertainment at the very start of Liveness:

Why would you make live work in an age of mass communication? Why work in more or less the only field which still insists on presence? For artists interested in ‘the contemporary’ this area of live performance seems like a bit of a backwater. Do you have something against mass-reproduction? Do you work from some quaint notion about immediacy and real presence? I don’t know - Answer the question (Forced Entertainment as cited in Auslander, 1999).

Positioned as some sort of preface to Liveness, this citation could be perceived as a framing of Auslander’s thesis. Yet on close analysis, it refutes much of what he argues. Rather than citing academics or philosophers Auslander cites artists, and what is more he cites artists who have made their career and name working in a live forum, presenting a crossbreed of experimental theatre and performance art. Forced Entertainment has managed to sustain this live practice since 1984, maintaining a dynamic, international and funded performance career - no mean feat when one considers the state of funding for the arts, particularly with the cut-backs of the late 1980’s and 1990’s. The statement Auslander
quotes appeared in *The Journal of Performance Research* in 1996, at which point the company had already been in existence for some 12 years. I would argue that the fact that the company was still asking that question about the 'live' emphasis of their work – taking a critical stance - goes some way toward explaining their success. Forced Entertainment still pursues their live performance work, despite describing live practice as a possible 'backwater'. However, their work has begun to 'live' in other environs and formats as well. For instance, they create online cities and interactive environments on CD-ROM and websites - they create parallel universes to their theatre work, as well as making film and video work. Engaging with new digital technologies has enabled them to present differing aspects of their performative work in alternative 'venues', intertwining the capabilities of new media with human, sensory elements, while continuing with their live practice.

A further line of questioning raised by the inclusion of the Forced Entertainment quote at the start of *Liveness*, is how much is this book an attempt to answer the question which Forced Entertainment raises? Does the book instead claim, rather, to have covered all questions and provided the definitive answer(s), which (re)set the paradigm for discussion of live performance? Complicit with this is an appraisal of how Auslander provides answers to the question(s) raised. Although within his thesis he argues that the prioritisation of mediatization over live performance is engendered in part by the effect of mediatization on the culture of capital, he cites no survey or paradigm of supply and demand in terms of
audience numbers and interest in live performance. Auslander does cite his own experience as an audience member at performances which are both live and mediated, to offer an example of the draw of the screens, the attraction of mediatization. However, he only focuses on the fact his attention was drawn to the screen, rather than any overarching experience engendered by the production as a whole.

Why make live work in an age of mass communication? Why work in more or less the only field which still insists on presence? Random Acts of Memory (1998) was an attempt to 'answer the question(s)'.

Random Acts of Memory - Live And Mediated

The will to mastery becomes all the more urgent the more technology threatens to slip from human control (Heidegger, 1997, p. 5).

In her book, Clicking in: Hot Links to a Digital Culture, Lynn Hershman-Leeson writes that:

The RAMifications of the Digital Age are enormous. Presumptions about communities, identity, property, physicality, art, science, and values are being digitally rewritten. A symbiotic relationship to technology exists. It defines culture as culture defines it (Lynn Hershman Leeson, 1996, p. ix).

In Random Acts of Memory, the title itself, a theatrical play on the acronym RAM (Random Access Memory), simultaneously juxtaposed and intertwined the live and the mediated from the outset. Through a
performative exploration of the co-evolutionary process of the memory of
the body and the memory of the machine, the aim in making Random Acts
of Memory was to create a cross-fertilization of live and mediated that was
mutually complimentary. As Lois Keidan, Live Art director for the
Institute of Contemporary Arts noted, at the outset of the ICA’s 1996
Totally Wired season:

Some of the slogans of the zeitgeist claim the body as obsolete in
the light of accelerated developments in technology and scientific
practice. Others claim that the body, with its blood, sweat, tears
and as a signifier of gender, race, class and sexuality, is the only
‘reality’: the only place where diversity can exist in a dehumanized,
remote and virtual world (Keidan in Armstrong, 1996, p. 4).

The stage environment created in Random Acts of Memory reflects this
‘remote and virtual’ world as the performers seem almost under house
arrest in their state-of-the-art cyber sitting room. There is no door,
cameras and screens are the only portals, there is no way out. Even the
large window is revealed to be another screen when the Venetian blinds
are opened. There is an austere, minimalism to the set, with its custom
made brushed steel desk and chaise longue and sleek glass side tables and
bar-cart. A television screen flickers, camouflaged in a silver oval picture
frame, positioned at eye level on a cream wall. It plays continuously,
interlacing 3-D animation of synaptic functions in the brain with 1940’s
Technicolor footage of Esther Williams, so that synaptic nerves dissolve
into scores of smiling synchronized swimmers. The Venetian blinds open
and close like mechanized billboards, revealing glimpses, not of a world

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beyond the window, but of pre-recorded real life and unleashed tension, as the performers ferociously wrestle with each other. This footage is interspersed with live feed of the performance as the performers take turns at recording each other on a digital video camera, set in a prime vantage point usually reserved for the ubiquitous television set, in a 'normal' sitting room. In a high-tech/low-tech confluence the live feed of the performance jump cuts into pre-recorded digital video, which fades into black and white analogue super 8 film footage, itself edited digitally. The performers relate to the cameras and screens but rarely with one another. The anxiety caused by usurped identities, is edited out in the live version. The performers test their memory, claim each other’s memories as their own and then forget what they were going to say next.

At the start of the performance the performers sit side by side, discretely copying the movements of the audience members as they take their seats. Dressed alike, in tailored muted blue suits, black shoes, each sporting a slicked back short hair cut, they are virtually clones of each other. They recount personal memories, which are then recorded and replayed. Oftentimes it becomes revealed that the memories they recount are not actually their own, but copied, appropriated from each other. Frustrations caused by the constant usurpation of each others’ memories is depicted by pre-recorded video footage of the two performers in a head-to-head-wrestling scene. However, despite their similarity of appearance and gesture, the performers rarely interact with each other in the live performance. They do interact with life-size digital clones of themselves.
which, isolated through chroma-key shooting, free themselves of the traditional boundaries of the screen not only through isolation, but also through a new technology of 360-degree axis interactive projection, known as ARVID (Autonomous Remote Video Imaging Device). The clones travel through the performance world speaking only copied words from The Culture of the Copy. The challenge for the live performers in Random Acts of Memory is to try to match the seeming infallibility of their free-floating digital counterparts, their perfect states of being. The performers struggle, forget their lines, grow tense - whereas the clones are word perfect, immaculate, poised. As the performance progresses it seems as if the mediatised world will take over. In a climactic moment of download overload, six Dolly Parton heads are projected into the space which then morph, unnervingly almost imperceptibly, into six ‘Dolly’ the clone sheep heads. It seems for a moment as if the live performers have been surpassed, engulfed by a mediatized world. It is at this point that the live performers exert their own unique capabilities. ‘Cut the power’, shouts one of the performers, and with a simple toss of a switch, video and film screens flicker and die, Dollies and clones vanish and the live performers, lit by a series of solitary matches, remain. The performers speak fragments of text, stopping abruptly when the flame flickers and dies, recommencing only when a new match is struck. The contrast from the high-tech visuals of before, to this simple, elemental setting that follows is stark and powerful.
When the power finally comes back on it is to project stilting Super8 film footage shot in Paris. The shots each contain the element of water, running down gutters; spurting through the mouths of stone lions, dripping through the keyhole of a large wooden door, bubbling from the mouths of dying crabs in a market stall. Silhouetted against the projection, Hill tells the Greek myth of Mnemoseyne, the Goddess of remembrance for whom water carries the memories of humankind. At the end of the speech, the screen plays static, Hill draws the blind and the performers leave the stage.

What are the factors in combining live performance with integrated media that challenge our assumptions about reality? Is it possible to invent relationships between live and synthetic personifications to create a third dimension of the performance experience? RAM featured live action in one moment; a parallel mediated version in the next, and/or ‘clones’ of the actors as synthetic characters sharing the performance space together. Personal life stories were laced with large doses of intellectual ‘wisdom’ and physical action that assaulted the audience in visceral terms, inducing multiple levels of meaning (Loveless, 1999, pp. 76-77).

(Re)Confirming the Conventions – An Ontology of the Olfactory

According to Auslander:

One of the main conventional explanations advanced for the continued appeal of live performance is that it offers a fuller sensory experience than mediatized performances. Whereas mediatized representations appeal primarily to the visual and auditory senses, live performances engage all the senses, including the olfactory, tactile, somatic, and kinesthetic (Auslander, 1999, p. 55).

Auslander passes swiftly over this area, going on without elucidation or example to conclude:
I would argue that this is not the case, that these other senses are engaged by mediatized performances. It certainly can be the case that live performance engages in the senses differently than mediatized representations, but a difference in kind is not the same thing as a difference in magnitude of sensory experience (Auslander, 1999, p. 55).

As a performer I posit that the 'difference' Auslander mentions does in fact have a substantial effect on the magnitude of sensual experience proffered in live performance. The sense of smell is a case in point.

The human sense of smell, linked to the cognitive centers in the brain, is a powerful evocation of memory, 'Smell may be to emotion what sight or hearing is to cognition' (Engen, 1991, p. 3). In Smell: the Secret Seducer, Peit Vroom writes that there are reasons to assume that a child's first sensation is in the sphere of smell, 'We begin our life, as it were, not by seeing the light of day, but by smelling a kind of 'Life smell' diffused in the fluid of the womb' (1997, p. 21). In terms of the technology/performance relationship, smell is as yet unique to the live presence/performance/audience dynamic. Technology has not found a meaningful way to (re)create smell. It is the emotive impact of smell that I am most interested in exploring particularly with respect to its impact when used in live performance. 'The perception of smell, thus consists not only of the sensation of the odours themselves, but of the experiences and emotions associated with them' (Classen et al, 1995, p. 2). Smells can be highly evocative, conjuring up the vivid memory of associated events and places,
even from remote childhood. In *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell*, Classen et al argue that:

Smells can evoke strong emotional responses. A scent associated with a good experience can bring a rush of joy. A foul odour or one associated with a bad memory may make us grimace with disgust. Respondents (to a survey) noted that many of their likes and dislikes were based on emotional associations. Such associations can be powerful enough to make odours that would generally be labeled unpleasant agreeable, and those that would generally be considered fragrant disagreeable for particular individuals (Classen et al, 1995, p. 2).

In *The Foul and The Fragrant*, Alain Corbin states that, 'As the sense of affective behavior and its secrets...the sense of smell was viewed as capable of shaking man's inner life more profoundly than were the senses of hearing or of sight' (1994, p. 8). Piet Vroon writes that:

When people are asked what sense they would be prepared to do without if necessary, smell comes at the top of the list and sight at the bottom. This is a debatable choice, given that smell plays a significant part in many psychic processes and behaviors patterns. Smell is essential for the operation of the sense of taste; it affects one's sex life, motivation and memory processes (including learning, health and feelings of security and well-being); and it has an alarm function in life-threatening situations (Vroon, 1997, p. 4).

It is of little surprise then that the world of theatre was quick to realize the emotive power smell could have on an audience. Corbin cites that toward the end of the eighteenth century, 'the sense of smell did form part of the sensual palette available to the artist who wanted to vary the production of sensations and feelings. Perfume could help to perfect a strategy of emotional satisfaction' (1994, p. 80). By Mid-Nineteenth Century, 'Whiffs of perfume scented the stage for English fairy plays,' and
in 1858 the perfumes of Charles Frederick Worth, ‘gave new impetus to the stage set of the boudoir’ (1994, p. 98).  

Alan Read asks why, in his view, ‘the nose is being downgraded.’ For Read, the demise of the olfactory coincides with the post-industrial period, ‘the collapse of the olfactory is synonymous with the collapse of the old factory’ (1993, p. 119). For Read it is important to, ‘Register an inevitable loss which will bring with it the loss of an inducement to memory, a loss that will join other forgettings in a city of amnesia, where a theatre will simply become a memory chamber’ (1993, p. 20). Read points out how the olfactory can be seen to find its most ‘natural’ placing in the world of live performance:

The introduction of smell into the cinema in the form of ‘scratch and sniff’ cards...like the short life of the Sensurround film, these became distractions fraught with miscalculation of the ‘users’ of the art form. On the contrary, those whose work in theatre derives most deeply from everyday life are intuitively able to confront the everyday’s most meaningful odours. The miasma that hung over the turf of Pina Bausch’s 1980 encompassed dancers and audience in a canopy of nostalgia and unease, and from the epic to the domestic, the smells of Bobby Baker’s Kitchen Show were a reminder that this was a workplace as well as, for the moment, a play space (Read, 1993, p. 121).

I will further explore how smell is appropriated into live performance by specific reference to the deliberate use of the olfactory in Random Acts of Memory.

Smell in Random Acts of Memory
I want to start this analysis of the relationship of live and mediated performance where the performance of *Random Acts of Memory* starts, namely with the sense of smell. In *Random Acts Of Memory* smell is the first real presence in the auditorium. The auditorium is filled with the intermingling scents of licorice and pumpkin, into which the audience enter. Pumpkin has been found in scientific research to be a smell which arouses men, for women the smell is licorice. Licorice sweets are handed to all the female audience members as they enter the theatre space. Pumpkin pie has been cooked in the auditorium prior to the show starting and pumpkin spice scattered underneath the chairs. Amelia Jones describes Maureen Conner’s 1991 piece entitled, *The Senses* as probing:

> The unlocatable limit between the body and the world that Merleau Ponty explored as flesh of the world, marking this flesh as specifically (but not inherently) gendered and its embodied experience as always highly charged, sexual, and - by definition – intersubjective (Jones, 1998, p. 210).

In addition to the smells that greet the audience as they enter the theatre space, a sound recording of a Radio 4 program loops quietly in the background on the subject of smell. Within the aroma-filled auditorium the performance has already begun. Helen picks up an antimacassar and inhales the lingering odor of the cloth. Part of the cloth has been worn away and Helen starts to speak through the worn bit in the antimacassar. Suddenly Helen’s memory becomes clear, obviously triggered by the smell from the material. The sound of football score results fades in, and
drones in the background as she is transported by the memory back to its site, a moment in her childhood:

**Helen:** This smells just like my grandparents house. My grandmother had these antimacassars on the back of all the armchairs. Their whole house smelt like their chairs. You could bury your face in those armchairs – deep in the crevices between the arm and the seat and smell the whole house. We went there every Sunday. There were wooden bowls of toffee on the table and football all afternoon.

‘West Bromwich Albion: 1 Manchester United: Nil
Bristol Rovers: 2 Liverpool: 1’

This was on my grandfather’s chair - you can see where my grandfather’s head wore away the material. He sat in the chair to the right of the fireplace as you came in. He died in that chair. The cat from next door was still asleep on his lap. He was wearing his blue and white striped apron still on from cooking the dinner. It was New Years eve. I found him. I came in to see if he wanted to go for a drink. ‘Granddad, do you want to go for a drink? He was dead in the chair.

‘Crystal Palace: 1 Queens Park Rangers: 1
White Hart Lane - Huddersfield: Match postponed’

Thus, in a sense it can be seen that smell activates the performance as it stimulates the performer to speak. According to Vroon:

Sometimes the sense of smell can function as a kind of ‘starter motor’ that evokes all kinds of apparently forgotten experiences and events from the past, even though sometimes one cannot name or describe the smell concerned more precisely. This mechanism is called state-dependent retrieval (Vroon, 1997, p. 103).

The sound effect of the football scores in the background emphasizes that the performer has been transported back to the time she speaks of, and because the audience hear it too, so have they. The memories released in the piece are central to the ontology the performance itself. In a sense the
rest of the performance of Random Acts of Memory can be seen to have been triggered by smell, plunging performers and audiences into an environment where smell serves as a strong, emotive evoker of memory stories, providing the performers with segues and transitions between the action as smells they remember or sense on the set jog their memories.

The whole notion of authenticity engendered by real olfactory encounter is a recurrent them within Random Acts of Memory, where at one moment true stories, triggered by real circumstances, are related, and in the next moment lie about the truth or even ownership of those stories. For example, the story about the death of the grandfather was evoked by placing the antimacassar over my face at one point of the rehearsal process - the smell of the fabric did indeed actually trigger the memory of my grandfather. Although the story about the Grandfather is authentic in that it was literally triggered by the smell on the antimacassar, in the performance some details of the story are not exactly true, which the audience discover when he story is repeated:

Leslie: Could you repeat that story about your grandfather, but this time cheat your face towards the camera a little?

Helen: ...This was on my grandfather's chair - you can see where my grandfather's head wore away the material. He sat in the chair to the right of the fireplace as you came in. He died in that chair. The cat from next door was still asleep on his lap. He was wearing his blue and white striped apron still on from cooking the dinner. It was New Years eve.. Uncle Michael and cousin David found him they came in to see if he wanted to go for a drink. 'I know I said before that it was me that found him, but it wasn't. It wasn't me. It was in fact my Uncle Michael and cousin David. So I don't know
why I said that. It's just that sometimes I see it that way. Sometimes I remember it like that.

Helen willingly repeats the story, word for word until she comes to the ending which is now different. The audience half listen as the speech about the performer's Grandfather is repeated. As it is already part of their own 'performance memory' and they assume they know what is coming, and are, therefore, caught out when they instantly pick up on the change in the second version. In this moment the audience experience their own memory process.

An intermingling of stories happens through out Random Acts of Memory which coincides with the intermingling of smells. The smells are always authentic and the stories true, however the ownership of the stories, of the memories, is questionable. For example, after telling the story about her own dead grandfather Helen gets up form the chaise longue and goes over to the bar cart. Picking up a shaving lotion bottle that was on the 'memory game' tray she unscrews it, inhales deeply. She then proceeds to claim a story about Leslie's grandfather as if it is her own, and the audience are momentarily tricked.

Helen picks up shaving lotion bottle. Frozen image cuts to live feed of Helen at bar cart.

Helen: When my grandfather died, he left me his shaving lotion bottle collection. Which was odd, really. Considering that he had eight grandsons. I suppose it was because the shaving lotion came in bottles shaped like cars and when I was little I used to love playing with them on the carpet.
Leslie crosses to cart and takes bottle from Helen while video source switches from live feed to prerecorded section: Leslie standing in front of bar cart saying, 'When my grandfather died, he left me his shaving lotion bottle collection. Which was odd, really. Considering that he had eight grandsons. I suppose it was because the shaving lotion came in bottles shaped like cars and when I was little I used to love playing with them on the carpet.' Source switch back to live feed, Helen at bar cart, heads and shoulders.

Next, Helen begins telling a story evoked by smell as if it has jogged her memory. It becomes apparent, however, that she can only remember the story as long as the smell is present for her and thus tells it on long intakes of breath. As Helen inhales, Leslie dabs her grandfather's shaving lotion onto the antimacassar, which has previously been associated with the smell of Helen's grandfather, as if erasing Helen's olfactory memory in order to replace it with her own. Simultaneously, timed with Helen's inhalations Leslie pours the shaving lotion onto the antimacassar, and as Helen relates the stories triggered a series of different smells that she senses in the atmosphere around her, Leslie polishes the smell of the shaving lotion meticulously into the surface of a curved metal table:

Helen: Breath. The thing with smell is that you remember the whole smell - not like half remembering a face that was definitely the pantry I can feel the light coming in the tiny side window and the biscuits kept in the yellow and blue Tupperware boxes so all you can smell is the Tupperware and all you can taste is the Tupperware. Breath. There is this man who works on an exhibition called the London Experience and he has to create the smell of London in the old days that was father's suede jacket smoke city air leather and him coming home every Friday in his dark suit with sweets in his brown leather briefcase. Lime chocolates for my sister and black licorice for me. Breath. So that is his job and it's not just the smell of food and street fumes that he recreates he even does the great plague apparently a dead pig smells just like a human.
corpse that was the building we used to have history in it took me ages to realize that was the smell of a damp building rather than the smell of history or the smell of the history teacher. Breath. Once a week a group of old people come to the exhibition on a trip down memory lane as he takes them past recreations of old fireplaces and the smell of the blacking reminds them of their mothers there is a smell that has always scared me I don't even know why I don't know what it is I can't define it but sometimes without warning I can suddenly smell it. Breath. The smell of Brilliantine reminds them of fast boys or was it more that the boys who wore that had reached the age when they were interested in girls and then they wonder what came first the hair wax or the sex and then they all go back home the smell that most excites men is pumpkin pie whereas women respond more readily to licorice...

The duration of the story she is telling literally depends on breathing in the smells which trigger her memories. Read states that the 'Olfactory is an intelligence of survival'. He is referring to the fact that the sense of smell gives warning against danger, disease; it can alert us to the proximity of friend or foe (1993, p. 123). Here the survival mechanism is needed in this world usurped by machines, by mediation, by simulacra.

Vroom writes that:

A person who lost his sense of smell was amazed by how much he lost. 'Sense of smell,' he said. 'I never gave it a thought. You don't normally give it a thought. But when I lost it — it was like being struck blind... . You smell people, you smell the city, you smell the spring — maybe not consciously, but as a rich unconscious background to everything else. My world was suddenly radically poorer' (Vroom, 1997, p. 168).

In terms of memory not only is the ability of smell to trigger memories made clear within Random Acts Of Memory but the very function of synaptic impulses within the brain are included within the text. In Random...
Acts of Memory a direct connection is made between these areas of smell, the brain and memory. Pouring the shaving lotion on to the antimacassar Leslie rubs the smell, the memory, the presence of her grandfather into the silver chrome table, as if enervating the chilly metal techno environment. When she has covered the entire surface, she lights a cigar, inhales and then slowly exhales a fog of smoke over the table three or four times until the smoke has touched the entire surface. The cigar smoke and the aftershave evoke personal memories of her grandfather which are interwoven with comments on RAM and synaptic memory, as if all share a homogenous relationship:

Leslie: One cell, one memory may not be exactly the way things work, but it seems to be the first way that people think about the problem of locating memories in cells. Even if you aren't familiar with how computers store data, the take home message of most introductions to the brain is that there are pigeon-hole memories - highly specialized inter-neurons, the firing of which might constitute an item's memory evocation. On the perceptual side of neurophysiology, we call it the grandmother's face cell (a neuron that may fire only once a year, at Christmas dinner.) Obviously, my father has many more memories of my grandfather than I do and I've come to realize that this is the reason I liked my grandfather better. Recall, of course, is not the same thing as recognition, and my grandfather never gave my father the recognition he deserved. No present technology provides an analogy to help us think about the problem of associative memory and distortion. He never forgave him, but he was holding his hand when he died.

The personal, emotive and poignant memories triggered by the smell of the aftershave are intertwined seamlessly with ideas surrounding the memory of the machine and with precise descriptions of what is happening in the brain at the very moment of remembering and telling.
the stories (similar to when the audience in a sense experienced their own memory process as Helen repeated the story of her Grandfather). Here, at the very moment when the performer is saying these lines, her brain is following out the functions of which she speaks, all the time her outside presence is being 'remembered' recorded, and projected by the camera.

The seamless interflow between smell, the synaptic functions in the brain and memory is expounded by Engen when he states that, ‘Regarding the notion that perception of odor is closely tied to emotion, neurological evidence indicates that the right temporal lobe is more important to short-term recognition memory of odors than is the left lobe (1991, p. 109). He states that:

The neurological impulses in the olfactory system seem to have a more direct route from the receptors to the brain. They have direct access to the limbic system and then to the cerebral hemispheres. Olfactory information may therefore be processed more quickly and with less editing than visual and auditory information. Odor memory may last longer because of a larger number of connections to different parts of the brain that may make possible more associations (Engen, 1991, p. 109).

In Random Acts of Memory smell is used to trigger thought and memory throughout and in a sense highlights the moments when the performers interact on their most honest, personal level. Certainly smell engenders deeper and more emotive reactions in the performers that the plethora of audio and visual stimuli which surround them.

Shared Ontologies: Smell and Performance
As argued above, a direct connection can be made with the synaptic function of the brain and odour memory. I want to compare this with Phelan’s descriptions of the ontology of live performance and her thesis that performance is recordable only within the memory. As previously mentioned, not only is smell a distinct, and an emotive dynamic, unique to live work, it is actually like performance because of its ephemeral, unrecordable nature. For example, Alan Read states that, ‘it is frankly difficult to deal with, notoriously hard to pin down, and of interest only to an analysis which begins from the everyday realm in which it plays such as important yet unthought part’ (1993, p. 121). This statement refers to the olfactory and yet could so easily be viewed as describing performance, for instance when compared with Phelan’s statement that, ‘Without a copy, live performance plunges into visibility – and disappears into memory, into the realm of invisibility and the unconscious where it eludes regulation and control’ (1993, p. 148). I wish to further explore Phelan’s statement by comparing the ontology of performance to that of smell.

In Aroma, The Cultural History of Smell, the authors state that odours cannot be recorded, ‘There is no effective way of either capturing scents or storing them over time. In the realm of olfaction, we must make do with descriptions and recollections’ (1995, p. 3). The mortality and ephemerality of smell is emphasized at the end of Random Acts of Memory, when the electricity has been switched off and the performers are only illuminated each by the flame form a match. Leslie refers back to the bottles of shaving cologne bequeathed to her by her Grandfather, stating
that, 'The devastating thing about my inheritance is that it smells like him, but it doesn't smell of him.'

Similarly, as the authors of *Aroma* state, 'Smell, like taste, is a sensation of the moment, it cannot be preserved. We do not know what the past smelled like, and in the future our own odour will be lost.' (1995, p. 204).

I want to compare this notion that smell cannot be preserved with Phelan's definition of the unmarked, ephemeral and undocumentable nature of performance:

Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representation of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology (Phelan, 1993, p. 46).

Phelan's statement, one of the most frequently cited within academic and artistic fields, and certainly one of the statements that seems to be most problematic for Auslander, is comparable to the statement about the impermanence of smell (as cited above). Both reflect an intangibility, an ungraspability which defines their very nature. The 'unpindownable', elusive nature of performance is similar to the indescribable nature of smell. Vroon writes that:

Our terminology for describing smells is generally meager or inadequate, due to our neural architecture. The parts of the brain that are closely involved in the use of language have few direct links with the olfactory system. Because consciousness and the use
of language are closely connected, it is understandable why olfactory information plays a part mainly on an unconscious level (Vroon, 1997, pp. 110-111).

Similarly, Alan Read states that:

> What reaches us through the nose is a knowledge, not drawn from the encyclopaedic tradition but a doxa, a wisdom, that belies the splitting of the mental and the material...what could be a more distinct individual yet profoundly social interface with the world than that conducted through the chemical senses? (Read, 1993, p. 124).

This statement echoes Phelan when she claims that, 'Having no particular home, no boundaries dictated by genre, the unmarked can be mapped across a wide terrain...Poised forever at the threshold of the present, performance enacts the productive appeal of the nonreproductive' (1993, p. 27). Similarly, a comparison can be drawn to the statement that, 'smells resist containment in discrete units, whether physical or linguistic; they cross boundary lines.' (Classen et al, 1995, p. 204). Just as live performance cannot be captured and reproduced, even in writing, without the documentation changing it, so smell and the memories it evokes are of the moment, as Engen states, 'Time seems to play no role in odour memory' (1991, p. 107). In tandem with this is Phelan’s belief that, 'without a copy, like performance plunges into visibility – in a maniacally charged present – and disappears into memory, into the realm of invisibility and the unconscious where it eludes regulation and control. (1993, p. 148). Smells can be ‘remembered’ long after the initial sensation has been experienced and recalled, spontaneously, years later,. Like performance, smell can live
on in the memory, unlocking a personal history; ‘lieux de mémoire’. I define this phenomenon as ‘body memory’, locating it directly within the totality body.\(^{22}\)

**Artifical Olfaction**

The notion of the intermingling of truth and falsehoods, of real smells in a mediated environment, leads me to another area concerning smell and its comparable relationship to live and mediated performance, namely synthetic or artificial smells. ‘Today’s synthetic scents...are evocative if things which are not there, of presence’s which are absent: we have floral-scented perfumes which were never exhaled by a flower, fruit-flavored drinks with not a drop of fruit juice in them’ (Classen et al,1995, p. 205). The ability to reproduce smells synthetically, even though they may bear little or no resemblance to the actual smell they are attempting to replicate - certainly they do not necessarily contain any of the essence or tincture of the actual smell - is interesting to analogise in reflection to mediatisation in terms of performance. For Auslander, ‘in terms of the cultural economy the live actors are only pale reflections of the mediatised representations that dominate the cultural landscape (1999, p. 37). Synthetic smell is certainly at the heart of the commercial and economic market. Can mediated performance be said to be like the smell which has been ‘artificially created?’ \(^{23}\) In *Aroma, The Cultural History of Smell*, Classen et al cite Baudrillard in reference to artificial smells and flavors stating that, ‘the world has come to be, “completely catalogued and analyzed and then artificially revived as though real.”’ In the same way artificial flavors are
created 'by the synthetic reproduction of individual flavor notes present in the original' (1995, p. 204). This description certainly seems to comply with Baudrillard’s claim that, ‘The real is produced from miniaturised units...and with these it can be reproduced an indefinite number of times’ (as cited by Classen et al, 1995, p. 204). Similarly, this idea about the synthetic reproduction of smells, can be seen as complicit with Walter Benjamin's description of photographic reproduction: 'From a photographic negative...one can make any number of prints; to ask for the 'authentic' print makes no sense' (as cited in Auslander, 1999, p. 50). For Benjamin authenticity and presence are bound up in 'aura,' which he defines using the example of nature, stating that aura is based on:

The desire of contemporary masses to bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly which is just as ardent as their bent toward overcoming the uniqueness of every reality by accepting its reproduction. Every day the urge grows stronger to get hold of an object at very close range by way of its likeness, its reproduction (Benjamin, 1968, p. 223).

Does odour/odor/aroma, however one writes it, produce aura? Does the object pried from its shell its aura destroyed loose its smell, which gave it a sense of self, of place, of identity? Does odour, like aura work best at a distance? ‘The best place to smell perfume is at a distance from its owner’ (Read, 1993, p. 122).

In Aroma, The Cultural History of Smell, Classen et al include at the end a section which is entitled, ‘Smell: The Postmodern Sense?’ Therein they state that:
In our postmodern world smell is often a notable absence. Odours are suppressed in public places, there are no smells on television, the world of computers is odour free, and so on. This olfactory 'silence' notwithstanding, smell would seem to share many of the traits commonly attributed to postmodernity. The past irrelevant, the future uncertain, postmodernity is a culture of 'now', a pastiche of styles and genres which exists in an eternal resent. Postmodernity is also a culture of imitations and simulations, where copies predominate over originals and images over substance (Classen et al, 1995, p. 203).

All these notions of smell can be applied directly to the performance of Random Acts of Memory. In terms of the proposition that in postmodern culture 'copies predominate over originals', it is interesting to note that the experience of performing with technology oftentimes left Leslie Hill and myself, as performers in Random Acts of Memory, feeling all the more messy, uncontrolled; we became the unprogrammed element of our media performance, particularly in terms of the clones. One of the reasons that we made the decision to include this smell/breath session, cited above, was to emphasise this visceral, physical presence, thereby asserting control through emphasising the 'unprogrammable, uncontrollable elements. For example, the visceral energy of the performer as she performs the smell/breath text, each smell only allowing her one breath, is juxtaposed with the cold, chrome set, the steely surveillance of the digital camera, and ARVID's computer presence glowing green, rotating slowly above the heads of the audience. The performer forces the ends of the sentences out from the last breath left in her lungs; the sound coming from deep inside, uncontrolled, jagged, rasping, in direct contrast to her controlled, static post-modern environment.
Will smell, seduced by an endless procession of olfactory simulacra, succumb to its postmodern life, or will it – ever elusive – transcend its postmodern categorizations to remind us of our organic nature and even hint at a realm of the spirit (Classen et al, 1995, p. 205).

As the audience leave the theatre the smell, the odour, the aura remains, intangible, in the air.

The Memory of the Machine and the Culture of the Copy

In Walter Benjamin's influential essay, 'The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction' he makes his seminal statement that:

Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence (Benjamin, 1968, p. 220).

For Benjamin, 'The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity' (Benjamin, 1968, p. 220). He cites the 'aura' of an object and argues that it is this unique and individual aura which is lost in the process of reproducing the art work:

That which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art. This is a symptomatic process whose significance points beyond the realm of art. One might generalize by saying: the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. By making many reproductions it substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence (Benjamin, 1968, p. 221).
I want to examine this concept in the light of some of the questions it has raised for performance studies in general, and also in terms of *Random Acts of Memory*, with particular reference to our chosen strategy of using cloned images of the ourselves, (the performers). Within the piece, the clones, light-based replications of the 'original's' – the art(ists) were created very much as a reaction to the increasing interest in DNA copying and genetic engineering. In a recent article in *The New York Times Magazine* entitled, 'Clone Of Silence', Margaret Talbot writes that in many ways, the idea of cloning has become increasingly normalised. She asks, 'How did replicating humans mutate form sci-fi nightmare to sentimental dream' even though only a few years previously, the cloning of Dolly the sheep evoked strong reactions:

Remember how it was just three years ago? In February 1997, when scientists in Edinburgh unveiled Dolly, a cloned sheep, the whole idea of cloning mammals – and the path it seemed to open to the cloning of humans – struck countless observers as a hideous portent of science out of control (Talbot, *The New York Times Magazine*, 16th April, 2000, p. 21).

The decision to create and use clones of ourselves was also a response to Benjamin's concept of aura and loss of aura as incurred by reproduction and how this viewpoint is interpreted by those involved in writing about, making and performing in live and mediated performance. I would posit that in terms of live performance any notion of aura is based on the same-time-same-space dynamic shared between performer and spectator, heightened by the involvement of the senses and the contact and
communication possible in the live moment between performance and audience member. For Mary Kelly, 'Benjamin's 'aura' may wither away in the age of mechanical reproduction but authenticity remains. What is made more explicit, more transparent, by the so-called dematerialisation of the object, is that the production of authenticity requires more than an author for the object; it exacts the 'truth' of the authorial discourse' (1997, p. 92). (Kelly's italics).

In the Stanford Drama Electronic Forum online debate, entitled: 'Presence and Absence: The 'real' and the Telepresent,'26 Charles R. Lyons from the Department of Drama at Stanford University starts the discussion by questioning the notion of aura. He initiates his argument with the statement that much of both theoretical and practical work has been based on a notion of the aesthetic power of the phenomenon of the live performer, within same-time-same space dynamic shared with an audience. Such is the power of this aura that, despite incorporating various media into performance the presence of the performer is privileged. Lyons goes on to question whether:

If present to us through a combination of media and physical experience, what 'special' significance, if any does that physical presence constitute? Should we continue to celebrate the phenomenon of the actor performing before us at a time when other media offer more flexible ways of revealing the constructedness of human images and can offer keener instruments with which to challenge the processes of representation? (Lyons, Stanford Drama Electronic Forum, 1999).
I would counter Lyons description of media offering "more flexible" forms of presentation than physical presence. Like Auslander, Lyons positions mediated and live against each other, which to my mind limits the individual capabilities unique to both. Technology, old and new, offers other representations and ways of representing, but when seen as a more flexible alternative, prioritized over the live presence, the value of live work is undermined. As Stephen Weeks, who counters Lyons argument states, 'When the human figure loses its aura as it enters into the realm of the reproducible, the stage loses its ability to signify the materiality of the past.'

In, *The Culture of the Copy*, Hillel Schwartz argues against Benjamin's notion of aura. For Schwartz it is not the aura that is lost when a work of art is reproduced but rather the guarantee of our own liveness: 'What withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is not the aura, the Happen-Stance, of works of art but the assurance of our own Liveness. (1996, p. 141). According to Schwartz:

We look misguidedly to our creations to find our animation and learn our fortune. Only in a culture of the copy do we assign such motive force to the Original. What we intend by 'Original' these days is that which speaks to us in an unmediated way, an experience we seem to believe we have lost between ourselves, human to human (Schwartz, 1996, p. 141).
Using examples of copying and reproduction as manifested by the clones in *Random Acts of Memory* I want to explore the notion of aura as it relates to the live performer. I shall explore how, within the performance issues and images concerning reproduction and depletion of the original are exaggerated in order, ultimately to reassert the role of live presence.\(^7\)

Schwartz identifies the moment of conception as the point at which we enter the culture of the copy:

Acts and images of doubling start here, at the root of our lives: our flesh, our blood, our coming to be. In an epoch proud of instant copiers but perturbed by errant copies, delighted with lightweight artificial limbs but disturbed by the likelihood of clones, biology itself is invested with the rich ambivalence of myth. The stories we tell about our bodies, under the sign of the double helix, are as generative as they are genetic; we are said to begin, literally and originally, by making copies of our cells. (Schwartz, 1996, p. 19).

In *Random Acts of Memory* we (Hill and Paris: authors and performers) offer live, mediated and hybrid twinnings as two performers who emphasise their natural similarities and become theatrical ‘clones’ of each other – moving together, telling the same stories, dressing alike while behind us life-sized duplications, projection clones move through the space. When mirror reflections live side by side which is the original in the cult of the copy?\(^8\) Baudrillard notes that:

All reproduction implies...a kind of black magic, from the fact of being seduced by one’s own image in the water, like Narcissus, to being haunted by the double and, who knows, to the mortal turning back of this vast technical apparatus secreted today by man
as his own image (the narcissistic mirage of technique, McLuhan) and that returns to him, cancelled and distorted – endless reproduction of himself and his power to the limits of the world (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 153).

Their argument offers an interesting connection with some of the ideas expressed in Chapter One, with regard to the performance of *Vena Amoris* when the reflected face of performer and audience are caught, layered over each other in the glass of the two-way mirror. What is it that exists in this glass space between the two faces? The reflection of the cyborg other? The avatar? The self? The audience? The performer. What happens with glass and electricity? What is produced and reproduced?

There is a deliberate referencing of neurology alongside technological systems within the performance. This reflects an ongoing area of theoretical discussion within the field of performance studies. For example, Arthur Sabatini, in his essay, 'Discourses of Art, Technology, and Aesthetic research: On a multiplicity of discourse', (an essay which references the performance of *Random Acts of Memory* as a case in point) states that:

I want to consider technology and aesthetic performance in reference to the brain and current research on human neurophysiology, cognition and consciousness. The question I want to ask is this: what is the relationship between the types of cognition involved in learning and experiencing of aesthetic performance and cognitive processes involved when individuals interact with advanced technological tools or systems.’ (Arthur Sabatini, 1998, p. 5.).
In *Random Acts of Memory*, deliberate and conscious comparisons are made between human and machine memory and capabilities. For example, Leslie ‘forgets’ her words while reciting personal memories:

Leslie: Less than a week before... Leslie forgets words; Helen prompts her...Less than a week before I had been sitting on my Grandfather’s red leather footstool next to him. She goes and gets script, reads surreptitiously throughout this section. He was watching a program about Polar Bears: the Loneliest Creatures on Earth. The commentator described how the killer whale stalks the polar bear from beneath the ice; watching for its shadow, then diving down and coming straight back up through the ice at amazing speed, clamping the bear in its jaws and pulling it down into the freezing water. My grandmother was aghast. ‘Did you know that? My grandfather adjusted his morphine drip and said, ‘No, but if we’re going to learn, let’s do it now.’ Puts script down clearly remembers the following: Memes are those things that are copied from mind to mind. The cultural analog to the gene is the meme (as in mime or mimic); it’s the unit of copying. The spread of a rumor is cloning a pattern from one mind to another, the hushed whisper of leaves rustling in a breeze through axon branches. He was holding his hand when he died. After he was buried, he broke out in shingles. Traces will linger, in much the same way that blackboards retain ghostly images of former patterns. The synaptic strengths should remain charged for awhile making it easier to recreate part of this array, the ugly wallpaper pattern in the back bedroom.

The speech textually links human and computer cognition, as the speech continues memory. In terms of theatrical convention, Leslie plays with memory as she ‘forgets’ her words. Helen is instantly able to prompt her, again revealing ownership of a memory that is not her own, inferring that she has been programmed, computer like. She has no frame of reference for this story, it is not her memory, she has not lived the experience; she has downloaded the information. Conversely, Leslie, to whom the story
'belongs' can remember the complex information about synaptic and RAM memory, but not her own, stored, experiential, personal memory.

It is a deliberate decision that at this point the clones enter the performance, at the moment when the fallibility of the human performer is shown. Here the clones represent the 'next step' as they enter and give word perfect presentations, as if asserting the supremacy of the memory of the machine:

Clone of Helen: Copying is pedestrian. Copying is peculiar. On the other hand, copying makes us what we are. Our bodies take shape from the transcription of protein templates, our languages from the mimicry of privileged sounds, our crafts from the repetition of prototypes. Cultures cohere in the faithful transmission of rituals and rules of conduct. To copy cell for cell, word for word, image for image, is to make the known world our own.

Leslie: Do you remember when you discovered that you were going to die some day?

Helen's Clone: Medieval scribes knew each line of text...copyshop attendants are scarcely aware of what they copy at 135 copies per minute. Copying to disk requires no knowledge at all of the contents.

Leslie: Because it seems to me like you should be able to remember something like that.

Helen's clone disappears, re-enters stage right of screen.

There is a double irony at play in the speech of the clones. Not only is their speech copied form another source and passed off as their own, but they, as projected copies of realities speak of their own 'ontological' truth,
in that, literally 'copying makes us what we are.' They speak a pre-programmed language which they have appropriated, ('copying to disk requires no knowledge at all of the contents') and inhabit the stage as it is their own world, following programmed and theatrical 'cues', performing with the performers. There is a disturbing subtext in operation when the clone speaks the lines, 'To copy cell for cell, word for word, image for image, is to make the known world our own.' Where is the true original where the copies pass themselves off as the originals?³¹

Laurie Anderson uses technology to create a video clone, a surrogate of herself. In his article, 'Unnecessary Duplicates: Identity and Technology in the Performances of Laurie Anderson', Auslander cites the story Anderson tells in Home of the Brave where she recounts the event of having 'turned the corner in Soho today and someone/Looked right at me and said: Oh no! / Another Laurie Anderson clone.' According to Auslander, 'In this anecdote, Anderson herself has lost control of the cloning process, to the point where she is mistaken for one of her clones; the original is confused with a copy' (2000, p. 31,). Auslander states that, 'Since digital code is reproduced through a process of 'cloning,' the information on all compact discs and their sources is identical: all are 'originals'; there is neither an originary referent nor a first in the series (1999, p. 104).

Helen's Clone: We use copies to certify originals and originals to certify copies.

Leslie slips underneath the Clone image beside the blinds just before it disappears.

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Leslie 'embodies' the Clone, stepping in front of it so that it is momentarily projected on her body. It is not her clone that she re-embodies in this way, however, but the clone of Helen, and as she does this, she usurps the identity of the live Helen, by taking her story and passing it off as her own.

Leslie: One day I stood behind the orange curtains in the breakfast room. After a while I cut the side of the curtain with a pair of large orange handled scissors. It was just a tiny cut. Not even an inch. My mother was furious. 'Who cut my curtains!'
In fact she still mentions it to me, 'remember when you cut my curtains?'

The clones in Random Acts of Memory plagiarise at will from Schwartz's The Culture of the Copy, a work which takes copying as its central theme and which describes plagiarism as 'sticky with feelings of originality—through-repetition/revelation-through-simulation' (1996, p. 314). As if triggered by yet one more false appropriation and dissemination of untruth, this story heralds the frenetic scene which follows. The explosion of frustration caused by the saturation of copy ignites a moment of 'reproduction overload,' as Leslie draws the blinds to reveal prerecorded film, wherein Helen takes Leslie's drink and throws it in her face and the two start wrestling. Loud disco music fades in and Helen removes her jacket and dances. Leslie meanwhile pours herself a martini at the bar cart. ARVID projects a random sequence of moving images; items on the set such as ashtrays and martini glasses, are shown flying through the air, the image of a martini being poured hovers on the
wall, and Helen's clone appears dancing vigorously beside Helen. Helen's clone dances with her, on her, maintaining its pristine, unsweaty perfection, the copy that looks better than the original, as the set becomes filled with copies. Meanwhile the clone of Leslie appears on the wall, watching the proceedings and yawning. According to Schwartz:

Postmodern boredom is said now to be completely diffuse and diffused, arising from overload and saturation; experience has no context other than replay. Been-there/done-that is ultimately no less desperate a feeling of boredom that going-nowhere/done-nothing (Schwartz, 1996, p. 317).

The bored women in their state-of-the-art-sitting-room with all post-modern mod cons, seeming to underline the ennui of their lives, seem to have always been thus. They are there in place before the audience arrive, as if they have been there for ever. They mimic and copy the audience, and each other, unable to think or act or speak original thought without prompting. They minutely document their lives and the documentation becomes more important that what is actually happening to them.

At the very start of the show, Leslie, rather than being moved or affected by the story Helen tells about finding her dead grandfather on New Year's Eve, or engaging in a conversation with her about it, or sharing the story of her own memories of her grandfather's death etc., is only interested in the angle and close-up shots she can procure, asking Helen to repeat the story to the camera. The scene continues with Helen repeating the story about the curtains, reclaiming her truth, struggling against the influx of
copy that surrounds her. Leslie snaps a still of Helen alone by the curtain and in the 7 second gap before the camera resumes live feed, Leslie squeezes herself in behind Helen. The live feed image is a tight shot of Helen's head, with just a shadow of Leslie behind her. Previously, Leslie stepped behind the clone of Helen, which layered itself on top of her. Standing behind Helen she once more loses her identity as this time Helen reestablishes hers through the reclamation of her story. It is almost as if the real performers are treating each other as reproductions.

Anything unique is at risk of vanishing...The more adept the West has become at the making of copies, the more we have exalted uniqueness. It is within an exuberant world of copies that we arrive at our experience of originality. Can we still uphold – or is it time to abandon – any distinction between original and replica? (Schwartz, 1996, p. 212).

The complex relationship between original and copy is further emphasised when Leslie’s clone enters the space, and takes center stage as Leslie is hidden from view: ‘is it time to abandon – any distinction between original and replica?’

Leslie’s Clone: Biology itself is invested with the rich ambivalence of myth. The stories we tell about our bodies, are as generative as they are genetic; we are said to begin, literally and originally, by making copies of our cells.

Leslie’s Clone shifts position, reappears:

Leslie’s Clone More and more frequently, we equate the computer’s binary opposition of data with processes of human memory and learning. The metaphors of machine reasoning and computer linkage have become our own: our brains are parallel processors, our thinking is signal processing, our lives are
databases and we need downtime. In the company of laser copiers, faxes and scanners, we are drawn to assume that what we copy instantly we know immediately. (Schwartz, 1996, pp. 245-246).

Leslie’s Clone shifts position, reappears:

Leslie’s Clone An estimate of the number of different ideas the human mind is capable of is 3,655,760,000. ‘While there may be a slight hope that all the ideas have not yet been bespoken, there is a high probability of coincidence or unconscious repetition. (Schwartz, 1996, p. 313)

Leslie’s Clone shifts position, reappears stage left of Helen and Leslie, who are stage right of screen:

Leslie’s Clone A cassette tape playback of Ella Fitzgerald’s high C can shatter a crystal goblet ...more regularly than Ella in person. (Schwartz, 1996, p. 377).

At this point, in a desperate and yet futile move to break the claustrophobic and consuming world of the copy, to resist abandonment of the distinction between duplication and replica, Helen throws a drink in the face of Leslie’s clone. The clone disappears but the battle has by no means been won, as confused and thinking she must defend her duplicate self. Leslie challenges Helen, removing her suit jacket in a ‘let’s take it outside’ stance. In this world however, there is no outside. The ‘outside’ is the world of pre-recorded video footage that comes in through the window. Would a live fight be copying a pre-recorded moment? The scene on stage becomes dangerously true to Baudrillard’s statement that:

It is no longer a question of imitation, nor of reduplication, nor even of parody. It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself, that is, an operation to deter every real process by its operational double, a metastable, programmatic, perfect descriptive machine which provides all the signs of the real and short-circuits all its vicissitudes. Never again will the real have to be produced (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 4).
The performers begin to remove their jackets as in the prerecorded footage, as if they are about to wrestle for a real ‘fake real’ identity. They are interrupted as Dolly Parton’s ‘Muleskinner’ song is played and twin pairs of her smiling faces appear on the screen, the in the middle of the room between them. As the song blares out, the identical Dolly Parton heads morph into twin heads of Dolly the clone sheep. The head wink, then morph back into twin images of Dolly Parton. This moment within the performance is a crescendo of the copy, with the appearance of the Dolly / Dolly moment of complete ‘reproduction overload.’ Where are the real, true identities? The copies seem to have taken over, the live performers simply stand aside in the dark, which makes them appear to disappear, and allows the copies to be seen in all their glory – everywhere – on the film screen, on the television screen, on the walls of the living room. It is at this point that the mediated, replicated world seems to take over. And at this very point the performers exhibit the control (that they have always had).

Leslie: Cut the power!

Clones, and digital duplications, disappear. For a moment the stage is in darkness. The performers, enfolded in the blackout, stand motionless in the darkness. After the bright illuminations from the television and video screen, reflected by the chrome set, the contrast of the darkness is heightened. Suddenly a match is struck and one small flame flickers,
lighting the face of Helen. For the duration of the flame she tells a story, stopping as the flame reaches the end of the match, flickers and dies, once more plunging the stage into darkness. Another match is struck and the story is resumed. This process continues until Helen finishes her story and Leslie takes over, again striking matches which guide her way through the story. The performers are now able to recount individual, distinct and precisely remembered accounts. They no longer compete with each other, but fall into a reciprocal rhythm of story telling.

Returning to the electronic debate concerning the aura of the live presence which started this section, I would cite the statement made by David Z. Saltz and posted onto the Stanford University Electronic forum chat page: ‘Recent advances in digital imaging technology may actually increase the potency of live performance by rendering increasingly unstable the assumption that a film or video image has any indexical link at all to a pre-filmic event.’ It is this conceptual digital (and I would add analogue) technology that heightens the presence, or the ‘aura’, of the live performer/the live performance, either by its overwhelming presence (as in the climactic ‘overload’ scene just described) or, by its absence. I posit that within Random Acts of Memory, the starkness of the image of the two performers on stage, (lit only by the solitary flames of matches, their speech lasting only as long as the flames linger) accentuates the presence of the performers in part because of the technology that has preceded this. Several of the audience members said that they related to this scene in particular, because the technology had been switched off - giving them
more space to focus. It was the non-mediated or post mediated parts that seemed to remain most strongly in the memory of the audience:

It has come back to me in frames and clips since Friday night - memories. First of all, my congratulations on a piece that was cerebral and provocative and visually interesting. I found much of the writing stirring and poetic and some of those lines have also come back to me. I guess that is what I enjoyed most about the work - that it has a life, it continues to roll in my mind. Some of my favorite moments: Helen's breathless soliloquy; both of your candle speeches... (Comment from audience member, *Random Acts of Memory*, Institute for Studies in the Arts, 1998)

**Remembering Random Acts Of Memory**

Memory's images, once they are fixed in words, are erased... Perhaps I am afraid of losing Venice all at once, if I speak of it. Or perhaps, speaking of other cities, I have already lost it, little by little' (Calvino, 1997, p. 87).

As well as detailing audience memories of the piece, it is significant to this exploration of memory and the notion of a culture of the copy to note how there are differences in how Leslie Hill and myself remember the performance and performing of *Random Acts of Memory*. For example, in re-\( \text{ma(r)king} \) the performance here, rather than choosing to refresh my memory by watching the video documentation of the piece or re-reading the script, for the most part I wrote this chapter entirely from memory. In a sense I have created a replica, a copy of *Random Acts of Memory*, drawn from my body memory, mentally charting my path as performer through the piece and through my epistemology of the process, the technology, the
text. In part, the decision not to return to the video documentation of the piece reflects an acceptance of Phelan's statement that, 'the labour to write about performance is also a labour that fundamentally alters the event,' (1993, p. 148). The performance of Random Acts of Memory is un reproducible in any way other than the performance. Writing this account from the phenomenology of my lived experience, my being within the performance/being the performance and theorising the performance from this position I acknowledge and actively accept the inevitable alteration of events. I do not reproduce the performance of Random Acts of Memory, but rather produce my interpretation, after the event. My memory of the performance will differ from the memory of each audience member who witnessed it. It will differ from the memory my performance 'clone', Leslie Hill, a fact which led to the inclusion of a brief interview with Hill, below. Similarly, just as Phelan draws a correlation between the very act of writing and her subject matter, I posit a similar connectivity between writing the remembrance of this performance with the subject of the performance, namely, memory. Phelan writes that:

Performative writing enacts the death of the 'we' that we think we are before we begin to write. A statement of allegiance to the radicality of unknowing who we are becoming, this writing pushes against the ideology of knowledge as a progressive movement forever approaching a completed end-point (Phelan, 1997, p. 17).

There is a memory that Leslie and I have which is shared; the 'we' who co-conceptualised, co-wrote, co-directed and co-performed Random Acts of
Memory. A 'we' who shared a journey of 'unknowing' and then of 'knowledge'. I want to compare this to Heidegger's description of technology as being not a means to an end but rather as a way of revealing. In arguing this point Heidegger takes the stem of the word technology, Technikon, that which belongs to techne (1997, p. 12). For Heidegger it is important that techne is the name, not only for the activities and skills of the craftsman, but also for the arts of the mind and the fine arts. Techne belongs to bringing-forth, to poiesis, something poietic' (Heidegger,1997, p. 12).

Thus Heidegger's description of technology as a poetic bringing forth, a revealing, alongside Phelan's concept of writing 'unknowing who we are becoming' act as theoretical beacons of sorts for the writing of the performance of Random Acts of Memory. However, in the making of Random Acts of Memory there is also a place where the 'we' splits, at every part of the creative act, before, during and after the performance. Where the memories of the lived and unlived experience differ. Where Leslie and I remember different things. Different shows. Uncopied copies.

Re-Memory

Interview with Leslie Hill, June 2000

Helen Paris: What is your strongest memory of the performance?

Leslie Hill: Towards the end when I light the candles with the match. There were so many things going on that the act of performing you could feel almost like an automaton - having to sync in with all the other things
that were happening and knowing that all the cues would be triggered off what you did, so that you had to be pretty much the same in every performance. I think I remember the match striking the most because as a performer that was the place where I could really take a breather. It was just me and the audience. I could do it differently every time. I think that moment also stands out in my memory because the set itself was so flat, so full of screens, so visually oriented so relatively 2D that...in a world like that when you strike a match and smell the sulfur or feel the heat it snaps you into the moment again.

**Helen Paris:** What is your strongest memory of my performance?

**Leslie Hill:** The speech you did about smell. Speaking sentences on one intake of breath had an urgency to it. Also I was taking all my movement cues off your speaking.

**Helen Paris:** What is the strongest visual image you retain from the performance?

**Leslie Hill:** When I just think of the show from outside then my strongest memory is of the overload scene with the Dolly morph and you dancing. Partly because we chose the Dolly morph video excerpt to highlight the different ways we were working with screens and projections. So I have seen that clip in isolation from the rest of the show so many times that that is what I think of.

**Helen Paris:** Do you ever think of any of the stories you told of mine as your own?

**Leslie Hill:** I thought of cutting the curtains as my own. I think because I spent a lot of time intimately acquainted with curtains when I was little so
it was easy to think that that was my own story – we may even have had orange curtains.

**Helen Paris:** Do you have ‘body memories’ of performing the piece?

**Leslie Hill:** I have different ways of remembering it. I think about what it felt like having the radio mics. I remember what a big voice I had with very little effort. I remember feeling very constricted in my movement, partly because of wearing the radio head mic, and partly because of the small set, the precise cues, the uncomfortable furniture. I remember watching the Venetian blinds going back and forth and knowing Kelly was behind the wall. I also remember cooking the pumpkin pie every night before the show to put under the seats.

When we were doing the show I didn’t want to memorise any thing. I don’t like memorising. At one point when I was talking about the legend of Memosyne, the rise of the written word and the demise of oral tradition I actually was reading from a book. For the final story, after I walked off stage and talked and about the amnesiac, I read that from a piece of paper behind the set wall. I did that every night –

**Helen Paris:** It must have got to the point when you knew the lines, and didn’t have to read them...

**Leslie Hill:** Well, the thing is that now I remember those sections more than the ones that I had memorised. Maybe it is because there was some sort of anxiety round that moment. Rather than rattling it off you are really concentrating and alert for every sentence you are saying, as you have not put it in that automatic recall place.
Technologies Used In Random Acts of Memory - Forms and Contents

In this section I shall examine each of the various technologies used in Random Acts of Memory, and their various qualities as employed within the performance. As previously stated, the choice of the technology used in Random Acts of Memory was made in a conscious attempt to show an awareness of some of the anxieties caused by digital technology, as well as current theoretical and philosophical debates surrounding mediatisation.

In the performance of Random Acts Of Memory both 'old' and new technologies merge: Super8 film, analogue television, live and prerecorded digital video and computer generated graphics, and ARVID - a computer controlled video projector moving on a 360 degree axis. The 'lives' portrayed on stage seem to be controlled entirely by the surrounding technology, which has saturated the environment to the point where even the performers own original thoughts and memories lose focus and their life-size clones upstage them with their perfectly 'remembered' lines. Lyotard states that, 'Technology is...a game pertaining not to the true, the just, or the beautiful, etc., but to efficiency: a technical 'move' is 'good' when it does better and/or expends less energy than another (1984, p. 45). This notion is reflected by the use of the technologies in Random Acts of Memory. ARVID seamlessly projects its images; the faultless clones move through the space but ultimately it is made clear that these 'precision tasks' are in the control of the performers. There are subtle clues as to who is really in control of the performance right from the beginning, when the performers cue the music to come up
and the house lights to fade. Both performers cue music cuts or fast-forwards during the show, and at the moment when it seems that the technology has taken over as duplicate Dolly morphs fill the stage, the performers 'cut the power', plunging the stage into darkness; the TV set flickers and dies and digital projections on the screen are replaced eventually by a few minutes of grainy Super8 film.

As further example of the self awareness of other performers in taking on the signs and associations of new technologies I would cite Jet Lag, a collaboration between New York architects Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidò with the Builders Association and a performance group directed by Marianne Weems. In his New York Times article entitled, 'Exploring Space and Time, Here and Now', Herbert Muschamp writes that the phrase 'Good Morning!' which opens the play refers to the opening sentence from McLuhan's cult classic, The Medium is the Message (1966). Muschamp describes how, in the performance that follows video, radio (broadcast and short-wave), in-flight movies, telephone and other play major roles: 'The human actors speak a language that derives almost entirely from media clichés. As in the recent film 'The Matrix,' they are playthings of the artificial intelligence that has evolved beyond human control' (Muschamp, New York Times February 6th, 2000, pp. 37-39). Muschamp goes on to state that, unlike The Matrix, Jet Lag is not set in some future dystopia. As with Random Acts of Memory, the action of Jet Lag occurs in the present time. According to Mauchamp, it thus reveals 'the extent to which the world, thanks to the media, has already fallen into
what McLuhan called the 'narcosis of Narcissus,' an insentient, dreamlike state induced by our infatuation with the images of ourselves that the media pump out.'

At the start of Random Acts of Memory the performers seem to inhabit this dream-like state as they drift in and out of copied and forgotten memories. Their life-like images track them in the shape of the clones, usurping their realities. Technology allows for untruths and falsehoods. In Jet Lag, the character who speaks the opening line 'appears to be a sailor setting out on a solo voyage around the world. Or his voyage might be a hoax: he could be staging the event from a media center in a basement or a garage.' (Muschamp, The New York Times, February 6th, 2000, pp. 37-39). Just as Random Acts of Memory used 'true' stories (such as the story trigged by the smell on the antimacassar), Jet Lag was also inspired by true stories. 'The script, by Jessica Chalmers, and the set could not exist without each other. The set is rigorously architectural in the relationship of its parts to its whole. But without the actors and the theatrical format, the production would lack the immediacy of real-life time and real-time life' (Muschamp, The New York Times, February 6th, 2000, pp. 37-39).

The custom made set for Random Acts of Memory, designed by the performers and fabricated by a team of specialists played an integral part in Random Acts of Memory. The set design with its steel silver chaise longue, its cold glass furniture, presented an environment which lent itself more to its 2D clone projection inhabitants than to the fleshy 3D rumps of
its 'real' occupants. The curvaceous back of the chaise longue, an item usually synonymous with opulence and reclining, belies its sharp edge and hard cold exterior. Similarly, the undulating curve of the table was crafted from hard steel. The only piece of furniture in the room that suggested comfort and ease was the deeply cushioned swivel chair positioned by the camera, its mobility designed to aide smooth image capture to the camera. The chair provided a comfortable seat, as if it was only there that the inhabitants of the sitting room would sit for any length of time, in the place where they could record and replay the action, rather than create it.

Imagine the set again, as it still exists in real time: There is a window across the back wall which is covered by motorised white vertical blinds positioned in front of a film screen rather than the expected window, so that it inhabits the 'home' like some giant advertising billboard. (Auslander's statement about the commercial success of mediatisation is clearly referenced here, although it is ironic that what makes the blinds function in this way is the live presence of Kelly Philips, one of the technicians, crouched behind the screen and slowly turning a small handle backwards and forwards). In The Soft Edge: A Natural History and Future of the Information revolution, Levinson states that: 'Notwithstanding radio, the photocopy, desktop publishing, and the fax, the twentieth century can indeed be characterised as the century of the screen' (1997, p. 163). The direction of the blinds moving back and forth, as if counting time, displays
the ‘world outside’ as a life experienced in eternal playback. Levinson writes how the window and the window shade:

finally allows all denizens to eat their cake of visual access to the outside, and have it without the bite of the Peeping Tom. Thus the evolution from the savannah to the wall to the hole in the wall to the window to the window covering provides a textbook case of media evolution in response to human need and design (Levinson, 1997, pp. 112-3).

One can watch and remain unseen. In the world created by the set of Random Acts of Memory, however, there is no view out of the window from inside or from the inside out onto another world. The experiences watched, seen and experienced are only those created by the inhabitants of the world inside, and it seems as if, more disturbingly, they are created only in order to be watched. As well as the constantly moving blinds, revealing their display of mediated life, the television is switched on from the start of the show and plays constantly until the blackout. In contrast to the images on the screen, however, the television is never watched, although always on. The room has been specifically designed around it, as it fits snugly into a specially fabricated section of the wall, three-quarters of the way up the wall, where a picture, or window or mirror might be expected to be placed. The television is surrounded by an oval frame, resembling a mirror frame.

Outside the sitting room environment, but trained directly on the room is ARVID, the video projection device, projecting the images of the clones
into the cyber sitting room\textsuperscript{27}. As with \textit{Jet Lag} the design of the set is of
great significance to the themes raised in the piece, not just what
technology is used and how it (re)emphasize the live action but how that
technology creates the environment in which the performances take place.

\textbf{Television}

Something has changed, the Faustian, Promethean (perhaps
Oedipal) period of production and consumption gives way to the
‘proteomic’ era of networks, to the narcissistic and protean era of
connections, contact, contiguity, feedback and generalized interface
that goes with the universe of communication. With the television
image – the television being the whole surrounding universe
become a control screen (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 127).

As previously stated, in \textit{Random Acts of Memory} the television is part of the
very infrastructure of the stage world. This positioning is a deliberate
reference to the generic set up of what is seen as the conventional sitting
room:

\begin{quote}
We bathe in the mesmerizing glow of the family TV. TV is a
manufactured object – a piece of furniture ... like the other
furnishings in the home, except that for many of us, it is the most
important one: the one we look at or stare into. (Hall & Fifer, 1999,
p. 17).
\end{quote}

Rather than positioning the furniture in the room so that everything faces
the television, here the room itself has been designed to accommodate the
television, although it is never watched. It remains on, however,
flickering, and seems, disturbingly, not out of place:
One way television, in its early days, was made to appear 'reassuring' by means of its housing: the introduction of the TV console – the TV appeared in the home as furniture, like any other furniture (Aconci in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 126).

Part of the reason that the television is not watched could be to do with its positioning, three-quarters of the way up the wall, behind the table, with no chairs to sit on in front of it. Rather than something one would sit down and watch, its positioning makes it more like something one may walk past, glance at: more like a mirror. Just as the window to the outside reflects nothing but recorded images of the 'liveness' inside, this 'mirror' does not reflect the real life faces of the performers:

Today the scene and the mirror no longer exist; instead, there is a screen and network. In place of the reflexive transcendence of mirror and scene, there is a nonreflecting surface, an immanent surface where operations unfold – the smooth operational surface of communication (Baudrillard, 1983, pp. 126-7).

As Dan Graham states: 'TV might be metaphorically visualized as a mirror in which the viewing family sees an idealised, ideologically distorted reflection of itself represented in typical genres of TV' (Graham in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 168). In this environment, what are the typical genres of TV that are being reflected? There are no sitcoms or soap operas here for the performers to model themselves after. Rather, there is an endless loop of silent footage in which endlessly cloned synchronised swimmers in larger-than-life Technicolor merge unnervingly with images of brain synapses, as the loop constantly dissolves in and out of highly
coloured animations of the working of the brain (specifically the synaptic functions triggered with memory recall). This is what the viewer into the TV looking glass sees as their reflection. Baudrillard states that:

In the image of television, the most beautiful prototypical object of this new era, the surrounding universe and our very bodies are becoming monitoring screens... It is no longer the obscenity of the hidden, the repressed, the obscure, but that of the visible, the all-too-visible, the more-than-visible; it is the obscenity of that which no longer contains a secret and is entirely soluble in information and communication (Baudrillard, as cited in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 245).

What does this reflection of self convey to the viewer? Where the face of the viewer should be, the intricate workings of the brain morph seamlessly into highly costumed synchronised swimmers with fixed smiles and identical movements. On the back cover of his educational book Video Study Groups: For Education, Professional Development and Change, (1999) François Victor Tochon, describes reflection as a bending back of light on itself. Thus 'a mirror image is enough like the original so as to be recognised, but sufficiently different to cause one to examine the familiar from a new perspective' (1999). Tochon makes the link between the mirror and the video; the original and the copy.

Kathy O'Dell describes the home as the place where one first constructs the self. For O'Dell, video is a tool which helps advance the process of reflection that begins in the earliest symbolic stage of human psychic development. Using a psychoanalytic method derived from Jacques Lacan, she perceives in video the potential to continue this 'mirror stage,'
since it provides the possibility of reflecting back new imaginings or identities (O'Dell in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 18). Similarly, artist Vito Acconci describes the screen as:

Some kind of distorting, inside-out mirror, which the power inside the box holds up to the world at large. Inside the box, the world – or the power-to-be-a-world – is condensed; it’s the size of a conventional package, a gift, its power made handleable. The viewer might be led to believe, then, that the world is in his or her hands (Acconci in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 125).

But what sort of power do the images reflected by the television screen to give the performers in Random Acts Of Memory? What sort of psychic development is engendered? We see the results throughout the performance of Random Acts of Memory as the performers copy the movements of the audience, become copies of each other, synchronise their lives so that one performer’s life becomes interchangeable from the other’s, their pasts merged, homogenised. Acconci states that:

Television broadcasts the same program, all over a particular country, at the same time. One world is transported into different worlds: each different world (different household) is kept in place (instep, in line, in time) by the importation of the same 'universal' world. When a TV set in a particular household is turned off, that world is lying in wait, the world-within-the-TV-set ready to erupt, to flash on 'in the middle of things' (the plot has already been going on without us). 'It' is always there, thought we might not be yet, we might not be watching. But people in some other house are already watching; 'it' has plenty of time, plenty of viewers already – and, anyway, we'll probably come around to watch sooner or later (Acconci in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 126).
In *Random Acts of Memory* the television remains switched on until the power is cut, thus keeping the performers constantly 'in place, in step, in line' - so much so that they are synchronised. Acconci describes this as a 'wave of sameness', which is 'about to enter everywhere' and acknowledges how frightening this could be perceived to be: 'a loss of individuality: all those supposedly particular 'I's' about to be entered by 'it' (in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 126). In *Random Acts of Memory* the performers are engulfed by the 'wave of sameness' as real and virtual realities merge, dissolving into each other with a perturbing normalcy as seen with the fluid transitions between swimmers and synapses. The dissolution of TV into life, the dissolution of life into TV – offers an indiscernible chemical solution (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 55).

Auslander compares television to live performance stating that: 'Originally...all television broadcasts were live transmissions.' He adds that later in the history of television, whether events were live or not, it was always important that 'they were sensed as live by the home viewing audience' (1999, p. 12). He argues that television is watched like a performance: 'Unlike film, but like theatre, a television broadcast is characterised as a performance in the present.' (1999, p 15). In the television's role in *Random Acts of Memory*, however, this is not the case. There is nothing 'live' about what plays on the television, it is a seemingly never ending loop of images and graphics that repeat themselves. They show functions which repeat, the endless firing of the animated brain synapses, the eternal synchronicity of the technicolour swimmers, like
brightly coloured tropical fish in the 'fishbowl space' of the television space, never getting anywhere (Acconci in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 125). In *Random Acts of Memory*, rather than the television having an ontology of *Liveness* as Auslander posits, it is used rather to show the surfeit of replication which renders the information unintelligible. The very functioning of the brain becomes nothing more than a brightly colored graphic. The functions of the integral synapses become no more than an elaborate pattern which repeats and copies. 'Our sense that there is nothing below there – beyond the surface – that we are nowhere and that television is, in effect, a two-dimensional shopping mall in which there is nothing to buy (Acconci in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 19).

**Video in Random Acts of Memory**

In her article entitled, 'Paradox in the Evolution of An Art Form: Great Expectations and The Making of a History', Marita Sturken writes that:

> Most recently, the debate of video's properties has raised the issue of the potential to construct an electronic language. As artists deconstruct particular digital effects and attempts to explore their metaphoric and narrative meaning, they take steps toward the construction of a syntax. Hence, the properties take on meaning as codes. What does it mean to use slow motion? What kind of meaning do certain digital effects impart – the potential of turning a moving image into a two-dimensional sheet that can be manipulated on the screen or the seemingly limitless possibilities of combining images within the frame? (Sturken in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 118).

A digital film camera is used by the performers throughout *Random Acts of Memory* to film each other. This camera outputs the images directly onto a video screen, and also enables still images of performance moments to be
captured and frozen on the screen for 7 seconds. For example, at one point in the script the stage directions read:

Helen snaps a still of Leslie at the table and Leslie’s still image is frozen in place on the screen; Leslie carefully replaces the antimacassar on the back of the chaise longue and positions herself back in the picture in time for the resumption of the live feed...

Using this function of the digital camera, the performers changed positions while an image of themselves remained on the screen. In this way, the function of the digital camera to take and display life stills is used by the performers to enable their action, in Sturken’s terms thus creating a syntax between live performance and digital possibilities. Once more the issue of who, or what, is in control is raised. And again, this is a deliberate inclusion. For example, on the one hand it could been seen that the technology, the camera, dictates the structure of the performance, the actions of the performers, forcing them to choreograph their actions in time to the seven-second time-capture of the stills. Alternatively, rather than elevating the digital memory over live performance, the stills can also be seen as handy ‘bookmarks’ holding the ‘place’ of the performer, keeping a record of her ‘presence’ whilst enabling her to go and do something she needs to do. For instance, there is a moment when Leslie ‘forgets’ her lines and refers to the script. After refreshing her memory, Helen snaps a still of Leslie at the table and Leslie’s still image is frozen in place on the screen, as Leslie leaves her position at the table to carefully replace the prompt sheet under Helen’s chair, positions herself back ‘in the picture’ in time for the resumption of the live feed before the 7 second
capture of the still image switches back to live feed. Similarly, this strategy can be seen as enervating the liveness of the performance with the stills, engendering a sense of play:

Leslie snaps a still of Helen alone by the curtain and in the 7 second gap before the camera resumes live feed, Leslie squeezes herself in behind Helen. The live feed image is a tight shot of Helen’s head, just a shadow of Leslie behind.

Not only is it relevant to discuss the performer/technology relationship in terms of issues of control, but it is also important to show how the audience are controlled by the technology in live performance. In Random Acts of Memory, wherein some of the action is directed to the audience by the live performer and some is filtered through a lens, the view of the audience is controlled. As well as the utilising the video functionality in terms of the still images, the camera is used to project close-up images of the performers during the performance, directing the gaze of the audience to specific details. Again, it could be argued that it is the technology that is determining and controlling the gaze of the audience, drawing their focus away from the simultaneous live performance and to the mediated projection on the screen. Acconci writes that the ‘close-up’ literalises in television, whereas in film, the actor is larger than life, “the face on film is a landscape” (in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 125). For Acconci, on television, “the face on-screen is a detached head; a head-without-a-body-without-organs. This is pure mind, without a body to ground it; this is a head that
floats, and can’t (won’t) come down to earth (in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 125).

The situation is complicated by the fact that it is the performers themselves who control the camera and therefore the image. At the beginning of the performance Helen’s story of her Grandfather, triggered by the smell of the antimacassar, is filmed using close-up shots.

Leslie goes to blinds, opens them, and a motorised sequence begins whereby the blinds rotate from side to side, 180 degrees. Live feed projection begins to play onto the screen behind them. Leslie returns to the camera.

Leslie: Could you repeat that story about your grandfather, but this time cheat your face towards the camera a little?

Leslie snaps a still image on the digital video camera, so that as Helen leaves the antimacassar on the chaise back and goes back to the bar cart and replaces the tray, her image, cloth over face, is frozen on the screen behind the chaise.

This decision by the performer to zoom in on the mouth of the performer under the antimacassar purposefully focuses the audience’s gaze. They see through the camera’s close-up the detail of the worn fabric, the thread frayed by the real presence of the head of the grandfather. A grandfather no longer present. This is not a prop; it is an artifact. It is the authentic, the unreproducible instantly reproduced. The audience are thus allowed two perspectives. They view the complete room, in all its functional, almost synthetic furnishings, the TV looping continuously on the wall, Helen laying on the sharp-edged chaise-longue. Simultaneously, the eye of the audience is directed to the image behind Helen in a close-up shot.
that fills the frame. They see Helen’s mouth, magnified, moving ghost like behind the worn fabric: flesh is where flesh once was. The story they hear spoken and simultaneously see spoken in close up – the mouth shaping the words engendered by the smell on the fabric. So important is it for Leslie to capture this image that she makes Helen repeat the story. Thus the real time significance of the story is not as important as the detail, the camera shot, how it will be remembered/reproduced/relived.

The fact that within *Random Acts of Memory* it is the artists themselves who are operating the camera, and therefore controlling the cinematography/videography, is doubly significant. Once more this reestablishes the idea of the control in the hands of the performers, though it may appear to the contrary. Whilst manipulating the camera in the rehearsal process, certain functions were discovered accidentally which were later used within the performance.

This work with the camera in *Random Acts of Memory* led to the creation of a one-off performance on 26\(^{th}\) March 1999. The performance was called *BULL*. Working with the video technologies developed in *Random Acts of Memory* had meant that in terms of time, the live performance seemed always to be the last thing attended to after shooting, editing, programming and cueing. At the same time, there was a pressure for the live performance to already be constructed, and all the moves, text and performance cues set so that the technology could be slotted into the right place.
*BULL* was a one-time site specific performance incorporating both live presence and digital technologies. In *BULL*, the live performances had an element of preparation (with lines written and learnt, costumes selected etc.), but the digital filming and editing were to happen live, the day of the performance, in front of an audience. Each of the four performers involved in the piece (namely Christine Molloy and Joe Lawlor from Desperate Optimists Theatre company and Leslie Hill and myself) all work primarily within the field of live performance. This experience of working in a live medium was shifted into working with what is usually a pre-recorded medium. Each performer set up, shot and edited their individual films during the day, and then layered the filmed images on digitally created soundtracks. That same evening, positioned beneath a 20x20' film screen, adjacent to the bull, Molloy, Hill, Paris and Lawlor presented the film and performance quartet to a live audience – some of whom had been present during the day’s filming, some who came for the live performance only. As the real time filming left no margin for error, the editing was done entirely ‘in-camera’. This process created a ‘Liveness’ to the filming and manipulation of the digital camera, shots taken in one-take, replicating the ‘in the moment’ quality of live performance. The filming took on a performative, live style, developed by the artists using the technology. In this way, it can be seen that the mediated becomes the more ‘live’ element:
Consumer technologies make it possible for people to become media literate as they shoot and edit their own programs. As people learn about media practices, they become less passive and more capable of countering its demagoguery (Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 22).

In terms of mediation being invested with a Liveness and vise versa it is interesting to explore Walter Benjamin’s notion of aura in terms of the close-up shot of the live performer. ‘The artistic performance of a stage actor is definitely presented to the public by the actor in person; that is the screen actor, however, is presented by a camera... The audience’s identification with the actor is really an identification with the camera...’ (1968, pp. 228-229). Here, though we have both the camera’s presentation (as directed by the performer) and the live presence. In terms of the film actor, Benjamin states that: ‘for the first time – and this is the effect of film – man has to operate with his whole living person, yet forgoing its aura. For aura is tied to presence; there can be no replica of it’ (1968, p. 229). The audience are consumed in unadulterated gazing, looking, examining, watching, seeing, not seeing, staring, prying, blinking. They are voyeurs and observers both directing and having their glance directed. How is their gaze reflected back? Do the performers look at the camera? And when do they look at the audience? At times they do both, e.g., when Hill looks intently into the lens of the camera, her face is magnified on the live-feed projection screen which faces out directly into the audience. If she turned her head just a few degrees she would be speaking directly, face to the audience. Benjamin states:
The definition of the aura as a 'unique phenomenon of a distance however close it may be' represents nothing but the formulation of the cult value of the work of art in categories of space and time perception. Distance is the opposite of closeness. The essentially distant object is the unapproachable one. Unapproachability is indeed a major quality of the cult image (Benjamin, 1968, p. 243).

For Auslander, 'in the theatre spectators direct their own vision, the television camera does not permit them to choose their own perspectives' (1999, p. 19). The use of the camera in the performance can be seen to give the audience different perspectives, allowing a simultaneous viewing of live and mediated. They choose where to look at any moment although the camera dictates what shots will be filmed, frozen, transmitted live, and close-up. Do the audience look at the screen or the live performance? This question raises many interesting areas of discussion significant to this exploration of the relationship between live and mediated. For example, the last words spoken on stage in *Random Acts of Memory* are taken directly from Baudrillard:

> We draw ever closer to the surface of the screen; our gaze is, as it were, strewn across the image. We no longer have the spectator's distance from the stage – all theatrical conventions have gone. That we fall so easily into the screen's coma of the imagination is due to the fact that the screen presents a perpetual void that we are invited to fill (Baudrillard, 1993, p. 55).

As cited within a live performance this statement has particular impact and is intentionally placed. At first glance it could seem that the performance of *Random Acts of Memory* does indeed pay homage to this statement. The continuous projection of live action onto a screen seems to
confirm Baudrillard’s notion that the desire to fill the screen in stronger than anything else. The performers forget their own histories and yet allow the film to freeze them in time. Suspended in stills, the memory of their actions is imprinted on the screen and therefore on their eyes of the audience. The images presented looping interminably on the television could certainly be seen to induce a coma of the imagination. However, in seeming to play with Baudrillard’s description of the draw of the screen, the performance of Random Acts of Memory simultaneously plays against it. For example, as Hill gives her speech about synaptic memory, the camera zooms in tight onto her face, giving the audience far more detail than they would witness from their seats without the live feed. In Liveness, Auslander cites the work of the actor Robert Blossom whose project, entitled Filmstage, was an experiment combining live actors and pre-recorded film. According to Auslander, Blossom saw the live and filmed elements of his productions as competing with one another.

Blossom acknowledged that the competition between the actors’ live bodies and the filmed images in these mixed-media performances was intrinsically unfair because the filmed images were inevitably more compelling (Auslander, 1999, p. 37).

In Random Acts Of Memory, the pull between the screen and the live action is constantly and deliberately complicated. Filmic and live functions are shared betwixt the two; time delay and liveness are played with on and off screen (for example, when Leslie draws the blind to reveal prerecorded film). In the film Helen and Leslie wear exactly the same matching outfits that they wear in the live performance, and the film is
shot in the same room. In the film, Helen takes Leslie’s drink and throws it in her face, both take off their jackets and shirts (down to matching white vest tops) and they start wrestling each other. Simultaneously with the film, the live performers also start to undress and the assumption is that perhaps the same fight will appear on stage. Instead it becomes apparent that the reason that Helen removes her jacket and shirt is that she is about to start dancing. Leslie retires to the bar and pours herself a martini. The live performers completely ignore the action on the screen. However, later in the live performance, Helen does throw her drink in Leslie’s face, but this time it is at the face of Leslie’s clone. The clone pays no attention, but instead it is the ‘real’ Leslie who reacts, just as she did in the film. She starts to remove her jacket and it seems as if the performers are ‘really’ going to engage in the head to head wrestling that has played out on the screen. Again however, the convention that has been set up is immediately altered, as the projection of the Dolly Morph into the set takes over the scene.

Rather than live and mediated being in competition with each other, they enter into a strange collaboration, constructing and deconstructing possible scenarios and actions. Rather than one being seen as more ‘compelling’ than the other, their relationship acts to add levels of meaning to the action. What is represented by Helen throwing water in the face of Leslie’s clone in the live performance when the audience have seen her throw the water in the face of the ‘live’ Leslie on the pre-recorded video? Are the audience encouraged to sense the perturbing
theory that perhaps Helen can no longer differentiate between life and mediatisation; between the real Leslie and her 'realer than real' clone? Or does it intensify the sense that the characters in this room are so aware of the cyclical, repetitive ritual of their lives that they know what comes next, or that they prerecord some moments they cannot be bothered to relive. Their life 'loops' as unchanging and unending as the footage which revolves on the television.

At the beginning of the performance the use of prerecorded video interspersed with live feed distorts notions of time, past, present and future:

Helen picks up shaving lotion bottle. Frozen image cuts to live feed of Helen at bar cart.

Helen: When my grandfather died, he left me his shaving lotion bottle collection. Which was odd, really. Considering that he had eight grandsons. I suppose it was because the shaving lotion came in bottles shaped like cars and when I was little I used to love playing with them on the carpet.

Leslie crosses to cart and takes bottle from Helen while video source switches from live feed to prerecorded section: Leslie standing in front of bar cart saying, 'When my grandfather died, he left me his shaving lotion bottle collection. Which was odd, really. Considering that he had eight grandsons. I suppose it was because the shaving lotion came in bottles shaped like cars and when I was little I used to love playing with them on the carpet.' Source switch back to live feed.

With the use of pre-recorded image and text, it is as if Leslie already knows that Helen will assume ownership of her story. Again this implies that the lives led by the characters are so similar, so repetitive, that they can pre-
programme some moments in advance. It is interesting to compare this to Auslander's description of television which is filmed before a studio audience, when he states that: 'Because the programs are edited...the home audience does not see the same performance as the studio audience, but see a performance that never took place' (1999, p. 22). The audience in *Random Acts of Memory* see, in a sense, that which did take place, but which was also edited out. It is as if in the performance the 'liveness' of the characters' lives is edited out. The head to head wrestling scene which is magnified through close-up, the women sweating, falling, frustrated, visceral, reproduced larger than life on the big screen, all this is distinctly 'edited out' of the ultra-controlled live performance. The 'idealised reflection' of calm, unconfrontational acceptance is lived out in the flesh – whereas the 'true events' that show the frustration of the doppelganger, of its eternally mediated existence, are trapped on the screen. What the 'life performance' shows, therefore, is edited life.

The pre-recorded images at play whilst these stories are being swapped and appropriated can be seen almost as underlining the sense of falsehood, for example, the digital stills capture moments of the performer during the performance and suspend them in time, while the performer has already moved on. Often when we see action live action alongside simultaneous live feed (e.g., at music concerts) we believe that the live transmission *reinforces* the truth. Indeed, Auslander cites the simulcast as an example of how mediatisation has in his point of view assumed more of a live presence than the live presence:
Recent developments have problematized the traditional assumption that the live precedes the mediatized by making it obvious that the apparatus of reproduction and its attendant phenomenology are inscribed within our experience of the live. Straightforward examples abound in the use of video screens at sporting events and rock concerts. The spectator sitting in the back rows of a Rolling Stones or Bruce Springsteen concert or even a Bill Cosby stand-up comedy performance is present at a live performance, but hardly participates in it as such since her main experience of the performance is to read it off a video monitor. The same is true for the spectators at major league baseball games and other sporting events, who now watch significant portions of the games they are attending on giant video screens. The rhetoric of mediatization, such as the instant replay, the "simulcast," and the close-up, at one time understood to be secondary elaborations of an originally live event, are now constitutive of the live event itself. The games — their scheduling, the distribution of time within them, their rules, and so forth — have themselves been molded by their entry into the economy of repetition, which demands that the form of the games as live events be determined by the requirements of mediatization (Auslander in Diamond, 1996, pp. 199–200).

Here and throughout Random Acts of Memory, the technology is used to create 'untruths.' This can be seen in the creation of the life-like clones who take on the exact likeness of the performers, usurping their identities: their speech is totally plagiarist, copied and yet passed off as their own truths. At one point in the show, a life-sized clone of Helen is projected, sauntering throughout the set stating that, 'we need copies to certify originals and originals to certify copies.' Just as the clones were plagiarisations of the 'originals', the 'real' was not necessarily always 'true' and the mediated as well as the live performance reflected this. For example, in the above scene the camera faithfully records and projects the image of Helen telling the story about the grandfather's shaving lotion bottle. However, the camera then reveals its own 'untruth' when Leslie
comes over to Helen and takes the bottle from her, and the film switches a
track of Leslie's voice, pre-recorded repeating exactly what Helen has just
said. Thus the technology establishes a prior 'knowledge' of the truth
and yet initially portrays the falsehood as if it were truth. The close-up
shots of Helen recounting this story add to the seeming authenticity of the
account, giving the audience more intimacy in the moment.

Auslander states that live performance was in many ways a patent or
model for mediatised formats: for instance, that television originally
modeled itself on the live form. He posits that

The subsequent cultural dominance of mediatization has had the
ironic result that live events now frequently are modeled on the
very mediatized representations that once took the self-same live
events as their models (Auslander, 1999, pp. 10-11).

In Random Acts of Memory, episodes of the live copying the mediatised are
exaggerated as a refutation of this viewpoint, and at the same time,
mediatisation is manipulated to such an extent that it pretends to be real
life, only 'realer.' As mediated and live shift places in this way, it is
interesting to ask: what is a 'close up' in live performance? Is it in the
comparison between the live performer (as she sweats throughout the
high energy dance routine, gasps her sentences on one breath) and her
perfect clone copy, throwing the performer into some sort of messy relief?
Do we find the 'close-up' in technology acting to reemphasises liveness,
to reinstate the aura of the live, somatic performer? Or do the true 'close-
ups' come only in the moment when the power is cut and the stage lit only by the flame from a match? And is the impact of this moment accentuated because of the mediatisation which has preceded it? In these final illuminated moments in the darkness, the flame defines the face of the performer out of the blackness. It is a live 'close-up' unmediated by technology, but working to direct all eyes to her face, to her story, to her real presence.

**Super8**

In Random Acts of Memory, the performers openly use a camera to record each other. It seems that no story is too inconsequential, no action too mundane to render it undeserving of being recorded, documented and reproduced (often simultaneously, as live feed hovers behind the performers as persistently and consistently as do the free floating clones). Marita Sturken writes that:

> Video is an instantly reproducible medium with unprecedented powers of transmission, whose very essence is simultaneity. Not only does it retain those qualities of reproduction it also signifies the electronic factor, which through television and computers has come to symbolize information in contemporary culture (Sturken in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 110).

Life is instantly reproduced in the very moment of the living of it in. And the act of copying is more important than what is copied as seen at the very start of the performance, when Leslie gets Helen to repeat the story about her grandfather's death. The here and now of transmission transcends the actual lived experience. For Sturken:
The ideology that resulted in the invention of television and video technology, as well as many aspects of computer technology, is one based significantly on the notion of immediacy. In an information culture, the speed of information is paramount — information is more valuable if it is more immediate. Television technology simply did not evolve out of a desire for the preservation of history. Many early videomakers were responding to precisely this aspect of immediacy, with the attitude that tape was ephemeral and instant, the ‘now’ (Sturken in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 121).

Not only can life be recorded and represented as it happens but it can be recorded ad infinitum. Robb Lovell, the computer analyst who programmed the ARVID system, stated that one of the strongest ideas that the performance conveyed to him was the sense that *Random Acts of Memory* pointed to a choice: on the one hand the option to assiduously video each fragment of our lives (which we would never have time to watch), or alternatively, to content ourselves to hold the moments in our own memories. At the end of the performance Leslie speaks of a Cambridge scholar who developed chronic amnesia due to a brain hemorrhage that obliterated his ability to store new memories:

Leslie: So he remembers everything that happened before the trauma, but nothing since. So he knows who he is. But he doesn’t know what he has been doing. And in order to maintain his independence, his ability to live alone and function as an adult, he records what he is doing throughout the day into a small dictaphone at two or three minute intervals, which he sits down at night and transcribes into notebooks that he keeps in a black metal trunk behind his sofa. I wonder if he is ever tempted to cheat and upgrade his memories - more action, more color, more drama - knowing that in a few minutes' time he'll be none the wiser.
Lovell pointed out that in order for a computer to really 'use' a memory it has to represent the knowledge associated with that memory. For humans, memory has a functional purpose. But that is not the case with the computer, where 'knowledge has to be represented in order for it to be remembered.'

It is in this context that the use of the Super8 film footage within the piece is significant. After the power has been cut and the performers have told stories by match-light, a Super 8 film is projected, flickering onto the screen. Entitled Memory of Water, this 12 minute film presents a melange of images of water in Paris, recalling the city through currents and reflections. When this film is played at this point in the performance (after the computerised clones, the digital graphics of the Dolly Morph and the television loop) the image it depicts of a real place is particularly striking. The simple, handheld, black and white use of Super 8 is contrasts starkly with the gluttonous use of the digital camera, the endless technicolour looping of the television. Tony Treadway states that:

I would argue that the camcorder is less empowering than the Super 8 camera because you become addicted to recording more and more, which gives you less and less time to look at what you are recording. You can't afford the means of editing it, so you don't edit it, so you don't present it in an edited form. So it never gets presented. And you are also pouring it into a medium which is fragile, which is not going to last, so those families are going to end up with nothing in 50 years' (Treadway in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 72).
Each roll of Super8 film allows for only 3 minutes of filming. No longer is there the option to reshoot the scene for a better angle as at the beginning of Random Acts of Memory. As Owen O'Toole states, 'Memory isn't something that goes on forever. We don't have memories in 120-minute reveries. We have memories in little bursts. That's why a single roll of Super8 is so appropriate' (O'Toole in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 43). After the custom made set, designed to present the technology to its best advantage, the special revolving chair allowing smooth precision tracking, here the hand held camera presents a very different aesthetic. Just as the images presented reveal a real place, the body of Paris, its streets, its corners, its gutters, its market stalls, each reflected by the water it holds on its surface, there is a sense of the person behind the image. The presence of the human body behind the camera is very visible with Super8 because of the way it is held or moved (Fonoroff in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 42).

There is also a strong form and content relationship present within the script. What will be chosen. What is essential to show in the precious three minutes of film? As essential as the very matter of the film itself is the water it portrays running through the gutters of Parisian side streets, dripping from the stone mouths of the lion statues surrounding the fountains. Fonoroff states that:

Like the childhood pastimes of saving baby teeth, locks of hair, and autographs, Super 8 filmmaking was for me intricately tied to the idea of the personal imprint, of the life of the body over the course of time. Each yellow box of processed Kodak film contained a plastic spool that represented about two and a half minutes of a
complete world in miniature: a fragment can only be achieved through an idea of the totality (Fonoroff in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 83).

The text which accompanies the film is also bound up in a reciprocal form and content relationship to the Super 8 film. As the film fades up into black and white footage of an old square in Paris, filled with fountains, Helen speaks the live soundtrack, told in rhythm with the film:

Helen: ...a sort of 'odor of memory,' she wrote, 'like a person who has come from some place that we have forgotten and would give our life to recall.' Pause. Walking down the Boulevard de Saint Michel, I look up and see my dress hanging from the railings of our balcony, where I placed it this morning to dry in the sun. It makes me happy to see it there. Pause. There's a little square with four identical fountains, one in each corner, where we go some days and watch the people. Pause. Leaving the gallery, we hear fragments of a woman's voice singing an operatic aria and follow the notes until we see the singer, standing in an archway on la place de Vosges. Sitting by a fountain in the park nearby we listen to her sing and watch a small boy run round and round the fountain, a string in his hand attached to a blue boat.

Each line speaks of captured, remembered moments, fragments caught in the mind and on celluloid. Fred Camper describes Super8 film as presenting an effect 'not of separately articulated spaces, but of a kind of overall aura, almost an odor, that the colors seem to give off' (Camper in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 30). The images last for a few seconds, a piece of paper carried by a flow of water down a Paris side street and carried out of sight under the gutter; white and silver fish shining wet at the market and large crabs catching last droplets of water on their whiskers.

One pays attention to what is most important when watching a Super8 film, to the essences of things. It is a kind of reduced image in which outlines, silhouettes, shapes appear flattened in relation to
the space around them, it is a very painterly image, and a very beautiful one. I find that a part of me is engaged in terms of the physiology of perception; some perceptual niche is engaged (Fonoroff in Kilchesty, 1999, p. 45).

Super8 demands that the artist make precise choices; structurally more like a poem than a narrative. Rather than documenting everything that takes place, like the digital camera in Random Acts of Memory, Super8 captures what is at the heart of the action, as Fonoroff says, the essence. In his book *Data Smog, Surviving the Information Glut*, David Shenk compares the selective qualities of Super8 and VHS:

> The camcorder is everywhere. It has become an integral part of the American suburban family lifestyle. Home video archives have blossomed, filling shelves with scores of hours of toddlers learning how to walk...The tape is so long and inexpensive that camcorders are routinely brought out for family events and simply left running, so as not to miss anything. As today's colossal computer hard drives allow us to access and store a nearly unlimited mount of text, today's camcorders do the same with sound and images (Shenk, 1997, p. 193).

For me the key line in Shenk's argument is 'not to miss anything.' Throughout *Random Acts of Memory* the performers simultaneously record themselves, nothing is 'missed out'. And yet there is no sense that these recordings are taken in order to capture special, important, emotive moments. Again, to cite the example at the start of the performance when Helen recalls finding her grandfather dead in his chair, Leslie shows no concern towards Helen's feelings. Leslie's concern is purely to capture a good shot. Likewise, Helen shows no sense of distress that Leslie disregards her personal feelings and she willingly shifts position for Leslie.
to get a better angle. For Shenk, the amount of video it is possible to shoot of an event, easily and cheaply actually renders it lifeless.52

The decision to include the Super8 film of Memory of Water into Random Acts of Memory engendered further explorations into the comparisons between old and new technologies, the reciprocity of the live with this older but mediated format. In terms of ideas around the theme of memory it presented different questions and images, reflected within the live text:

Leslie: In Greek myth, the Lethe is the River of Oblivion, or forgetfulness in the Underworld. Legend has it that streams carry the memories that the Lethe has washed from the feet of the dead to a well of Remembrance. Water that washes became the source of remembrance, the wellspring of culture, and acquired the features of woman. This well of remembrance, the Greeks call Mnemosyne, from whose name we derive memory, mimeses, memos...A mortal who is blessed by the Gods can approach this well and listen to the muses sing in their several voices: what is, what was, and what will be. Even the immortals must draw on her waters if they wish to remember.

Muschamp writes that in Jet Lag, ‘the sea becomes a metaphor for what Manuel Castels, the urban theorist, calls the electronic ‘space of flows,’ the communications network that keeps capital constantly on the move,’ (Muschamp, The New York Times, February 6 2000, p. 37-39). Muschamp continues, stating that, ‘We’re supposed to be in the age of cybernetics, a term adopted from the Greek word for helmsman. The hope was that computers and other electronic media would enable us to be captains of our own ships’ (Muschamp, The New York Times, February 6 2000, p. 37-
39). Here the helmsman is the Super 8 film, containing the spill of water in its 3 minute existence. For Jet Lag, the dystopian message revealed is 'that we are all captive passengers on a ship drifting rudderless across the techno-environments we have made,' (Muschamp, New York Times, February 6 2000, pp. 37-39).

The Memory of Water text concludes:

But the first woman of oral tradition is forgotten when the oral transmission of epic ceases. Not one Greek city has preserved an altar dedicated to Mnemosyne. Her name becomes a technical term for memory, now imagined as a page; the stuff of memory turns from water into a shard. Written language, which has fixed words on clay tablets, acquires more authorship that the re-evocation of fluid, living speech.

The live text which accompanies the film also serves as a reminder that Super8 sound film is no longer made, although many of the existing Super8 cameras have the capacity to record sound. The technology itself leaves traces of memory in the body of the camera: memories of 'what was', deleted to make room for 'what will be.' What prefix have the technologies which no longer exist, that are not new and no yet old? Forgotten? Past? Or merely passed over in the surge forward for the newer, better thing?

ARVID

The technologies used in presenting Random Acts of Memory were the results of research initiatives ongoing in the Technology Development
Group of the Institute for Studies in the Arts, Arizona State University, where *Random Acts of Memory* was devised and premiered. The moving video images in the piece, including the life-sized free floating clones, were provided by ARVID (Autonomous Remote Video Imaging Device): a prototype device for human / video performance. According to George Pawl, ARVID's creator:

The exploration of the performance applications of interactive on-stage sensing systems and ARVID showed that even in its early days of development, it is considerably more flexible and talented than standard projection systems, able to move in a 360 degree axis and to respond to programmed or spontaneously triggered cues.³³

For Pawl, the initial concept for constructing ARVID derived from a need in a live performance on which he was working to project images to areas on the stage which were impossible to reach with a conventional projector, without having eight or ten different projectors. He adapted a standard projector to ride on a moveable arm previously used specifically for follow spot lighting at rock concerts. The ARVID system allowed a spatial interaction between the performer and the video, breaking the boundaries of a fixed projection surface. As one of the main issues in the performance was the notion of a 'culture of the copy' in which information, memory, art and even sheep are processed and reproduced, both Leslie's and my reaction to the ARVID system was to create performance clones of ourselves, the performers, which moved through the space.³⁴
In order for there to be a symbiotic relationship between technology and performance there needs to be a similar dialogue between performers and technologists. Levinson defines technology as 'an embodiment of human ideas' (1997, p. 60). In other words, like, technology, live performance, finds its genesis in the living breathing bodies and minds of those who create it. It seems only logical, then, to include within an analysis of the relationship between technology and performance, a discussion on the relationship between technologists and performers.

The technologists involved in Random Acts of Memory showed great clarity of thought and perception concerning the aims and objectives of ARVID at all stages of the process. The primary new aim for ARVID as expressed by the technologists after the work on Random Acts of Memory was to make it more improvisational, sensitizing the device to the action on stage in order to increase interactivity and interaction. As the programmer, Lovell's original aims for ARVID were to make the technology more accessible to the artists, developing an interface that could allow for more playful interaction and the happy accidents of improvisation, as opposed to the heavily deterministic programming paths used in Random Acts of Memory, which marked the maiden voyage of the device.

In as much as the technology added conceptual ideas from the performers into the delivery mechanism for the performance, so the technologists were influenced in their thinking about the technology by the content of the live performance. In terms of discovering a symbiotic relationship
between the technology and the live performance, the general consensus of the group was that it was not necessarily a matter of what technology is employed but rather of how the technology is emphasised. Many of the members of the production crew who were involved in the mechanics of the performance came from a background of traditional theatre. When asked for his perspective on the changing dynamics of theatre in the light of new technologies, George Pawl responded to a comment raised by one of the high school students who had seen *Random Acts of Memory*. The student had stated on behalf of her class, that, as part of the 'media generation', she had witnessed the employment of new media technologies all the time. Pawl's response to the statement was, 'yes, but you don't see it live'. For Philips, also from a theatre background, the main changes in theatre in the age of new technologies have to do with the way people focus their attention and the triggers used to that end.

The things that are visually and auditorially important are changing in a way they have never changed before. Bringing technology elements into live performance is one of two possible paths live performance can use to survive. The other one is stripping everything away ... bringing a live audience in to meet technology in a completely different way than \in TV or film. You pay a different kind of attention than you do when you meet a video in live performance.56

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Part Two

The essence of technology is by no means anything technological. Thus we shall never experience our relationship to the essence of technology so long as we merely conceive and push forward the technological, put up with it, or evade it. Everywhere we remain unfree and chained to technology, whether we passionately affirm or deny it. But we are delivered over to it in the worst possible way when we regard it as something neutral; for this conception of it, to which today we particularly like to do homage, makes us utterly blind to the essence of technology (Heidegger, 1997, p. 4).

Form And Content/Live and Mediated

This part explores the different ways in which certain live performances have chosen to incorporate a live and mediated hybrid form. It also analyses the relationships of form to content, at play, and the varying degrees of success of these performances. Included within this is an examination of the powerful live, unmediated performance work of Franko B, which is then contrasted with meditated examples of his work (which is, I argue, less engaging for the audience). This part also examines the notion of technology as providing another, alternative venue for performers, briefly citing an other project by Leslie Hill and myself, entitled I never go anywhere I can’t drive myself as a case study. In terms of the notion of mediatisation offering different ‘venues for the performer’, I have also included a brief description of those live performers who have become technologists of their own ‘mediated bodies’, and who use their own bodies as sites or venues for the technology. Finally, I examine the notion of ‘community’ as it refers to live and mediated performance.
In some ways technology can seem to be the natural partner of dance. For example, for some choreographers interested purely in 'movement for movement's sake' the body of the dancer is used, as what I would define as a 'meat puppet,' in order to enact prescribed movements. Technology is able to fit easily into this formalistic mode of production. But what implications does this have for content based work? In the last chapter of his book *An Introduction to Digital Media*, Tony Feldman examines the notion of content in the digital world – asking 'what is digital content?' Similarly, an article in *The New York Times Magazine*, entitled, 'Inside Job', by David Rakoff, features an interview with Michael Hirschorn and Kurt Anderson, the brains behind Inside.com a digital information service about the entertainment industry. Hirschorn states that: 'the creation of content has become more interesting than the content itself' (Rakoff, *The New York Times Magazine*, 16th April, 2000). What is the content when we use technology? What is the reason for employing technologies in live performance? How does the technology enhance the live, either as a foil or a way of reinforcing what is happening in the live? Heidegger states that: 'once we open ourselves expressly to the essence of technology, we find ourselves unexpectedly taken into a freeing claim' (1997, p. 26). However, some live performance work, rather than being liberated and expanded by using technology can be said to be constricted by the form. For example, as regards the vast bulk of the work presented at IDAT '99, the international dance and technology conference (described by critic Arthur Sabatini as 'remarkably underwhelming'), I would cite this as a case of 'technology as topping.' Without the sense of a reciprocal role
between mediated and live, and without a prioritising of content over form, live work is in danger of becoming meaningless.

In Samira Kawash's article, 'Interactivity and Vulnerability' she writes that:

Traditional museums, increasingly challenged to become more democratic, more accessible, and more economically autonomous, are confronted with the imperative to become 'interactive.' This has frequently meant adding a layer of technology on top of already existing exhibits or displays. The effect is to reinforce the distinction between, on the one hand, the objects themselves which are presented as indifferent to their viewers, and on the other, the 'interactivity' which is isolated to institutionally specified and sanctioned locales (Kawash, 1999, p. 48).

Kawash also gives example of the 'Digital Duchamp' website where viewers can alter the look of famous art works, such as giving the Mona Lisa a moustache. 'This interactive project is a precise demonstration of the impossibility of 'interactivity' in the traditional museum: to interact in this way with the Mona Lisa is to destroy it' (1999, p. 48). Such examples of the so-called capabilities of technology can actually be said to enforce what its limitations are. 'Technology for technology's sake' does little to enhance either the technology or the subject it is being used to represent. Kawash cites the example of the painting on the wall of the gallery and the touch screen in the kiosk next to it. Why bother? (1999, p. 48).

As one example of a technology application in which there is a strong relationship between form and content, Kawash cites the work of performance artists Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Roberto Sifuentes with
particular reference to their project *El Mexterminator*. The piece was a month-long series of various actions and happenings in both real and virtual places, including live internet chat and interactive website work.

Audiences are invited to interact with the performers in person (in the museum installation and in other public spaces), in 'live' but technologically mediated format (radio call in, Internet live chat), and through written interactions both virtual (the web-based confessional) and physical (the paper questionnaire) (Kawash, 1999, pp. 46-47).

Both the decision to use technologies and the manner in which they were employed within the piece, and also the way the technology was used, had a deliberate effect on the overall content of the piece and the interactions and reactions that were engendered by it. In *El Mexterminator* 'the interactions of viewer, object and context become the very substance of the work itself' (1999, p. 48). The form not only heightens but adds to the content itself. For Gómez-Peña and Sifuentes, the various media evoked/provoked different responses and allowed layered types of interaction with the audience members, more ambiguous and complex than previous forms of 'in your face performance' (1999, p. 46).57

Auslander states that:

The general response of live performance to the oppression and economic superiority of mediated forms has been to become as much like them as possible. From ball games that incorporate instant replay screens to rock concerts that recreate the images of music video, to live stage versions of television shows and movies, to dance and performance art's incorporation of video, evidence of
the incursion of mediatization into the live event is available across the entire spectrum of performance genres (Auslander, 1999, p. 7).

It could certainly be argued that Auslander is drawing too many conclusions. How does the inclusion of media into live performance render them more alike? Isn’t technology merely another option available to the performer to communicate, rather than a simulating of something else? In her article ‘Push the Boat Out: Site-Specific and Cyberspatial in Live Art’, Leslie Hill talks about the fact that different ‘venues’ are enabled by technologies. Hill perceives that CD-ROMs, or the Internet, enable different ways of presenting performance work. Auslander argues that Phelan creates an opposition between live and mediated by describing ‘virtuous live performance’ as being ‘menaced by evil mediatization wherein liveness is caught in a life and death struggle with the insidious Other’ (Auslander in Diamond, 1996, p. 198). I would argue, however, that it is (ironically) Auslander’s argument which seems to place the artist in a position of opposition with the different formats available. For example: as an artist Hill creates live work and authors CD-ROMs; she makes live performance and websites. Hill states that, ‘For the more visceral aspects of live art, technology will always be hard pressed to eliminate the adage, ‘you really had to be there’ (1998, p. 46). Similarly, as stated earlier, Forced Entertainment, who Auslander quotes at the beginning of Liveness work in live and in mediated formats.
Auslander bases much of his argument on a premise which not only positions live performance and mediatisation in a position of opposition, but also devalues what is unique and of value in live performance:

The progressive diminution of previous distinctions between the live and the mediatized, in which live events are becoming more and more like mediatized ones, raises for me the question of whether there really are clear-cut ontological distinctions between live forms and mediatized ones. Although my initial arguments may seem to rest on the assumption that there are, ultimately I find that not to be the case. If live performance cannot be shown to be economically independent of, immune from contamination by, and ontologically different from mediatized forms, in what sense can Liveness function as a site of cultural and ideological resistance, as Bogosian, Phelan and others claim? (Auslander, 1999, p. 7).

The all or nothing position which Auslander takes seems to devalue live performance, weakening his argument as it weakens a perception of both the formats of which he speaks. Must the artist choose one over the other? Surely the potentials of both old and new technologies are still on offer to the artist, alongside, as part of and in tandem with live performance.59

In his article ‘A Timeless Moment grounded in Impermanence’, Vincent Canby writes of the incomparable power of live theatre. It may seem somewhat surprising to discover that the piece of theatre he is describing is a staged reading of Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf? at The Majestic Theatre, New York. I have often questioned the purpose of both staged and sight readings, seeing them as incomplete performance. The reactions the piece engenders for Canby, however, and the audience whom he describes as leaving the theatre ‘aware that they had just experienced
something available nowhere but in this great ailing tradition we call theatre', are significant to the (re)evaluation of live performance. Despite the fact that in the staged reading the performers are seen by the audience in their more 'natural state', more fallible, seen in the process of remembering and forgetting their lines, remembering and forgetting their moves, without the distancing effects of stage lighting, costume or make-up, Benjamin's notion of 'aura' still remains.

What is perhaps more significant is that in the reading, actress Uta Hagen recreates the role, in which she had triumphed thirty seven years before. In recreating the role the real life experiences of Hagen in those thirty-seven years become a part of the character. According to Canby, Hagen gave a: 'Great, bawdy one-night stand' of a performance and that with the role of Martha her performance becomes legendary in that her:

Physical and psychological presence possibly even enriched by everything that has happened since the last time she played the role. Such legends are unique to theatre. They are an impossibility in any of the performing arts that have been frozen in time on film or tape. Movies have enormous power, but, being representations of something already completed, they are fixed and quite dead. Only memory keeps the living theatre alive, recalling the particular circumstances in which time wasn't stopped but, instead, its passage was celebrated. It is only in an acute awareness of the finite, during a performance that you know will never be exactly duplicated, that you glimpse the meaning of the infinite (Canby, The New York Times, 1999, p. 8).

The more ageist world of cinema does not allow for such recreations in the same way as the world of theatre and live performance, which, invested in the live, the ephemeral, are natural sites for such happenings, not
transmittable in the same way through other mediums. Lois Keidan states that, 'People go on about fear of the future, but I think we're beginning to deal with our fear of the present. Performance is very much in the here and now. You have to be there' (Lois Keidan as cited by Annie Griffin, The Guardian, 1st November, 1995).

Although within this thesis I argue for a more reciprocal positioning of live and mediated performance than I believe Auslander describes, I also believe that some live performance work, which fully incorporates the live, time-based dynamic of its existence does not lay itself open to transition to a different format. The live and the mediated work of Italian performance artist Franko B provides a case in point. In his 1996 work entitled, I'm Not Your Babe, the performer stands motionless on a stark white stage whilst his blood drips away from his body in a steady painful flow. His performances provoke intensely visceral, emotional responses from his audience as his identity is stripped and reclaimed. This work offers a completely visceral response to the external world.

Franko's assertion of the body/object, in opposition to all controlling forces, insists that the body will not be forgotten but rather that it will be incorporated, with all its depravity, into a world that is increasingly sterile, technologised and stressful (Armstrong, 1996, p. 19).

Watching Franko B's 1999 video installation I Miss You at Toynbee Studios does not evince the same gut-churning reaction. The audience are led into the space in small groups at 15 minute intervals, and the
rumours fly that audience members are asked donate a pint of blood before entering the installation, so that part of the performance becomes a scanning of faces of the returning audience members. In the corridor outside the studio, green medical curtains frame a monitor showing video footage of Franko B releasing blood from his arm. The audience are then bustled into the room in accordance with the imperative of the 15 minute time slot and the imminent arrival of the next group. Brown shoe-box shaped boxes lay on the floor, with the outlines of images of ambulances, syringes, hospitals reflected in red from gels under the box lids. Similar objects deck the walls, with the words ‘queer’, and ‘loss’ marked out. A filing cabinet stands in the far corner. A cross has been cut out of the top drawer, framing a monitor. Footage of Franko B cutting, bleeding, scarring is interspersed with overground trains and seemingly endless hospital corridors and vast snow-covered landscapes. The scenic juxtapositions of the video did not add dimension but rather seemed to diminish the power of the work. When an audience is presented with the inescapably here-and-now rawness of the bleeding figure in front of them, many responses are triggered by the force of the image and the stark minimalism of the event.

Video gives the viewer a ‘safe screen’ to view the bleeding body and I would suggest that the viewer is desensitised. There is no imminent danger, no feeling of witnessing, no moral questions of complicity, no smell of fresh blood. Several people looked away from the image – but there was a safety in the escape – the objects could be examined, the
screen was small and easily avoided. Rather than creating a more intimate, more vulnerable space, the limited audience numbers actually seemed to work in opposition to this. In the large auditorium of the ICA, the crowded audience pushed close to one another, hemmed in by the presence of hot human bodies, all witnessing the truth of their own humanity in the viscera of the performance before them. The loud, body-pulsing soundtrack made the whole effect one of being engulfed, entering en-mass into the body and blood of the performer. Sitting cross-legged in the small studio gazing at the cabinet framed monitor, knowing it was only going to be a brief 15 minutes before we reentered the convivial café downstairs, diminished the impact as did the foreknowledge that the artist himself was already in the café, drinking wine and chatting to members of the arts community, his recent publication of photos on sale at one of the café tables. The heavy red curtains were reminiscent of an opulent sitting room although the strong hospital smell of antiseptic worked against this, evoking a more sterile, unnerving atmosphere yet the overall effect was of an anesthetised viewing. At the end, the audience scuttled out, hurried by the stage manager.

The strength of Franko B's work arguably lies intrinsically in the live presence, almost a bearing witness from the audience:

Franko's work uses the existential self through form by using blood, drawn from his own veins to spill onto his body. He contrasts visceral body rituals with an organic need and desire to function as human, synthesizing a tension in his performance portraits, which implicate taboo and the natural destitution of the
body, fundamental aspects of existence (Armstrong, 1996, pp. 16-17).

Technology as an Alternative ‘Venue’

Paul Levinson states in his book, The Soft Edge: A Natural History and Future of the Information Revolution:

The moral for the evolution of media is very profound: when a new medium triumphs over an older medium in a given function, that does not mean the old medium will shrivel up and die. Rather, the old medium may be pushed into a niche in which it can perform better than the new medium, and where it will therefore survive, albeit as something different from what it was before the new medium arrived (Levinson, 1997, p. 48).

Levinson’s analysis engenders a ‘natural’ evolitional paradigm which can not only can be seen to provide an inclusive framework for both old and new technologies, but can also be seen to establish an inclusive rather than oppositional infrastructure for live performance and its relation with mediatisation. Conversely, there is a sense that within Auslander’s argument concerning the value of the live event and its placement within an increasingly mediatised culture, he leaves live performance nowhere to go, restricting options to all-or-nothing binary oppositions. Within this section I will look at a number of ways in which technology can provide alternative ‘venues’ for performance, referring to time-based work such as an internet performance entitled, I never go anywhere I can’t drive myself, and briefly describing particular aspects of the work of artists Stelarc and Orlan, whose bodies in a sense become the ‘venues’ for the technology
they use. Finally, following on from the notion of differently performative/mediated venues available to the artist, I will examine some of the implications for the documentation of live work.

Auslander cites the work of Laurie Anderson as an example of how as live work becomes more mediatized, and the live presence becomes unnecessary:

Even as live performance becomes more and more like mediatized performance, is clearly illustrated by The Nerve Bible, almost all of which was prerecorded and run by computers. During the second half, Anderson wandered on-and off-stage, as if to suggest that the computerized, audiovisual machine she had set into motion could run itself, that it was the show, with her or without her (Auslander, 1999, p. 59).

Auslander cites this example in specific relation to the fact that at present live performance still carries more symbolic capital: 'Even though Anderson's performance is barely live at all, it still commands greater symbolic capital than full mediatised forms' (1999, p, 59). However, for Auslander this is a temporary condition, as he states that in the near future:

We can begin to imagine a culture in which more prestige would accrue to someone who said she had seen Anderson on videotape, or listened to her on CD than to the person who had seen her live. It is actually not all difficult to imagine cases in which owning the mediatized version of a performance is worth the same, if not more, symbolic capital as having attended the live event (Auslander, 1999, p. 59).

It is interesting to note that Laurie Anderson herself veers between making highly mediated, (although still live) performances, and low tech
pieces which rely almost solely on the live performance. Perhaps one of the most memorable pairings of live and mediated occurs in Laurie Anderson’s 1994 CD-ROM, *Puppet Motel*, in which Anderson’s spirited debate with her own ‘video clone’, a short, geeky male version of herself, serves as an ingenious pairing of ‘live’ with pre-recorded, physiological with digitally manipulated, a confrontation further complicated by the fact that both the ‘real’ and the clone are actually ‘sprites’ on a CD-ROM.

I never go anywhere I can’t drive myself – www.placelessness.com

As a live artist, the ‘live’ nature of the Internet held obvious appeal - being ‘on-line’ is a live situation in a way that reading a book or watching a film is not because in exploring the Internet you are downloading images and information from the source in the moment, i.e. as you navigate. The live aspect of the Internet makes it ideal for time based work, sites can be updated weekly, hourly, or every few seconds not only by the artist but by the people who visit the site (Hill, 1998, p. 46).

The underlying aim of this project was to create work that fully utilised the virtual aspects of new media, both in terms of form and content, creating performance work specifically for a virtual venue which would not be replicable in any other format: work that could not happen in any other way. *I never go anywhere I can’t drive myself* was a month-long live art road trip across legendary Route 66 from Chicago to L.A. and back again. Live interactive ‘performances’ were generated en route through the interaction with people, sites and objects, whilst the creation and daily updating of a road trip web site invited web audiences to participate in
the 'virtual' journey, including a Chat Page enabling virtual travelers to leave their comments, insights and requests. Through their interaction with people on the road and on the web, Hill and I constantly reassessed notions of 'place' and 'placelessness' and of 'real', 'virtual' and 'live' art.4

On the journey from East to West and back again, we performed 'Give' and 'Take', a series of interactions in which we gave and took as much 'evidence' as possible, including an extensive, eclectic archive of documentation, in a determined desire to leave and to discover 'traces' of reality. 'Give' involved leaving a trail of artifacts which included: a trail of video messages shot in England (our point of departure) such as footage of the artists at Derek Jarman's garden, left in a reclaimed urban garden in Chicago; English primroses planted in Oklahoma pastures; old maps of Shropshire and Skye; family photographs; souvenirs from the Tower Of London; 'original' Sherlock Holmes memorabilia from Baker Street; Sainsbury's digestive biscuits and red label tea; verbal and written narratives by the artists, and, of course, an audio recording of the Shipping Forecast. 'Take' was comprised of collecting a series of items found, given or stolen from places en-route including a wealth of stories, recipes, personal anecdotes, Polaroid and digital photographs as well as an abundance of Route 66 memorabilia and artifacts. Janet Adshead-Lansdale writes that:

While Doris Humphrey's dance Shakers (1930), or Enter Achilles (1995), Lloyd Newson's collaborative work, each in its own way challenged prevailing ideologies, neither matches Paris's and Hill's
radical view of 'theatre' as 'performance', as travel through time and space, virtual and real, with audiences seen and unseen (Adshead–Lansdale in Goodman, 1998, p. 321).

Similarly in her recent book, Off the Beaten Track, Lucy Lippard writes that:

Travelling alone ... we are far more likely to interact with both places and people on an unselfconscious or at least less self-conscious basis. We are not who we think we are when we are elsewhere. We can even become another person entirely. Who will even know? Travelling can be a kind of performance piece (Lippard, 1999, p. 5).

Lippard's notion of the performativity of travel relates strongly to this project. Throughout the journey Hill and I questioned our roles: were we the performers, or the audience? And what about those who we met along the road and whose pictures, stories and artifacts became the backbone of the website. As Lippard writes, 'Is anyone himself when a tourist? Which persona, which place?' (1999, p. 37). Similarly with the interactive possibilities of the Drive site, the virtual audience who navigated through it could also be seen to become directors or performers through their interactivity. Mark Dery asks:

What is interactivity? Digitization offers important opportunities to deliver traditional, linear information and media experience in new ways... Interactivity in an information system gives the user some influence over access to the information and a degree of control over the outcomes of using the system. In practice, this usually means that, in one form or another, the system presents the user with choices (Dery, 1996, p. 13).

Our virtual audience for I never go anywhere I can't drive myself left evidence of their participation not only in comments on the chat page of
the web site, but also through posting actual requests, such as an entreaty for a recipe for pecan pie, to be written by a waitress in a diner onto her order pad, or directions to a location a little off the beaten track. The sense of an online community or global village created by the internet was made palpable by these interactions, and it is interesting to compare the responses to the project with the responses of the audience to Random Acts of Memory, both representing different, but involved senses of community. As the virtual audience informed our real life actions I wondered exactly who was the performer and who the audience. Entering the Midway Cafe in Adrian, Texas, it soon became clear that the type of interaction possible in this project had a spontaneity and life of its own. The cafe, like most others on the now decommissioned route, was fairly empty. Mostly it contained a few regular customers. One, a man in his mid '70s whom I heard the waitress call Bob, was sitting at the counter reading the paper, a bright green visor perched on his shock of white hair. Little did I know that only a short while later we would be two miles up the road following Bob's old red pick-up truck as he led us to his farm where we were introduced to his pal Ronnie Jackson, and were given the guided tour of their fleet of handcrafted air planes. John Beckmann writes that 'Space is no longer something one moves through — space now moves through us' (1998, p. 4). On this journey down a real road charted by a virtual site, the sense of place and placelessness merged. Our space was that of cyberspace and of standing in the middle of Texas farmland, feeling the heat of the midday sun on our backs, with Bob and Ronnie: sharing space(s).
The contact with the virtual audience had its own unique dynamism. The *I never go anywhere I can't drive myself* web site made the project about the specific and the infinite at the same time; the potential to make contact with one waitress in a diner in the middle of the Mojave Desert and simultaneously with the rest of the world. Getting lost on the road one day as it eluded us for a moment, we stopped in a quiet street to ask directions. The 'street' was just a few houses really, in the middle of the vast expanse of Oklahoma plains. It was early morning but an old woman in a bright red dressing gown was out getting her mail from the box at the end of her garden or 'yard’. Despite the early hour she was perfectly made up, her lipstick matching her gown, and holding a half-eaten, fleshy avocado in her hand. As we drove off, I turned back and watched her getting smaller and smaller until she was just a tiny red dot in all that landscape and I thought about how later I would be sending that information about her housecoat out into the other vast landscape of cyberspace. In *Invisible Cities*, Kublai says to Polo: 'I do not know when you have had time to visit all the countries you describe to me. It seems to me you have never moved from this garden' (Calvino, 1997, p. 103).

Throughout the road trip the virtual audience shared in the journey through the interactivity of the site. Similarly, the responses from the virtual audience on the chat page instructed and informed the journey for both.
What is the reality of performance which exists primarily only in cyberspace? Hill poses the question, referencing Benjamin: 'Is it an original which has transcended the need for reproduction or it is a simulation that supersedes the need for the existence of an 'authentic' original? Is cyberspace site-specific or is cyberspace a realm of placelessness? '(1998, p. 49). Certainly, what lay at the heart of the piece was its undeniably live nature. Hybrid works such as this project can serve as useful models in moving performance theory away from a binary model of live and mediated, focussing instead on the specific qualities of each and the dynamic both can have working together. The old decommissioned highway of Route 66 offered an interesting analogy for the information highway, 'a vast, directed flux of digital information and communications' (Dery, 1996, p. 70).

I never go anywhere I can't drive myself also took on some of the larger metaphors that are attributed to the notion of a road trip, in the style of Kerouac et al. Lippard writes that:

The primordial beaten track is the road – the modern counterpart of the desert as a place where revelations occur. Landscape, people, pleasure, disaster... the road is a microcosm of everything that 'comes down the pike' in life itself (Lippard, 1999, p. 113).

In as much as Hill and I were exploring not only real and virtual senses of place, but also pioneering for ourselves, as performers, a new way of performing, within a new medium which we were learning literally as we traveled. Referencing Phelan's statement cited at the beginning of this
chapter, as regarding 'old' and 'new' technologies, the car itself presented an interesting form of mediatisation. In many ways the car has become such a normal aspect of life that it is not regarded as a form of old or new technology. However, in terms of a reciprocal live and mediated relationship, the car provides an interesting paradigm of the body and the machine. The use of the word 'drive' in the title of this project refers both to driving the car and the computer (often driven simultaneously, the laptop plugged into the cigarette lighter, enabling us to process images and create web pages whilst covering many miles of road).

Updated every few hours, our performance on the site engendered remarkably similar feelings to live performance, including high pressure and high adrenaline. In live performance, however, there is always the reassuring thought that if you make a mistake, you may be the only one aware of it. Here in our virtual venue, one errant dot or a misplaced '<' could wipe out communication with the audience entirely. Our awareness of the 'presence' of our virtual audience was a constant one, even when they were absent, so to speak. The interdependent form and content relationship which the hypertext used to 'speak' to the audience gave the metaphorical journey a non-linear quality similar to the meandering road itself. Hot text links enabled the audience to become authors as they reconfigured linearities. In the case of simply reading or viewing the website, the audience were placed in the roles virtual travelers, as they pointed and clicked to different stories, different days and moments on the road, and to the different people encountered there:
Hot type was set. Digital typesetting programs pour or flow. Hypertexts are, in more than a manner of speaking, three-dimensional. Fuguelike, they carry several levels simultaneously. We talk a lot about 'subtexts' and such, but what if several are actually there in residence? Again, electronic text literalizes a theoretical conundrum. No 'final cut' means no conventional endings, or beginnings or middles either. All of this yields a body of work active not passive, a cannon not frozen in perfection but volatile with contending human motive (Lanham, 1993, p. 21).

As well as the written accounts of each day's experiences we also uploaded digital photographs of people, sites and objects. We chose not to use video on the site, partly because its quality, resolution and most importantly size made for relatively poor, stilted viewing on the web. The download time for a viewer trying to access video from a typical home computer in 1997 was not conducive to the sense of performativity which we wanted to engender on the site:

As a performer, I have been accustomed to cutting and pasting freely from photography, music, video etc., a practice which is severely limited, as yet, on the Internet. A photograph or a simple animation can take several minutes to download from the net, and video and audio can take a small eternity with infuriatingly poor results. While I accept that a certain amount of download time is inevitable, as a performer I would never leave an audience sitting in boredom for five minutes at frequent intervals during a show and expect them to stick around. If the web is to be capitalized on as an alternative performance space, this must be done with the abilities and limitations of the 'venue' in mind, therefore while sophisticated networks of internal and external links and interactive time-based projects are ideal for the web, audio and video and animation work is much better left to CD-ROM. (Hill, 1998, pp. 46-47).

The only full account of the piece, of course, lives in the personal experiences of Hill and myself, but next to that, the web site provides the
most cohesive account of the project. The non-linear possibilities of the web site worked to create a mode of performance that was able to use multimedia and telecommunications within a format that was symbiotic in relation to the content of the piece. In so far as digital technologies can be regarded as more permanent sites of memory than live performance, however, it is interesting that this was not exactly the case in *I never go anywhere I can't drive myself*. We had always imagined the Internet as providing an alternative, and more permanent performance venue. Ultimately however, our cyber 'venue' evidenced the same impermanence, the same ephemerality as a live performance venue would do. The owners of the server which hosted the drive site during the project and afterwards, decided sometime early in 2000 to delete the site from their server space. Unwarned, we did not know this had happened, until we discovered that we could no longer access the site. Hill and I have a copy of the site itself in digital format stored on a computer disk, but there is no record of the comments made to the site once it was online by the virtual audience who followed and influenced the trip. The comments are lost, rendering in this instance digital performance as ephemeral as live performance.

Performers as Technology (Another Venue?)

In exploring the possibilities of new technologies and their relationship with live performance, it is relevant to include a brief analyses of those performance artists who in some cases seem to become the technology.
What is up for discussion when the artist becomes the technologist of her own body? In some of these cases rather than using the technology to heighten the *Liveness* of the body, the somatic body becomes obliterated by the machine. In *Breaking Frame: Technology and the Visual Arts in the Nineteenth Century*, Julie Wosk writes that the concept of mechanized human beings became both a fear and an area of ridicule in the nineteenth century. Reactions were exacerbated by Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*: 'The potent force of Shelly's mythic tale arises from its ability to embody the century's dual views of technology; the expansive pride in human inventiveness and the terrifying fear of becoming overshadowed and even annihilated by one's own technological expertise' (1992, p. 69). Wosk goes on to state that:

> The challenge to human identity posed by Shelley's technological simulacrum raised issues that haunted nineteenth-century thinking even as the focus sharpened to more particularized fears of mechanized humans. It was the idea of people themselves taking on the properties of machines – by wearing mechanical prostheses, by relying on technological aids, by becoming robotlike in their jerky movements and emotionless responses – that became, to some writers and artists, a source of amusement, scoffing and alarm (Wosk, 1992, p. 87).

Wosk goes on to state that this mixture of fear and fascination engendered by the prospect of mechanised human figures, was continued by Twentieth-century artists. Indeed the mechanised human was seen as 'the very embodiment of the modern era', or as German Bauhaus artist Oskar Schlemmer wrote in 1922, 'Life has become so mechanised, thanks to
machines and technology...that we are intensely aware of man as a
machine and the body as mechanism’ (as cited in Wosk, 1992, p. 214).

For some artists, however, the embodiment of the machine has been
articulated as the overarching aim. The Australian artist Stelarc, for
example, whose practice has always been about extending and
challenging the limits of the body (as is specifically visible in his
suspension performances during the 1970s), uses his ‘technological
expertise’ to create robots to extend his physical capabilities as a
performer. He turns the virtual into the visceral, not only using the
technology to change his body but encompassing it as his body with his
Laser eye, Third Hand and Amplified body. For Stelarc, the body is
obsolete:

In order to conquer natural limitations, Stelarc has coupled robots
to his body. The resultant Cyborg actor is currently equipped with
a robotic third arm and may be controlled by gestural language or
from an interactive space.... Stelarc considers the human body to be
redundant, its only capacity to evolve through the use of
technological developments extending the body’s sphere of
influence far beyond its own density and the physical space it

At the PSi 2000 conference, Stelarc gave demonstrations of his Third
Hand, described by Dery as:

Custom-made by a Japanese manufacturer, the Hand is a dexterous
robotic manipulator that can be actuated by EMG (electromyogram)
signals from the muscles in Stelarc’s abdomen and thighs. It can pinch, grip, release and rotate its wrists 290
degrees in either direction, and has a tactile feedback system that
provides a rudimentary sense of touch by stimulating electrodes affixed to the artist's arm (Dery, 1996, p. 156).

After demonstrating the hand, Stelarc then explained and showed footage of an invasive endoscopy in which a micro-engineered 'sculpture' is inserted into his stomach. Dery posits that 'Stelarc embodies McLuhan's declaration that with the advent of cyberculture 'man is beginning to wear his brain outside his skull and his nerves outside his skin; new technology breeds new man' (1996, p. 160).''

Orlan, the notorious French performance artist uses her flesh as the canvas for her work, morphing into various adaptations and manifestations of herself. Orlan 'performs' in her operating theatre where technology literally meets the flesh as she remakes her 'software', re-sculpting her body with the surgeon's blade. Orlan's performances have been associated with theatre of the future and the possibilities of Cyberspace. Her vision proposes the possibility of posthuman actors who would work on their flesh to play new roles (Armstrong, 1996, p.14).

Orlan and Stelarc use the body as an alternative site of practice, another venue. Just as the I never go anywhere I can't drive myself roadtrip sought to re-present 'live' work in an alternative 'live venue' the work of these body artists explores and extends notions of bodily space and spaces. Both Orlan and Stelarc refer to their bodies as 'it' as opposed to 'I': 'the body' never, 'my ' body'; and Orlan literally calls her flesh her 'software'. For both these artists the body has become obsolete. Orlan states that:

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Like the Australian artist Stelarc, I think that the body is obsolete. It no longer is adequate for the current situation. We mutate at the rate of cockroaches, but we are cockroaches whose memories are in computers, who pilot planes and drive cars that we have conceived, although our bodies are not conceived for these speeds (Orlan in Phelan & Lane, 1998, p. 325)

In her article, *Orlan's Performative Transformations*, Tanya Augsburg states that, 'Technology and the body are on display to remark and revision the gendered body' (Augsburg in Phelan & Lane, 1998, p. 289). In Chapter One of this thesis I describe a desire to use technology in live performance as a means to allow the female, gendered, objectified body to be hidden, in order to redirect the gaze. Similarly, Augsburg states that Orlan’s 1993 performance *Omnipresence*:

... Illustrates how we increasingly rely on the 'technological gaze.' Although the performance was 'live' since it unfolded in 'real-time,' its 'Liveness' was not immediate but mediatized. Its spectators viewed the performance through the lens of various mediums of communications technology outside the operating room. The telecast event utilized satellite broadcasting, video phones, and faxes, all of which enabled Orlan to communicate with others from fourteen galleries around the world during her surgery. As an instance of communication art, *Omnipresence* underscores how communication has become mediated by technology (Augsburg in Phelan & Lane, 1998, p. 289).

In speaking of her work, Orlan describes how she reads philosophical and theoretic texts during the operations even when the operation is being performed on her face, which, during the last operations gave the impression of an autopsied corpse that continues to speak, as if detached from its body (See Orlan, Phelan & Lane, 1998, p. 321).
In fact, it is really my audience who hurts when they watch me and the images of my surgeries on video. have given my body to Art. After my death it will therefore not be given to science but to a museum and, mummified, will form the centerpiece of an interactive video installation (See Orlan in Phelan & Lane, 1998, p. 326).

If the medium is the message, is the message in fact becoming the machine? Or is it that technology and virtuality are postmodern, troubling interlopers? In an age of technology, do virtual messages contribute to virtual identities? In Escape Velocity, Dery references artificial intelligence theorist, Hans Moravic who:

Calmly assures us that we are about to enter a "postbiological" universe in which robotic life forms capable of independent thought and procreation will "mature into entities as complex as ourselves." Soon, he insists, we will download our willing spirits into computer memory or robotic bodies and do away with the weak flesh altogether (Dery, 1996, p. 8).

Stelarc himself states that it is time to question whether a bipedal, breathing body with binocular vision and a 1,4000-cc. brain is an adequate biological form. It cannot cope with the quantity, complexity and quality of information it has accumulated. (as cited in Dery, 1996, pp. 160-161). Despite his naming of the somatic body as 'obsolete' and his questioning of its validity, it is interesting to note that Stelarc's video footage of his infamous Suspensions work (in which he hangs at great heights by giant hooks through his naked flesh) caused many in the PSI2000 conference audience, mostly familiar with this work, to look away.
Documentation

I concur with Peggy Phelan's assertion that live performance, because of its very liveness, resists documentation. Other theorists of postmodern performance such as Josette Feral, who take a strong view against mediation in live work, seeing it as antithetical to performance see that even using video to document and preserve performance for future examination 'denatures and destroys it' (Feral as cited in Auslander, 1992, p. 48). However, acknowledging that live performance does not have the same life through documentation does not mean that it cannot have a different one. In an article in The New York Times entitled 'A Screen-Size Encounter With Art Appreciation', Polly Shulman writes that when viewers turn on the small screen to see art works which are meant to be visited in person, there is a lot which they give up: 'the sight of the brush strokes an inch away; the muttered comment of the couple behind; the audience's ecstatic stamping; the chance to catch the singer's eye or the rose she tosses' (Shulman, The New York Times, Feb. 27, 2000 p. 47).

However, for Shulman the television has advantages as well: for example, the unobstructed, carefully chosen view it gives. 'When the show is 'Egg,' PBS's 12-part series about the Arts, add smart, welcoming companionship through an inclusive parade of performance, visual art, poetry and unclassifiable work' (Shulman, The New York Times, Feb. 27, 2000 p. 47). Shulman states that often the makers of Egg use the camera at times to reinforce the artists' apparent message; or sometimes to gently question it. She gives the example of a piece called 'Space,' in which the dance troupe Momix perform what seems to be a contemplative piece:
The dancers whirling slowly like dervishes... 'Egg' emphasizes the ethereal spinning by allowing each frame to linger, giving the motion a blurred, slightly choppy feeling. But a voice-over by Moses Pendleton, the group's artistic director, works against the atmosphere. 'Dancers are burning,' he says. 'Their bodies are on fire.' On-screen, meanwhile, a spitting fire flickers slowly, the sparks forming long white dashes. The image asks viewers to rethink the pace and urgency of the flame. An audience watching the performance onstage might or might not connect the dancers with the vast, cold distances of space, the unimaginable heat of stars or the intricate revolutions of planets and galaxies, but 'Egg' viewers certainly will (Shulman, *The New York Times*, Feb. 27, 2000 p. 47).

Shulman's citation of the Egg series makes an important point in terms of the alternative lives that live performance can have through mediatisation. For me, as both performer and audience member, part of the power of live performance is the imaginative role the audience plays. However much control the artist has in conceptualising a piece, an audience at a live performance will always make their own interpretations, and to a certain extent will decide where they want to look at any particular moment. This role of the audience completes the piece in another way than does the role of the performer – this is part of the sense of the coming together of maker and receiver – we are both.

**COMMUNITY**

Auslander pays a similar lipservice to the role of community within live performance as he does to the utilisation of the senses:
The appeal of live performance proposes that live performance brings performers and spectators together in a community. This view misunderstands the dynamic of performance, which is predicated on the distinction between performers and spectators. Indeed, the effort to eliminate that distinction destroys the very possibility of performance: “The more you approach a performer, the more you inhibit the very performance you are there to see. No matter how much a performer gives, no matter how intensively you attend to her, the gap remains between” (Cubitt as cited by Auslander, 1999, p. 56).

Auslander’s citation of the incident wherein a group of people gathered around a giant TV screen to watch a big-screen simulcast of the opening ceremonies of the 1996 Olympic Games does not for me serve as a meaningful comparison in this context. He states that, ‘The people gathered around the giant television screen constituted a community in all the same senses as the audience attending the live event a few miles away (Auslander, 1999, p. 56). There may have been a sense of community amongst those in attendance but not, I would argue, in the same sense as at the live event. In the same way that the crowds who attended the funeral of Princess Diana needed to make the pilgrimage to London, to St James’ Palace: in the same way that the crowds flock to see the real Mona Lisa and then buy the copy (not as a duplication but as a momento); so the proof, the trigger which ignites the recollection of the live moment in order to recapture and reclaim it is: ‘I saw that in real life.’ The cult event draws people in. ‘Originally the contextual integration of art in tradition found its expression in the cult’ (Benjamin, 1968, p. 223). To use Auslander’s example of the music concert: why do audiences flock to the concerts when the singer is an imperceptible dot in the distance? The crowd packed around them may heighten the sense of drama of the
moment, the crowd pushes and shoves, all desiring to be nearer to the live presence on stage. Although I agree with Auslander that many will watch the simulcast on the screen to get a better view, this does not explain why the crowd chooses to be there rather than to opt for the less expensive, more comfortable close-up view on television at home. Is this because they know that what they see recorded is what is really happening, live, where they are, in that same-space-same-time reality? It is the draw of what Benjamin describes as the 'cult event.'

In taking this viewpoint, Auslander denies that there is any reciprocal exchange between the viewer and what is viewed. What about the energy of the crowd at the sports event he mentions? What would the game be like without the cheers and shouts from the audience, not just for the viewer but for the viewed? In her article, 'Towards a Biological theory of the Body in Performance', Jean-Marie Pradier states:

Drama is a specific situation where live performers are perceived by live spectators. The simultaneous activity of these two kinds of living organisms belonging to the same species results in the creation of a fundamental biological event, whose whole components and consequences are still largely unknown (Pradier, 1990, p. 86).

What about the somatic, visceral experience of being part of a crowd, expressing their feelings and reactions to the shared live action before them? Pradier states:

Clapping, in Western audiences, screaming reactions (Kakegoe in Japan), whistles of approval or disapproval, and the stamping of
Not only does live performance allow for an inclusion of the sensory and olfactory elements, as argued earlier, but within the body of the audience itself, the senses are also engaged and these add to the viscerality of the live encounter. 'A meeting, an assembly or an audience produces a large amount of varied bodily odours, modified by nutrients, olfactory ornaments, age, sex, sexual, emotional and general states' (Pradier, 1990, p. 96).

From my own performance epistemology as a practitioner, I cite a definite and particular experience of being both a part of a performance community and of witnessing the communal response to performance from the audience. Levinson cites the philosopher Kant, stating that 'Reason alone...has its limitations. Untempered by actual experience, it can easily become ideology' (as cited in Levinson, 1997, p. 57). In London in 1994/1995 for example, a new wave of performance art emerged, centered specifically around issues of identity politics. Julia Brosnan writes about one aspect of this movement in her article, 'Performing the Lesbian Body – The New Wave':

As often happens with such movements and trends, a few key people pick up on zeitgeist undercurrents, they meet up, the elements fuse together and they find ways to help each other disseminate their work. In this case there was one particular
movement, ' It was the summer of 1994,' says Helen Goldwater. 'I was in Jyll Bradley’s play On the Playing Fields of Her Rejection and I met Helen Paris. Around then, we also met Marissa Carr and Amy Lame. We’d all been working separately on our own pieces so when we met up it was very exciting' (Brosnan in Rapi, 1998, p. 85). 

The community was centered not only in London but more specifically at The Institute of Contemporary Art, due in part to the programming of Lois Keidan and Catherine Ugwu and in part to the phenomenon that the ‘runt of the litter’ marginality of performance art tends to center itself in a particular venues such as PS 122 in New York, Highways in Los Angeles and The Center of Contemporary Arts in Glasgow. The ICA functioned as a ‘cult’ venue where performances where shown, where artists met to see each other’s work, or simply to see each other. Community is formed not only through the artist, but through programmers, the venues and locations, and in particular cultural moments.

Auslander states that in investigating live performance’s cultural valence for Liveness, he got impatient with what he calls:

traditional, unreflective assumptions that fail to get much further in their attempts to explicate the value of ‘Liveness’ than invoking clichés and mystifications like ‘the magic of live theatre,’ the ‘energy’ that supposedly exists between performers and spectators in a live event, and the ‘community’ that live performance is often said to create among performers and spectators (Auslander, 1999, p. 2).

He does admit that ultimately he acknowledged the validity of these concepts for performers and partisans of live performance, stating that it
may even be necessary for performers to 'believe' in them. Despite his grudging acknowledgment, his use of the word 'believe' implies that he sees the performer and audience as entering a relationship on faith rather than through actual experience, in order to validate what they do. Auslander's argument offers no sense of value attributed to the reciprocal relationship between spectator and performer. I would refer here to the performance of *Vena Amoris*, described in Chapter One of this thesis. From my experience of the piece as performer, and from the audience comments the piece engendered, I would state that the one-to-one audience/performer encounter bears witness to the unique exchange possible between performer and audience, made possible exclusively through live performance. Auslander agrees that: 'Live performance places us in the living presence of the performers, other human beings with whom we desire unity and can imagine achieving it, because they are there, in front of us' (1999, p. 57).

However he continues by stating that:

... live performance also inevitably frustrates that desire since its very occurrence presupposes a gap between performer and spectator. Whereas mediatized performance can provide the occasion for a satisfactory experience of community within the audience, live performance inevitably yields a sense of the failure to achieve community *between* the audience and the performer. By reasserting the unbridgeable distinction between audience and performance, live performance foregrounds its own fractious nature and the unlikelihood of community in a way that mediatized representations, which never hold out the promise of unity, do not. (Auslander, 1999, p. 57).
As well as referring to my own experience of being part of a performance community, I also include some of the audience responses from Random Acts of Memory to counter Auslander’s comments concerning what he defines as the failure of live performance to achieve community between performer and audience. I offer these as examples from my own practice – any person involved in live theatre of performance could similarly provide a wealth of specific comments and experiences on the subject. Throughout Liveness, Auslander never cites actual responses from audiences at either live, mediated or hybrid performance. Neither does he include in any detail the experiences of performers who work with new technologies. Occasionally he cites his own experience as a user as in the case of the Laurie Anderson or the Fuses dance piece, but he resists adding any specific collation of audience or performer feedback in his research. This necessarily means that he may not be reflecting the actual intent of the artist. For example in his essay ‘Unnecessary Duplicates: Identity and Technology in the Performances of Laurie Anderson’, Auslander states that:

The ambiguous ways Anderson employs her own biography and physical presence in her performances reflect the desire she has spoken of to present ‘disembodies stories’ and to disappear. To that end, she has performed in a white costume that has enabled her to blend into images projected over her, and in a black costume that simply enabled her to slip into shadow. (Auslander, 2000, p. 30).

Auslander goes on to state that Anderson’s uses of technology,
Reflects this desire for disembodiment and disappearance, as she employs various sophisticated technologies to disguise herself or create surrogates for herself. Her earliest uses of technology in this way involved devices that alter the sound of her voice, including the harmonizer and vocoder (Auslander, 2000, p. 30).

However, in the postshow discussion at the end of her performance of *Songs and Stories from Moby Dick* Laurie Anderson was asked by a member of the audience whether she intended to make the performance into an interactive CD-ROM, similar to Puppet Motel. Anderson replied 'I prefer a situation like this, where we are all together like this – all together in a room, seeing each other face to face.' She went on to explain that in 1995 she was really excited about exploring the potentials of purely mediated formats but also that she found them time consuming, that it became too demanding to be constantly updating her website. 'We are so much smarter than technology,' Anderson said, 'for example, technology can't do this.' She was silent. The audience were silent, waiting, unsure. The silence continued. People started to shift in their seats, look at each other, smiling, bemused, questioning. 'Technology does not understand silence' Anderson eventually said, 'if you did this to your laptop it would just switch off.' It is interesting to take note of Anderson's own current responses to her work and the role of technology and compare them with the somewhat opposing views of theorists such as Auslander. In part, just as technologies available to the artist are constantly changing, so are the artists' responses to the technology. Anderson admits her excitement about the possibilities of technologies for CD-ROM authorship and website
design in 1995, but five years later re-emphasizes the power of the live presence.

As stated previously, in approaching an exploration of the effects and relationships of live and mediated performance several areas of research are important. When exploring new areas of performance practice, in particular the arena of live and mediated performance, it seems essential to include the role the audience plays, both in terms of community and in terms of their responses to live and mediated work as regards the 'supply and demand' factor. What sort of work is of interest to the audience? How do they view live and mediated performance as it represents the culture they live in? As a means of assessing 'viability' of the explorations made in Random Acts of Memory, a review of the audience responses to the piece was taken from a cross-section of audience members. I offer this as a significant inclusion here, especially as a phenomenon spontaneously occurred after the show whereby a number of people sent email responses to Hill and myself about the piece, discussing ideas raised, personal memories, responses to computers, questions about technology, and philosophy. The personal nature of the responses stands out in this work, the initial aims of which were to explore the accessibility and personal nature of a live performance/technology melange. The personal nature of these responses acts, in some ways as a refutation of some of Auslander's claims. There is a twofold system in operation here; firstly that this fairly high-tech performance engendered such notable personal responses, and
secondly that these responses were evoked by the low tech or even ‘no tech’ moments.

Auslander states that there was no concept of ‘live’ until comparatively recently:

The live is, in a sense, only a secondary effect of mediating technologies. Prior to the advent of those technologies (e.g., photography, telegraphy, phonography) there was no such thing as the “live,” for that category has meaning only in relation to an opposing possibility. Ancient Greek theatre, for example, was not live because there was no possibility of recording it. (I would suppose that the concept of “Liveness” as we understand it was unthinkable by the Greeks for that reason) (Auslander in Diamond, 1996, p. 198). psychiatrically

In Liveness Auslander reinforces his viewpoint quoting both Baudrillard and the Oxford English Dictionary:

In a special case of Baudrillard’s well-known dictum that ‘the very definition of the real is that of which it is possible to give equivalent reproduction, the ‘live’ can only be defined as ‘that which can be recorded.’ Most dictionary definitions of this usage of the word ‘live’ reflect the necessity of defining it in terms of its opposite (Auslander,1999, p. 51).

For Auslander, 'To declare retroactively that all performance before, say, the mid-19th century was ‘live’ would be an anachronistic imposition of a modern concept on a pre-modern phenomenon (1999, p. 52). Thus his interpretation of live is that it is defined in terms of its oppositionality. It is interesting that, in Random Acts of Memory, what remained with the audience more than the clones, or the Dolly Morph, were the were the
personal stories the performers told. The technology can be seen as a format which engenders the stories, creating the format for the telling of them, but it does not provide the stories (this brings us back to the notion of content discussed previously). Random Acts of Memory audiences responses were compelling:

Something that's more real than technology, if that makes any sense. It's far more personal, or filtered through humanity, than a simple display or critique of technology. To be real best becomes you both.

I found much of the writing stirring and poetic and some of those lines have also come back to me. I guess that is what I enjoyed most about the work - that it has a life...

The parallel tracks of your mentalities, interlaced in past, present and future histories, weave a different tapestry in every performance. I have experienced it three times now, and like a good novel, film or painting, I always find new multiple meanings.

Several audience members noted that so much was going on in terms of technological effects that they found it difficult to take everything in. They stated, however, that they felt able to relax the when the power was cut half way through the performance: the moment when there is only a match flame illuminating the performer's face as she tells her story. Perhaps more than anything this reflects Laurie Anderson's aphorism that technology is just the campfire around which we tell our stories:

For me, electronics have always been connected to storytelling. Maybe because storytelling began when people used to sit around fires and because fire is magic, compelling and dangerous. We are
transfixed by its light and by its destructive power. Electronics are modern fires (Anderson, 1994, p. 175).

Conclusion

As a sign, ‘art and technology’ is not oppositional, but relational and polysemous. Despite its grammatical ambiguity, it is: multiplicitous, present serving, generative, multi-transdisciplinary, active, material, social, unfinished. It seems reasonable to identify the phrase ‘art and technology’ as a trope that puts speakers on guard as to assumptions of what it might mean or signify. Thus, within any given discourse or specific situation activated by an individual or institution, when the utterance ‘art and technology’ appears, the preliminary order of business becomes definitional, or at least descriptive. It then serves to generate further analysis and dialogue. (Sabatini, 1998, p. 5).

In many ways there is a symbiotic relationship between live and mediated in Random Acts of Memory. In part this is because the performance owns and acknowledges its technology. Within the performance, recognizable ‘archetypes’ of technology are played with, such as the construction of the anodyne cyberworld, the ennui of the media-saturated performers, tracked by their lifelike clones with their plagiarised speech or with the self conscious inclusion of the Baudrillard text referring to the power and draw of the screen: all this alongside the awareness of Benjamin’s theorisation’s of notions of reproducibility as represented by the Dolly clone. Amidst it all, the performers seem eternally reproducible as beings, not only in relation to their clones but also in relation to each other.

Rather than presenting a for-or-against position I am interested in arguing for an inclusivity of live and mediated form, so that through both old and new technologies the artist is offered other
options through which to present her concepts. Rather than obliterating live performance, mediatization can be seen as reemphasizing the live nature and enforcing the content of the piece through its relationship with the live. In some cases artists use or see technology as a 'means to an end.' Technology is not privileged over the body or textuality but exists at the service of content (Sabatini, 1998, p. 5).

At the beginning of this chapter, I cite Phelan's statement that new technologies are a part of existing and pre-existing forms and it is within that framework that they should be viewed. Similarly, in terms of a theoretical framework, Hal Foster emphasises a paradigm of technology based on an inclusivity:

What Guy Debord sees in the spectacle of the 1960s are the technological transformations that Walter Benjamin anticipated in the 1930s; and what cyberpunk writers extrapolate in the 1990s are the cybernetic extensions that Marshall McLuhan predicted in the 1960s, and the age of technoscience or technoculture in the 1990s (in which research and development, or culture and technology, cannot be separated) (Foster, 1996, p. 218).

*Random Acts of Memory* set out to question and explore the nature and potentials of the reciprocity between live and mediated performance. Rather than setting live and pre-recorded or lens based forms against each other I positions of opposition, each was utilized for its unique capabilities. The lineage of the forms depicted in Foster's statement posit a symbiotic inclusivity within media which *Random Acts of Memory* embraced.
At the end of the performance of *Random Acts of Memory*, the performers leave the stage and the screen plays on: static, confused and meaningless without the presence of the performers to give it meaning, to create the content which makes its sense. Although off scene, absent, the performers still maintain their presence as the script continues its text about memory, questioning the very event the audience have witnessed and asking them (as they gaze at the empty set, the switched off camera and television), what they will remember. Helen, the live performer, has the last word:

**Helen:** Do you remember learning that you were going to die? It seems like you would be able to remember something like that. But then again, memory recall, to a psychologist or neurophysiologist, is an artificial construct because it isn’t anchored by current sensory input. Recalls are created on the fly, sometimes differently on successive occasions and potentially tainted by injections from one’s imagination. Which leaves me to wonder if and how you’ll remember tonight.

And how will you remember this?
Dispatches Newsletter (April 8th 2000) included a section from the editor about 'New Media' stating that: 'Everyone is obsessed with New Media - even The Guardian has a 'New Media' back section to Monday's Media Guardian. And your editor teaches 'New Media Technologies' to journalism students at City University. Unfortunately the term is now so vague and all-encompassing as to be effectively meaningless, and 'New Media' is starting to sound like New College, Oxford - 800 years old and counting. After all, the Web is ten years old. The article goes on to state that, 'one aspect of new media that is different is that it is (or has the potential to be) interactive: the reader/viewer/user can also be a participant.' This notion of interactivity is discussed in Chapter One of this thesis and also within this chapter. (Dispatches is an independently written weekly forum for Arts news, views and opinions published by the Arts Council of England http://www.arts.org.uk/)

This 1996 issue of Performance Research was entitled The Temper of the Times and focussed on what it means to work and produce art in Britain - how artists are affected by the temper of the times in which they live (see Performance Research, Vol. 1, No 1 Spring 1996).


Chroma-Key refers to the process where live action is filmed in front of a blue screen. In the editing process the blue background can be selected and deleted, allowing the images to be manipulated and placed in different environments, with different backgrounds superimposed.

ARVID (Autonomous Remote Video Imaging Device) is a prototype device for human/video performance. The video playback was accomplished using an experimental non-linear digital video access system, and all light and sound cues, video sequencing and switching during the performance, including the power cutting, were coordinated through the Global Controller, a unique computer based interface allowing complex cue sequences supervised by a single operator.

In Lynn Hershman-Leeson's article, The Fantasy Beyond Control, she writes about her interactive video disk called Lorna in which the character of Lorna is literally captured in a mediated landscape, (Hershman-Leeson, Clicking In, p.269).

In his fascinating account of the olfactory history of Paris, Alain Corbin states that, 'Doctors since ancient times have untiringly stressed the importance of the nose as the sensory organ closest to the brain, the 'origin of sensation! (Corbin, Foul and Fragrant, p.7).

I am referring to smell specifically as it can be/is employed within live performance. Smell is used for commercial reasons such as the smell of coffee piped into supermarkets to encourage shoppers to buy. I discuss the commercial value of smell later in this chapter, along with artificially created smells. Vinopolis, one of London's recent additions to the flourishing Southbank, along with the new Museum of Modern Art, is a wine museum which incorporates hidden machines that replicate the smell of soured wine. Whether this is meant to encourage or discourage the patrons form drinking wine or purchasing it from the museum shop is not clear. At London's Heathrow Airport the scent of pine needles is sprayed in the terminals: an attempt to put people at their ease. In many Japanese companies it is customary to add different smells to the air in the
course of the day: a little lemon in the mornings; then a light flowery smell and
during the afternoon (to keep up morale) the smell of wood. It has been
proposed that one way to protect telephone booths against vandalism would be
to treat them with aggression-calming fragrances (such as baby oil), (Vroom,

9It is interesting to note the emergence and popularity of the cybercafe, where
the computer and the smell of coffee are at least in proximity! (See Levinson, The
Soft Edge, pp. 231-232). Also see www.leftbank.org/ café, Hill and Paris’s online
cafe.

10They cite a case of a woman who associates the smell of a flower with her
father’s death, which evokes a memory both visually and aurally vivid, ‘That
same kind of smell reminds me of the sadness, the helplessness, worst of all my
mother’s crying’ (Aroma p. 2).

11 Howard Fried presented the Museum Reaction piece in which the smell of a
meal taking place in one room is conducted by fans into another, adjoining room
(see Hall and Fifer, p. 215).

12 In The Perception of Odours, Trygg Engen cites that Artists (like Proust and his
memories associated with petites madeleines) have claimed that odours are not
forgotten to the same extent as other sensory experiences. (Trygg Engen: The
Perception of Odours p14). He gives the example of Marcel Proust who
described the recognition of odour, and who writes in Remembrance of Things Past
that, ‘An exquisite pleasure had invaded my senses.... Whence did it come?
What did it signify? How could I seize and define it?...And suddenly the
98).

13 Sniffing the Marigolds, also premiered at the Institute of Contemporary Arts,
London, 1995, was informed by the scientific fact that smell can induce
instinctive, physical reactions in the body and act as a potent evocation of
experience/memory. Smell was used in the piece as a catalyst for releasing body
memory, acting as a stimuli for producing the work, in the performance itself the
body is affected by and physically responds to smell and there was also a real
presence of smell, (flowers, earth) for the audience, ‘Paris extends the range of
languages at the performer’s disposal. She incorporates film and video footage,
projection, movement and choreography, smell and taste into her performances,
using every means of communication at the performers disposal...There is a
totality, a wholeness, a truth and honesty in Paris’s work, an overarching

14 Vroom writes about recapturing the smell of the nursery school, stating that,
‘Even if one does not experience the smell again for forty years, one still may
recognize it in a smell test. That is a remarkable fact, since after so many years
one cannot recall other essential things from that time, such as the name or even
the appearance of the teacher or the number of children in the class (Vroon,
Smell, p. 103).

15 See Alan Read who states: ‘Ask anyone to describe a place that was
characterised by odour, and one is surprised at the depth of that memory, the
emotion that it conveys and the very real sense of loss’ (Read, Everyday Life, p.
122).
Interestingly, Vroon writes that generally speaking, thirty-year-olds have the best olfactory memory. This is the age I was when I made Random Acts of Memory (see Vroon, Smell, p. 190).

It is at this point in the performance that the audience are alerted aurally to the fact that the auditorium has been filled with the scent of pumpkin and why the women only were handed licorice as they entered the performance space, ‘the smell that most excites men is pumpkin pie whereas women respond more readily to licorice.’

In her article entitled, ‘What Sense do the Senses Make?’ Barbara U. Schmidt looks at aspects of corporeality in the works of Miriam Cahn and Maureen Conner. Jones states that the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, ‘strives toward an understanding of the body itself as perceiving, and for that reason connected with and not differentiated from consciousness’ (Jones and Stephenson Performing the Body, 1999, p. 284). Acknowledging the notion of the marked body and therefore how smell signifies different meanings dependant on experience. Similarly in Aroma, the Cultural History of Smell the authors point out that, ‘Smell is not simply a biological and psychological phenomenon...Smell is cultural, hence a social and historical phenomenon (Classen et al, Aroma, p. 3).

Thus within Random Acts of Memory the use of licorice and pumpkin as two smells found to provoke different reactions in men and women is a playful suggestion of a gendered manifestation of smell.

Phenomenological methodology is of great significance in terms of the effects of smell, in terms of culture, sociology, economic and gender which engender an extensive area of theoretical thought. Here, however, I want to focus on a more generic use of smell and its relational qualities regarding live performance and memory.

See, Part Two of Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell, for an interesting account of different cultural uses of smell, in particular the piece concerning the Aboriginal inhabitants of Andaman island who use smell to reckon time, ‘In the jungles of the Andaman Islands, as one after another of the trees and climbing plants come into flower, it is possible to recognize a distinct succession of odours. The Andaman Islanders have constructed their calendar on the basis of this cycle, naming the different periods of their year after the fragrant flowers that are in bloom at different times. Their year is thus a cycle of odours; their calendar, a calendar of scents.’ In terms of the ephemerality, the time-based nature of live performance, the notion of capturing, counting time by smell is interesting. (Classen, Aroma, p. 95)

The fact that smell is described as resisting ‘containment in discrete units’ is comparable to Phelan’s description of the challenge of writing about performance (See Phelan, Unmarked, p. 149)

As shown by his example of Proust.

Similarly, Patrice Pavis claims in Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture, that in terms of performance, ‘The work once performed, disappears forever. The only memory which one can preserve is that of the spectator’s more or less distracted perception (Pavis, Crossroads, pp. 99-135).

The Desana peoples of the Amazonian rainforest of Colombia believe that smells are apprehended by the whole body, not simply the nose. (Classen et al, Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell, p. 100).

Tony Feldman’s description of binary code in terms of the display on a digital watch provides an interesting comparison to the notion of an ‘absent present.’
Feldman writes: 'there is an instant when a digital watch is speechless. When the display flashes from one second to the next there is a tiny gap in the information. So, although the watch seems to supply a constant and exact reading of time, it is in fact a discontinuous display sampling individual moments of time and displaying them (Feldman, Introduction to Digital Media, pp. 2, 3).

One question raised during a post show discussion with students concerned the notion of the performers' reviewing their performances as digital recreations. Was there an awareness of keeping the digital performance up to the standard of the stage performance, or vice-versa? The video of the clones was shot in front of chroma-key and was, according to David Lorig, ARVID's operator, almost clinical in its representation, especially when juxtaposed with the live performers; each creating a differing atmosphere, 'A clone of yourself that is not you in a sense, at least not you at that moment.'

Talbot goes on to cite philosopher Leon Kass, who writing of cloning's potential for commodifying human life and further depersonalizing reproduction, stated that: 'Shallow are the souls that have forgotten how to shudder. (as cited by Margaret Talbot, The New York Times Magazine, 16th April, 2000, p. 22). She also adds that, 'It's true that many technological innovations that once seemed disturbingly unnatural - in vitro fertilization, for one - have been folded more or less smoothly into the fabric of modern life.' It is interesting to compare this to questions raised later in this chapter concerning artists who appropriate technology into their body, or use it to alter their bodies shape. In many ways society still seems to have more problems with alterations to the flesh by the flesh than by technology, such as the banning by Nottingham Trent University in April 2000 of Kira O'Reilly's bloodletting performance art piece, or the reactions engendered by Stelarc's suspension pieces, images of which still cause audiences familiar with the work to look away, whereas they seem to have no problem watching his recent work concerning his mechanised third hand.

Wosk cites British craftsman and inventor C.J. Jordan, who made clear the distinction between an imitative copy and the original. For Jordan, 'Machines could not 'reproduce the ‘smoothness of surface and delicacy of finish, requisite in good works’ (as cited in Fosk, p. 110). Maybe the reverse is true in terms of performance; perhaps the rawness, the imperfections of live performance render it the true original.

Wosk states that the, ‘...theme of depersonalization and devaluation of the individual provoked by new technologies became an important theme in nineteenth- century caricatures' (Wosk, Breaking Frame, p. 96). She gives the example of the work of artist Honoré Daumier, whose work 'highlighted passengers' anxieties about the unfamiliar, and his comedy only thinly masked more profound fears, particularly the feeling of railroad travelers that they had no personal control over the new technology (Wosk, Breaking Frame, p. 62).

Or as Baudrillard states, 'We secretly prefer not to be confronted with the original any longer. All we want is the copyright' (Baudrillard, Illusion, p. 76).

In Where Wizards Stay Up Late, their book about the birth and early years of the Internet, authors Katie Hafner and Matthew Lyon write that, 'Early psychologists involved in working with computers in the mid 1950's were interested in computers and computer memory devices as models for the versatility of human cognition' (Hafner and Lyon, Wizards, p. 32).
In *Breaking Frame: Technology and the Visual Arts in the Nineteenth Century* Julie Wosk writes that in 1889, Thomas Edison began manufacturing his own version of a mechanical human. His phonographic ‘talking’ doll, first patented by William W. Jacques in 1888 with the patent later assigned to Edison, was made of a tin body with record cylinders inside that played a song or speech when a crank was turned (Wosk, *Breaking Frame*, p. 84). Wosk goes on to state that ‘the many girls hired to make recordings on the cylinders virtually became automatons themselves, creating cacophony as they continuously recited their rhymed words to be repeated by the doll’ (Wosk, *Breaking Frame*, p. 85).

Julie Wosk writes that, ‘In the 1980s, New York artist Nancy Burson turned to contemporary computer technologies to challenge definitions of human identity itself, producing simulated images of the human face. Burson’s composite photographs made with video camera and computer manipulations fused the faces of several people who did not, and could not exist. In 1989 she fused the face of a woman and a mannequin. Creating a startling android-like face with piercing woman’s eyes’ (Wosk, *Breaking Frame*, p. 215).

Extract from email sent by an audience member at *Random Acts of Memory*, presented at the Institute for Studies at the Arts, Arizona State University, November 1998. See Appendix for a selection of audience comments and feedback.

In *Invisible Cities*, Polo describes the city of Maurilla, ‘In Maurilia if the traveler does not wish to disappoint the inhabitants, he must praise the postcard city and prefer it to the present one, though he must be careful to contain his regret at the changes within definite limits. The old postcards do not depict Maurilia as it was, but a different city which, by chance, was called Maurilia, like this one. (Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, p. 30-31).

The two architects designed a brasserie in Midtown Manhattan where a surveillance camera photographs patrons as they come through the revolving door. The halting time-lapse images are projected from monitors behind the bar. Another monitor, focused on the street, feeds live coverage to a large monitor by the front desk – Diller and Scofidio substitute video for plate glass, creating an atmosphere of ‘life’ in a mediated world. At the reception desk a nice young women greet guests. On the video monitors reception is rendered into perception: the cold eye of the surveillance camera jostles against the hostess’s accommodating smile. Has life become performance? Are the reception ladies performers? (see Herbert Muschamp, *The New York Times*, Feb., 6th 2000, pp. 37-39).

The team of specialists who fabricated the furniture were Kelly Philips, David Lorig and George Pawl at The Institute for Studies in the Arts, Arizona State University.

The use of the word ‘cyber’ in this context is deliberate. Douglas Kellner points out in *Media Culture* (p. 301), that the term ‘cyber’ is a Greek root signifying ‘control’ – in terms of the state of the art cyber-sitting room the control is optimum - over controlled. It is this definition that I refer to when writing of the cyber-sitting room. The question of where or with whom the control lies is prevalent throughout *Random Acts of Memory*. Everything about the set is geared towards reinforcing the idea that the performers and their live presence are controlled by the technology. Aesthetically it can even be seen to look like a Control Room, devoid as it is of Anything that does not have a specific function. Even when the performers seem to react against the controlled environment and
exhibit moments of loss of control (such as the wrestling scene, when Helen throws the water at Leslie’s clone or when she takes off her jacket and shirt and starts dancing, the action is only shown in a mediatised format against a background of mediated images. However, ultimately it is made evident that the control lies (and has actually always lain within the world of Random Acts of Memory) with the performers, who cue the start and the end of the show.

38 Norman M. Klien states that: ‘The term television needs to be updated into ‘the material culture of electricity and glass’ (Klien, Illuminating Video, p. 394). This statement is interesting to cross-reference with the mirror moment described in Chapter One. The current of electricity brings the audience member to the glass where the invisible is made visible.

39 Marita Sturken argues: ‘While as a tool for expression video would seem to have many distancing factors, such as the actual television set, it is often pointed out that the size of the screen and the instant image provide an intimacy not shared by paintings or the cinematic apparatus. The tendency of artists to set the camera up and perform in the space before it and to use the monitor as a mirror caused art critic Rosalind Krauss to label video as inherently narcissistic. She noted, ‘Self-encapsulation – the body or psyche as its own surrounding – is everywhere to be found in the corpus of video art’ (Sturken, Illuminating Video, p. 117). This is an interesting area of exploration when compared with narcissism as discussed in Chapter One of this thesis. See also Chapter One alongside Kathy O’Dell’s notion of Lacan’s mirror stage aligned with the television in the family home.

40 There is a connection here with the ‘mirror moment’ described in Chapter One, where there is both a familiarity and an unfamiliarity as the face of performer and audience meet. See also Rosalind Krauss’s writings on the narcissism inherent in video.

41 In one of artist Dan Graham’s video projects, entitled Video Projection Outside Home (1978), Graham placed a large video projection screen on the front lawn, outside a house, facing pedestrians on the sidewalk. The screen projected an image of whatever television programme was being watched by the family on their television set within the house. When the set is turned off, the video projector is also off; and when the channels are being changed, this is also projected onto the screen (see Graham, Illuminating Video, p. 173).

42 Auslander includes several comparisons between television, especially early television and the way it was viewed, and theatre/performance. ‘Numerous advertisements... showed couples in evening attire gathered in their living rooms as if in a private box at the theatre’ (Auslander, Liveness, p. 17). For Auslander, ‘the goal of televised drama was not merely to convey a theatrical event to the viewer, but to recreate the theatrical experience for the home viewer through televisual discourse and, thus, to replace live performance (Auslander, Liveness, pp. 18 – 19). However, the images on the television in the performance of Random Acts of Memory are used convey in a sense that the looping meaningless flow of duplicated movements is actually a replacement for the live – as shown by the performers who live a copied and repeated existence – until the plug is pulled.

43 Margaret Morse writes of a collaboration on temporality, entitled, Wipe Cycle (1969), by Frank Gillette and Ira Schneider in which the artists used nine color monitors around which pre-taped material, live broadcast television, and live close-circuit television images from the entrance to the gallery were subjected to time delay and switching. Here the possibility for an image track to migrate
from monitor to monitor was exploited, as well as a series of contrasts between three different types of 'liveness' and time delay (Morse, *Illuminating Video*, p.163).

44 See Chapter Two of this thesis where the 'real' landscape has been destroyed and the body and face of the film and live performer become the landscape.

45 In the same way that using ARVID had created a dilemma of having to work around the technology, in BULL the mechanical bull was almost an analogy for ARVID. It also represented 'old technology' in terms of the fact that its chrome body, reminiscent of the furniture in *Random Acts of Memory*, belied the fact that its mechanism was far more of the industrial than 'digital revolution', powered by 2 engines controlled by a DC engine controller.

"Auslander adds in his notes that this was one of many intermedia experiments undertaken in the mid-1960s by theatre, film and performance artists. Carolee Schneeman and Robert Whitman, for instance, both staged 'Happenings' that juxtaposed live performers with filmed images (See Auslander, *Liveness*, p. 370). Also see Chapter Two of this thesis which cites Schneeman's film *Fuses*.

47 In *Liveness*, Auslander references the dance piece *Pôles* – described by its makers as a melange of 'Dance + Virtual.' In the piece, live dancers interact with holographic projections of themselves which are at times projected onto the dancers. The holographs and real dancers chase each other and for Auslander the best moment in the piece is when it is hard to differentiate the living dancers from their holographic counterparts. This is an example of how for Auslander the mix of live and mediated bodies produces work wherein the 'virtual' surpasses the 'visceral'. Auslander states: 'Do we see a piece like *Pôles* as a juxtaposition of the live and the digital, a shifting among realms?' He does not find it so, 'At most it is a fusion, a fusion that we see as taking place within a digital environment that incorporates the live elements as part of its raw material. Rather than a conversation among distinct media, the production presents the assimilation of varied materials to the cultural dominant. In this sense, Dance + Virtual = Virtual' (Auslander, *Liveness*, p. 38).

48 Auslander states that: 'Early film modeled itself directly on theatrical practice. As A. Nicholas Vardac shows in his classic study *Stage to Screen* (1949), the narrative structures and visual devices of cinema, including the close-up and the fade-in/fade-out and parallel editing, had all been fully developed on stage before becoming the foundations of the new medium's language, at least in its narrative forms' (Auslander, *Liveness*, p. 11). Vardac continues stating that: 'Steele MacKaye ... embarked on a series of technical innovations, beginning in the late 1870's, that brought greater flexibility to the stage in ways that anticipated cinematic techniques. To cite but one example, his 'proscenium adjuster,' a device that instantly changed the shape and size of the proscenium opening, enabled smooth transitions between scenes and among different views of the same setting.' In this way, MacKaye could control the type of stage picture offered, in the fashion of the motion picture with its long or medium shot, its panoramic or tracking shot' (Vardac 1949, as cited in Auslander, *Liveness*, pp. 11-12).

49 Interview with Robb Lovell at the Institute for Studies in the Arts, Arizona State University, November 1999.

50 See Chapter Two of this thesis.
In his article, 'In a world with less time, movies that last a millennium', David Thomson writes that feature films are getting longer. 'What makes this development so egregious is that here in 2000 we're lectured all over the place about how our attention spans have become abbreviated, how our sentences, paragraphs and thoughts are shorted and how the extraordinary burden of media stress, e-mail answerability and getting your data has given us less and less time to have children, let alone message them, and yet, somehow the most up-to-date moviemakers are crazy for longer, slower establishing shots, for mood interludes....It's not simply that actors have lost the habit of being quick or economical. At the other end of the production process, editing has given up the handling of film and the direct application of scissors or sharp blades for what I'd call Avid-gazing. The Avid is the standard system for computer editing, and it is a way of working - some heretics allege - that encourages moodiness, brooding, felt passages, grace intervals, small talk, luxuriant fades and dissolves' (Thomson, The New York Times, 30th January, 2000).

Because of this Shenks decided to have his wedding filmed in Super8, 'the twelve chopped-up minute, slow, motiony dances and party conversation seem so much more satisfying than the long, utterly comprehensive wedding videos I had seen in the past...the lesson of the camcorder is that the medium that captures almost everything conveys almost nothing' (Shenks, Smog, p. 194).

3-1 Interview with George Pawl, Institute for Studies in the Arts, Arizona State University, November 1998.

3-4 The clone issue was further highlighted by the performers' own physical resemblance. Kelly Philips remarked on this in relation to the symbiotic relationship between technology and performance. Her description of the performers' working process, as an unspoken communication, posited another symbiotic relationship in the physical, the spoken, and the presentational. Phillips confessed that she found this a little unnerving at times.

In Where Wizards Stay up Late: The Origins of the Internet, authors Katie Hafner and Matthew Lyon give a comprehensive history of the evolution of the internet. They cite the development of SAGE - The Semi-Automatic Ground Environment. Based on an IBM computer, SAGE was so huge that operators and technicians could walk inside it. SAGE was an example of what psychologist JCR Licklider hired by the Department of Defense to oversee the development of leading-edge computer technology in 1962 (see Hafner and Lyon, p. 27), would later call the 'symbiosis' between humans and machines, where the machine functions as a problem-solving partner. Implied in this symbiotic relationship was the interdependency of humans and computers working in unison as a single system (p. 31).

Interview with Kelly Philips, Institute for Studies in the Arts, Arizona State University, November 1998

See Chapter One of this thesis in regard to different types of interaction engendering different reactions, e.g., the use of the mobile phone.

See also Chapter Two of this thesis, p. 16.

In Breaking Frame: Technology and the Visual Arts in the Nineteenth Century, Julie Wosk writes that: 'The juxtaposition of a man and circle in Leonardo's study is a happy integration, an emblem of human aspirations in the intimately connected realms of art, nature, science, and technology. But nearly four centuries later, nineteenth-century artists commenting on the impact of mechanization and
technology had more ambivalent views of the integration of human and the machine (Wosk, Breaking Frame, p. 101).

60 In her article, 'Live Art: How is it for you?' Judith Palmer writes, 'With 23,000 people making their way across Hyde Park to see Tilda Swinton recumbent in The Maybe this September, and much of the ICA's 'Rapture' season already sold out, live art is suddenly reaching out of its ghetto to new audiences who are discovering the thrill of building up a repertoire of 'were you there when...? (Judith Palmer, The Independent, 14th Nov. 1995).

61 Performed at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London in the Totally Wired season, 13th May 1996.


63 In a similar spirit of a live, time-based web project Lucy Lippard cites the project undertaken by Rirkrit Tiravanija in April 1998. Tiravanija traveled in a motor home across the USA from Los Angeles with five art students form Chiang Mai University in his native Thailand, who recorded their daily responses to the United States on a website (see Lippard, Beaten Track, p. 37).

64 The shifting relationship between place and 'placelessness' brought about by the rapid adoption of the Internet as a preferred form of communication leads me, at times, to regard all real space, real time events as site specific as opposed to 'cyberspatial' works, whose reception occurs in the largely intangible interface between the human mind and the computer. (Hill, New Theatre Quarterly, no. 53, 1998, p. 46).

65 See Chapter One of this thesis as it refers to the lone journey taken in Vena Amoris, which also questioned the role of performer and audience and in which a journey is taken by the performer in making the piece and the audience in inhabiting it.

66 This idea is developed at length in Chapter One of this thesis.

67 See John Beckmann who writes: 'Every square meter of the globe has been mapped and digitized by high-altitude photography. Consequently, it has become increasingly impossible in our surveillance-ridden society to even get lost' (Beckmann, The Virtual Dimension, pp. 6-7).

68 See Lippard's statement that one of the particular dynamics of travelling is that: 'We do often wonder about the sights we're not seeing - houses and gardens glimpsed behind the wall' (Lippard, Beaten Track, p. 13).

69 See Levinson, The Soft Edge in which he compares the point and click negotiation of the web with driving his car. (Levinson, Soft Edge, p. 168).

70 Similarly, in terms of a performativity of language in his article, 'Laurie Anderson for Dummies' Jon McKenzie describes watching Laurie Anderson's Puppet Motel CD-ROM in performative language: 'this performance opened in my living room early on the morning of 8th April 1995 (McKenzie, The Drama Review, Summer 1997, p. 41)

71 The rapidly changing nature of the medium renders these remarks from 1997 'ancient history' in web terms.
At the PSi 2000 conference Martha Wilson, director of Franklin Furnace the artist led organization based in New York dedicated to supporting artists, particularly those making new work for the Internet, mentioned a Franklin Furnace project entitled Mir is Here. In this project the artists looked for a form and content relationship, choosing to explore the particular characteristics of the medium they were using, video on the Internet. They therefore decided on a piece of work about the space program as the clunky movements of the astronauts in space resembled so strongly the chunkiness of figures represented by videostreaming in the internet. (As cited at the PSi 2000 conference, ASU March 2000 in a panel called Going Virtual: Using Interactive technology to facilitate Performance)

Similarly, Jennifer Parker-Starbuck presenting on Cyberspatialities: Geography, Liveness and Technology in the Performance of Cathy Weis cites the tension created by the live link ups between Weiss and her virtual companions. Weiss enjoyed the fragmentation the internet gives, the unpredictability always present with live performance and technology.

In an article in The New York Times Magazine, (9th April 2000, pp. 34-36), William Safire writes in his article, 'Netenclature: A New World of Names Before the Dots' 'of the increasingly visible phenomena of domain names'. He mentions the cybersquatters, those who occupy themselves, 'grabbing the most salable words and well-known names for sale to the highest bidder.' He goes on to note that, 'one enterprising outfit, claiming it was merely protecting me from predatory types warehousing names for sale, 'owned' williamsafire.com, and I had to pay to reclaim my identity. (few others wanted my name, which was somewhat deflating but lucky for me. Indeed, some 90 percent of the most common words in English are already claimed by the fast operators of 'netenclature', my unregistered appellation for the Internet-naming business or racket.

In terms of identity this is an interesting phenomena. I have personally already purchased helenparis.com although I have not put anything there yet. Maybe I won't. I just need to keep hold of my identity, in a space which does and does not exist.

Stelarc speaking at the Performance Studies International conference held At Arizona State University March 9-12, 2000. The conference took the name of this thesis as its title, with my permission.

It is interesting to review Stelarc's body work and the reactions it engenders in the light of the recent stir in the live art world in the UK caused by performer Kira O'Reilly's piece, Wet Cup. In Wet Cup (2000), O'Reilly has her assistant cut her skin and "cup" her blood. Scheduled to be premiered at Nottingham Trent University, the piece ultimately did not go ahead because of the restrictions of the University's Departments of Health & Safety and Occupational Health. Even in the new millennium, what artists do with their bodies, with their flesh, engenders more fear, and intensified reactions than what they do with technology.

Judith Palmer writes in her article 'Live Art: How is it for you?' about the work of artist Michelle Griffiths which was part of Laurie Anderson and Brian Eno's Self Storage event. Palmer writes: 'An Alien on a life-support machine sits impassively in a white Perspex box, motionless except for the occasional flicker of her empty black eyes... The beautiful scrubbed creature with green tubes up her nose and scleral lenses in her eyes.' Palmer goes on to cite the response of audience member, Alison Wright who says: 'it's so much more involving and engaging than looking at a picture... if you think how bombardied with images you are every day, you're such a passive viewer most of the time. It takes
something like this to elicit a reaction.' However, Palmer concludes at the end of the article that, 'As she eventually climbs out of cryogenic chamber Michelle Griffiths says, 'I'd love to preserve it. I do document my work, but it's here in the flesh, that's where the impact lies (Palmer, The Independent, 14th, Nov. 1995).

78 See the enclosed CD-ROM of the performance and internet work of Hill and Paris, as an example of 'performative documentation'.

79 The Beatles may have stopped touring because their performances could not match (in terms of quality of sound) the level reached in the recording studio. (See Levinson, Soft Edge, p. 96) but this did not mean that their live presence no longer engendered huge and rapturous crowds of fans.

80 Auslander gives as an example of how we are drawn to mediatization over live, an account of a party he attended in which, 'There was a live band, dancing, and a video simulcast of the dancers on two screens adjacent to the dance floor. My eye was drawn to the screen, compared to which the live dancers indeed had all the brilliance of fifty-watt bulbs' (Auslander, Liveness, p. 38). I do not see that this provides any sort of substantive proof for his argument.

81 Levinson cites the example of theorist Neil Postman asking, 'How could Neil Postman offer a rational critique of online education in February 1994, admitting at the same time that he had neither taught nor participated in nor in any way observed a course taught online via personal computer and modem? (Levinson, Soft Edge, p. 57).

82 It is interesting that Brosnan goes on to state that, 'One striking feature about the women who came together at this time is their disparate backgrounds in terms of training and interests. Helena Goldwater was working in live/visual arts; Helen Paris worked in experimental theatre; Amy Lame came to England from New Jersey with no theatrical background, Cathy P had been doing street theatre and clowning in the highlands; and both Marissa Carr and Alison Cocks have worked at the performance end of the straight sex industry. They didn't come from a particular 'school,' although in another sense they had a good deal in common. Although they weren't all originally from London they were all living there, they were all in their early-mid 20s and they are all white. In this sense they correspond to the visible end of many similar movements which later (hopefully) filter out to a wider selection of people' (Brosnan, Acts of Passion, Rapi & Chowdry, (eds.), p. 86).

83 When staffing and policy changed at the ICA in 1997 and Keidan and Ugwu resigned due to severe limitations placed upon their programming freedom, the community which had formed around the ICA dispersed.

84 See Appendix V for a fuller list of comments.


86 This is particularly apt to consider when funding for the Arts, particularly the more hybrid, cross-discipline forms of performance, is in a constant crisis, as recently witnessed by the recent round of funding cuts to the Arts Council of England (which, in January 1999, axed its Combined Arts Department; the main, most salient funding resource for non-traditional, cross-platform work) did this mark an unclogging of the smooth machinery necessary for the circulation of capital?
Random Acts of Memory became a set performance text for analysis within the Communications Department of Arizona State University.

In his article, 'Liveness; Performance and the Anxiety of Simulation' Philip Auslander states: 'I want to make clear that reproduction (recording) is the key issue. The Greek theatre was technologically mediated in the sense that the actors' voices were amplified. What concerns me here, however, is technological reproduction, not just technological mediation. Throughout history, performance has employed available technologies and has been mediated, in one sense or another. It is only since the advent of recording technologies, however, that performance has been mediatized'. (Auslander, Performance and Cultural Politics, Elin Diamond (ed.), pp. 198 - 211).

See the Appendix V for full list of audience responses.
Conclusion

Visceral and Virtual: Digesting the Data

Since so much of our experience is mediated in some way or another, we have deep sensibilities to the signatures of different media. Artists play with these sensitivities, digesting the new and shifting the old. In the end, the characteristic forms of a tool's or medium's distortion, of its weakness and limitations, become sources of emotional meaning and intimacy (Eno, 1999, p. 229).

This thesis examines the nature of live and mediated performance and negotiates the varied relationships between the two formats. It posits a reciprocal relationship wherein the two forms compliment, challenge and redefine each other, rather than occupying or endorsing a position of opposition wherein they might be viewed as fundamentally separate and distinct from each other. At the same time this thesis defines what is unique about each format: the live and the mediated, the visceral and the virtual.

Much of the research and analysis is carried out primarily through my own embodied practice as performer engaged in live and mediated work. The experiential epistemology engendered by such a research methodology can be seen to offer a distinct contribution to the field in several ways, as demonstrated in the video and CD-ROM versions (or mediated representations) of the performances discussed herein. Each of the chapters and the performances which are their primary subjects explore specific relationships between the live and mediated. For example: in Chapter One, I focus on the research process undertaken in
the performance of *Vena Amoris* (including research for creation of the performance, the performance itself, and my reflective analysis of the impact of the piece on the audience considered alongside my position as its author/articulator/performer). In all these stages of embodied research – which are in turn embedded within a larger context informed by performance theory and media practice - I seek to convey how a mediated performance, rather than distancing itself from its audience through what some might perceive as the barrier of technology, can rather be seen to engender an intimate and very personal experience for the audience member and for the performer. In other words, technology serves in this case to embrace the role of the audience, rather than to distance that audience. I argue in this chapter that a distinct intimacy between performer and audience member can be engendered through both the live and the mediated, the visceral and the virtual, absence and presence. My argument is grounded in discussion of the relevant theories of 'mediated' performance as offered by Phelan, Auslander et al, but also by my unique experience as the theoretically informed performer who shared in the making of the new technological forms which 'serve' the performance.

In Chapter One, I discuss the embodied and theorised experience of the performer who shares her work with an audience 'live' and is also implicit in the creation of new technologies customised for those unique performances. In live performance, I argue, my role or that of another performer may at times be sensed as a physical, visceral presence which can be too intense, too vulnerable a position to take up, particularly for the
'objectified' female performer. Thus, I would argue that the unique contribution of my work in this field derives from my physical and intellectual position within what has been described as a 'theory/practice divide'. My embodied research validates my study of the relevant theory and my theorising of my own practice - developing as it does from an informed study of relevant practices in the field more generally - offers a new embodied theory which is mediated and also live, achieved and shared through unique insights into engaged performative experience.

In Chapter Two I progress my thesis argument (again, that the relationship between the visceral and the virtual can be teased and tested in original performances and theories which bring the two into a duet rather than treating them as simple binary oppositions) by demonstrating a range of symbiotic relationships operating between live and mediated formats, with reference to the performance The Day Don Came With The Fish (1997). I argue in this chapter that live and mediated formats can be seen to share similar ontologies; in this, I attempt to reveal some of 'mortalities' and 'immortalities' of each. Once again, the embodied research conducted in each of the phases of work (creation of the performances, sharing of the performances, analysis of performance reception and theoretical re-framing of the work post-performance) offers a specific kind of theorisation which is, I would argue, specific to this kind of embodied theory. For example, in dealing with the constant breakage of Super8 film during the performances, I demonstrated that the tension created by the performer who deliberately includes a mutable medium
within a work exploring the notion of mutability is both playful and provocative, representational and real. Similarly, in each performance of the piece I had an awareness of the general degradation of the film as it ran through the projector, with each show losing more of the clarity of the image as the film became more scratched. As the film – the medium – mutated my experience of playing to and with that film in a live performance setting shifted, and my theoretical understanding of the liveness of the virtual and the virtual status of the live was enhanced. Thus both the process and performance experience can be seen to underpin and to surround the range of philosophies and theories surrounding the relationship between the live and the mediated. In this case, I posit a relationship arrived at through performance and tested in theory, where the ontological and representational presence of both the live and the mediated are shown to engage in a continual process of change as they merge and shift. The decision to include the moment where the film burns within the performance informed not only the overall performance but also the subsequent theoretical consideration and contextualisation of this work, in terms of my larger study of the visceral and the virtual, concerning the shared qualities of live and mediated forms.

In the final chapter, I demonstrate a number of relationships, tensions and differences between live and mediated formats in performance practice more generally. I begin with discussion of early examples from my own practice where I tested the limits of ‘old technology’ in new performance formats, and move on to consider the work of leading artists in the field
who have explored other, related issues in the visceral/virtual debate. I
argue in this chapter that live and mediated formats each have their own
unique roles and contributions to make to performance, whilst at the same
time entertaining and supporting a reciprocal relationship with each
other. I support this argument with reference to the performance *Random
Acts of Memory* and with my original theory of an ontology of smell. Once
more, I would argue that this theory's status of originality (given my
reference within the work to a number of interdisciplinary texts on the
subject of smell, both academic and 'popular') is derived from, based
upon and developed in accordance with the experience of testing the
theory over a number of years in and through embodied practices. Over
the years, I have used the sense of smell in live work as a strong source to
evoke memories, both as a tool with which to generate emotionally
charged and viscerally engaged performances, and as a prompt to
personalised interpretations senses by the audience in response to that
work. This theory of 'the ontology of smell' is also significant to the thesis
in that my embodied practice as a maker and performer of this work led
me to explore specific performative relationships between the live and the
mediated. For instance, it was my early work on *Sniffing the Marigolds*
(1995), which led me years later to revisit what I had learned about the
specific nature of smell-sense memory when I came to work with
technologists interested in developing new forms of computer memory in
performance programming. An example of this is when I worked with
the ISA Technology Development Team producing the original ARVID
programming which invented virtual clones in the live performance
dynamic, in *Random Acts of Memory*. As I argue in the third chapter, smell operates in this work and in social life more generally as a cue to human memory, singular or individual and also collective. It therefore suited my academic aims perfectly to integrate the 'ontology of smell' into the 'higher tech' performance experimentation of my later work, thereby fitting the timing of my live performance to the possibilities and capabilities of 'memory' or 'ram' in the pre-directed, preprogrammed technology.

In and through this thesis, I argue against a placing of live and mediated formats in an oppositional stance where one is ultimately seen as ‘better’ than the other. Rather, I set out to show that live and mediated formats can work together to inform the content of the work as well as emphasising the specific qualities of each other. In her article 'Reach Out and Touch Sombody: The Romance of Interactivity', Ann-Sargent-Wooster cites video artist Nam June Paik's statement that the most important question to be addressed in our current studies of technology is not necessarily to do with creating yet more scientific or technological toys, computer games or weapons, but rather: 'how to humanize the technology and the electronic medium.... and also, to stimulate viewers’ fantasies, to look for the new, imaginative and humanistic ways of using technology' (in Hall and Fifer, 1999, p. 303). Within the three performance pieces discussed in this thesis I illustrate how, through live performance, technology has been used as an alternative mode of communication in my work, in a manner which is deliberately complicit with the content of the
work. The reciprocal relationship between form and content is demonstrated, toyed with and teased out in the playful positioning of my thinking/speaking body as the theoretician and performer, in a wide range of performance pieces which each engender a use of technology for both 'imaginative' and 'humanistic' ends, either within or beyond their familiar and recognisable roles. For instance, the mobile phone in Vena Amoris is utilised as both a practical tool for communication and as a metaphor for one-to-one contact within a public setting: as a tool to bring individual audience members into the center of the performance dynamic.

Chapter One takes as its primary focus the role of the audience. In Vena Amoris, the performance piece explored in depth in this chapter, the role of the audience (so often theorised in performance studies but not often tested on an individual basis within the performance setting) is renegotiated through the one-to-one dynamic, which tests and pushes at the ambiguity of 'ownership' of experience and rules or expected roles in the performer/audience relationship. The use of the mobile phone engenders both a distancing and a concurrent increase in intimacy between the audience member and the performer. In this way, the use of technology can be seen to have achieved one of the initial aims of the performance, namely by finding a way for the performer to maintain an 'unmarked' presence (in Phelan's terms) and to divert the 'being-looked-at-ness' inherent to live performance.
Chapter Two focuses more directly on the role of the performer and her relationship with the digital and analogue images with which she interacts in the process of inhabiting and staging her own embodiment. In *The Day Don Came With The Fish*, the performer is placed against the film screen, interacting with the images projected onto her body, as her body itself becomes an alternative projection surface. She appears within the film, and at the same time, she encompasses it. Here, the relationship or interdependence between live and mediated presences is demonstrated. The ambiguity of the constantly shifting performer/audience relationship described in Chapter One was performed in *Vena Amoris*, following on from that enactment of the theory discussed, Chapter Two projects a story of mortality through the body of the live performer. Here the 'mortalities' and 'immortalities' described in *The Day Don Came With The Fish* are shown to perform their own state of flux as each medium (live performance, film, live performing literally ingesting film, live performer offering her body as the surface on which the film's images may play) reveals the contradictions and co-dependencies of its own nature as a medium in a world of multimedia and active audience interpretation.

If Chapters One and Two can be seen to focus on the role of the audience and performer respectively, then Chapter Three takes as its central focus the performance itself. I divide this chapter in two parts in order to address the complex issues of performance at two linked but still separate or separable levels: the embodied and the observed. In the first part of the chapter I explore the original performance of *Random Acts of Memory*.  

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engaging explicitly with what can be posited as some of the defining characteristics of live and mediatised form. For instance, discussion of 'the ontology of smell' reconfirms the viscerality of the live performance when it both describes and shares a sense of smell within the performance space, and when it theorises its own emotional body memory in more theoretical discussion within the body of the thesis. This part of the chapter, then, playfully incorporates theories engaged with and engendered by technology such as Walter Benjamin's notion of 'the culture of the copy', demonstrated in live and virtual performance processes dealing with these central issues of authenticity and cloning (as manifest in the creation of the ARVID performance clones, and in the image of Dolly Parton morphing into a sheep: a double image on screen with a double status in the popular and scientific worlds, the imagination and 'reality').

Part Two of Chapter Three expands the exploration of live and mediated performance to include work in which technology can be seen to provide an alternative venue for performance, as demonstrated by the performance road trip entitled *I never go anywhere I can't drive myself*. This section explores the metaphorical and real experiences of travel on the actual highway and the technology superhighway, involving spectators engaged in their everyday lives on the 'real' road and those logging on to the web site for a performance experience or drive by proxy.
Having established the notion of the two roads running simultaneously in the imagination of new technology performance involving live performance, I open the chapter to discussion other performance practitioners whose work impacts my own embodied performance theory and practice. Consideration of the work of the artists Orlan and Stelarc in particular provides a counterpoint or set of contemporary examples of continuity and evolution with the notion of technology finding alternative sites, in the cases of these performers, in/on the body.

It may seem strange that I chose to leave detailed discussion of the work of other performers to the end of the last major chapter. But in the context of this embodied research, it was the only way to proceed and to progress new ideas and invent new technologies which may pay homage to the theories and performance creations of others, but which must of necessity begin with individual, remembered, inspired, created works, texts and ideas. The aim of the thesis could only be achieved by and through original practice-based research: an approach which began with a detailed overview of other performance work in the field would have blurred the unique perspective and contribution of an embodied research and blocked the creative energy which sought to create anew through an embodied performance theory.

Each one of the performances described in this thesis can be seen to be defined by the specific manipulation of the live with the mediated. All of the performance pieces use technology in a manner integral to both the
form and content: be it through the mobile phone which simultaneously
unites and separates performer and audience; the mortality of the fragile
Super8 juxtaposed with the mortality of the flesh; or the digital clones
who 'ghost' the live performers. Francesco Torres writes that:
'Technology is uniquely situated to provide the tools to create a genuinely
novel art that is, in turn, able to give technology a humanistic dimension
otherwise lacking' (in Hall and Fife, 1999, p. 209). As new digital
technologies develop, the process of 'digesting the new and shifting the
old' continues. With each new performance made and shared, the task of
the contemporary performance artist is enriched and challenged. For those
of us who are, as artists and as academics, jointly interested in shaping the
debates around and within which performance work is viewed, each new
piece of work seen adds to the burden of shaping original forms, and also
enriches the study of each new work in a broader context. This thesis was
made, not written. By that I mean that the process of producing the thesis
was a process of making, not just writing: of imagining, embodying,
shaping, performing recording and editing the performances, analysing
audience feedback, analysing my own feedback to the screenic versions
captured, reconfiguring those screenic images for submission in a
'finished' or at least fixed form – albeit one on CD-ROM allowing for some
user interaction – and then reviewing the work as a body of creative
material shaped by and within a cultural context as well as a theoretical
structure. In the final acts of writing, printing and binding, the thesis was
also made, and is remade and redefined by each reader and each viewer
who chooses to read or view the work in different orders, shaped by
personal experiences and preferences of a 'one-to-one' nature, as well as by any notion of 'academic objectivity. The thesis thus seeks to communicate differently to each reader, while providing the materials (performative, mediated and written) to offer a guide to further exploration in the field.

Heidegger states that: 'The more questioningly we ponder the essence of technology, the more mysterious the essence of art becomes' (1997, p. 35).

The performances cited herein chart their own symbiotic path within this thesis. Random Acts of Memory starts where Vena Amoris ends, with the performer both live and mediated captured in the glass reflection, the screen dividing and displaying two different 'realities'. The Day Don Came With The Fish, positioned midway in the thesis, offers a lens through which the images are viewed. The performer thus figures as the 'spool' through which the images thread. Of course it is no accident that I placed my earlier work last, but also in a deliberate opposition and complex structure of time and space/place. The discussion of Random Acts of Memory (a late work) and I never go anywhere I can't drive myself (an earlier work) with Sniffing the Marigolds (one of my earliest professional pieces) in the last chapter, alongside earlier work by other performers, is intended to freeze-frame the interpretive act of making meaning from the thesis, and to encourage the reader or viewer to rethink and review the materials and arguments in a more complex, playful and provocative flowing
relationship than any standard ordering by chronology or media type might entail.

In Chapter One I argue for a meaningful relationship between form and content, positing a symbiotic union wherein both illuminate and reiterate each other. The use of live performance and new media technologies in *Vena Amoris* reflects a different kind of reciprocal relationship. In Chapter Two I argue for a visceral relationship between live performance and technology, discussing the notion of immortalities and mortalities inherent in both. In *The Day Don Came with the Fish*, old and new technologies function almost as membranes between performer and text. In Chapter Three I argue for a reciprocal relationship between live and mediated forms: that is, I not only argue that there is a reciprocal relationship in operation (which we will see if we look with our various gazes open to that interpretation), but also, more importantly, that there should be, must be, a reciprocal relationship in place if we as artists and academics are to make anything of import (theses, performances, theories) in the age of new technologies. So, in the first part of this last chapter I use my original performance piece *Random Acts of Memory* to explore a symbiotic relationship between the live and mediated while in the second part, I examine a range of work made by other contemporary performance artists who incorporate live performance with technology. In this context, I am empowered by both theory and practice (or rather, by the reciprocal relationship demonstrable between them) to argue against Philip
Auslander’s placing of live performance in a position of opposition to mediated performance.

Throughout this thesis I argue from my own embodied practice and from the theoretical positions which both inform that practice and develop therefrom. This analysis of the role and relationships of live and mediated formats not only adds to the field of Performance Studies, but also to a study of the unique methodologies enabled by embodied practice which offers a specific theoretical framework from which to view the relationship between practice and theory. Just as I argue against a prioritising of live and mediated, one against or above or beyond the other, so too, in my role as practitioner and as critic, I aim to demonstrate the flow of the reciprocal relationship between theory and practice, in order to argue for an informed and sustained practical and theoretical engagement with the field of live performance in the new media age.

In conclusion, I argue that both live and mediated formats offer their own unique forms of communication. When incorporated into performance settings, both live performances and ‘virtual’ performances (or mediated performances using various forms of interactive or screenic devices) can operate and communicate in symbiotic ways. The live and the mediated can and, I argue, do operate in a two-way dynamic that shifts and flows: in forms that are mutually beneficial, wherein one accentuates and highlights the other, and each does more than clone or capture the other: where the live lends presence and weight to the mediated, and the
mediated gives further life and new technological forms to preserve and extend the influence of the live. As technologies develop further, the dynamics of this relationship will continue to grow, mutate and shift. But fundamentally, as audiences and artists alike continue to digest the new and to shift and invent new ways to remember and make sense of the 'old', the visceral will enliven the virtual and the virtual will enrich and extend the 'shelf-life' of the visceral. Each remakes the other. And here, as in the discussion of creating this thesis (above), I refer to a complex, negotiated, objective and yet subjective process of artistic making with cultural consequences, informed by theory and tested in practice. When this fluid dynamic is recognised and sustained, the contact and communication which dwell at the hearts of both live and mediated forms may find the shapes they need to adapt to each new age, safely yet always provocatively positioned on a solid and quintessentially human foundation.
Appendix I

Vena Amoris
(Love Vein/Vain)
1999

A performance script by curious.com

[Audience member is seated in the bar. Their mobile phone rings. It is the performer.]

Hello. The performance is about to begin, so if you'd like to make your way to the theatre. It's just through the pink door, follow the signs to the back and should we lose touch – if for some reason we lose contact, please move to somewhere I can find you again and I'll call you back. I promise.

[Audience member makes their way into the empty theatre space. There is a dim spot on the stage.]

Could you possibly step into your light?

[Audience member steps into the spot and the light comes on full. Doris Day's song, 'Make Someone Happy' comes on. In the center of the spot-lit area there is a box of matches and a cigarette.]

Please feel free to smoke. Comfortable? Then let's begin. The process of making basically distills into four different categories. And these four different acts of making break down into: waste; form; cast; and construct. These four terms describe how material is transformed because whenever we make something, whatever the motivation, we have to transform something in order for something else to come into existence.

Wasting: this is the making method that we have the largest association with. It means simply removing the material not wanted. Cutting things out is the obvious example.

Constructing is making a whole out of parts and requires the parts to be joined in some fashion, while Forming is to change the shape or structure of the material in question by bending or pressing etc. But what I'd really like to focus on now is casting, because this is the most sublime way of making.

Casting is the most sublime way of making in terms of the transformation of the material and the wholeness of the artifact, according to Chai Roberts, lecturer in Making at Goldsmiths University. We have a long, long history of making with this method. This method requires the material used to be homogenous and this gives it a blank nature which the surface of the mould can effectively write on with mere skin of texture.
So: waste, construction, forming and casting: the four ways of making. You can begin to make your way off the stage now and maybe find a place to put out your cigarette if you are smoking.

I don’t know if you already knew this, but a hundred years ago, just before they switched theatre lighting from gas lights and lime lights to electric lights, just about every aspect of theatre design was influenced by the fear of fire. They replaced nearly all the wood in theatre buildings with iron, metal and asbestos and London City authorities began to require the roofs of theatres to be crowned by an iron smoke flue. So the theatre itself was like a giant chimney. City councils demanded that theatres be separated from other buildings at a distance of no less than 30 feet. Brick walls were laid around the perimeters of the theatres, barricading them from their neighbors. Some theatres were sunk into the ground, taking into consideration that the water pressure of average fire hoses gave them a reach of no more than 30 or 35 feet. So the theatre building, before the introduction of electric lighting, was something of an architectural leper in the city, separated out, cordoned off, walled in, and swallowed into the earth.

Could you begin to make your way upstairs now? The stairs just outside the theatre door.

[Audience member leaves theatre and begins to ascend the stairs.]

The real danger, and this is the part I particularly like, was perceived as coming directly from the stage. Are you on the stairs now? Up three flights, past the kitchen to the ladies toilets on the first floor. In the event of fire it was stage and audience that had to be separated from each other, sealed off. Water curtains, solid iron shutters and asbestos curtains were designed. Because the danger emanated from the stage itself, a huge tank of water was suspended in the ceiling above the stage, over the performers heads. Have you made it up the three flights now? Can you see the ladies room?

If you’d like to make your way around the corner now, towards the Fire Room, you’ll notice a series of wooden cupboards. I’d like you to stop at the second one along.

[Audience member turns corner, finds second cupboard, stops.]

I’d like you to open the cupboard. In the cupboard is a computer and on the computer is a digitally rendered film which I’d like you to watch. It’s very short, so pay close attention, please.

[Audience member watches Thomas Edison ‘Animated Picture Studio’, 1904.]
The film you just watched was made by Thomas Edison in 1904, although the sound track was added only recently, by me. In case you’re wondering, this Thomas Edison was the same Thomas Edison who invented the light bulb. Or did he? There seems to be some controversy about this. At any rate, he at least liked to take the credit for it and was totally opposed to Nicola Telsa’s dream of free wireless electricity. Particularly, he didn’t like the way Telsa dressed. Please close the cupboard now and look behind you to the door to the Fire Room directly across the hall and make your way in.

[Audience member moves into the ‘Fire Room’ where there are chairs set out as if for a lecture. On the stage at the front of the wooden paneled room is a white lectern, upon which stands a Van der Graff generator. The generator is on and it is a bit noisy and makes little sparks of electricity, visible from close up.]

Please take a seat in one of the chairs for a moment, because I’m going to have to go soon and I just need to share a few things with you first. The most important thing is to do with your safety, because under no circumstances should you approach the Van der Graff generator on the podium while your mobile phone is switched on. Let me explain. If you haven’t come into contact with one before, a Van der Graff generator is a device which reacts to the static in the atmosphere, or the static electricity off a person’s body. It is absolutely harmless to humans, but should not come into contact with electrical devices. Your watch, if you are wearing one, if fine and does not need to be removed.

After you turn off your phone and leave it on your seat, I’d like you to approach the Van der Graff and, if you can, extend one of your hands towards the metal ball on the top very slowly, until your fingers are an inch or two from the surface. As you move close enough, you will experience a tiny spark of contact with your body’s own electrical current. The electricity of the machine the electricity of the body. If you look closely you will be able to see this as well as feel it. Again, don’t worry. I wouldn’t ask you to do anything dangerous.

I have to go now, but I promise to write and I’ll see you soon.

[Audience member approaches the Van der Graff, sparks, and reads the note written on the write lecture podium:]

*Egyptians believed that the third finger of the left hand follows the vena amoris, the vein of love that runs directly to the heart.*  
*A direct ‘digital’ blood flow.*

Please step through the door to your right.

[Audience member exits the ‘Fire Room’ through the door to the right of the Van der Graff, on the opposite side of the room to where they
entered. They find themselves in a narrow corridor, outside a door with a code lock. A tall blonde woman in a black evening gown is standing outside the door. She enters the code, opens the door open a crack and gently pushes the audience member through, while simultaneously speaking to her identical twin, who appears on the other side of the door:

Twins: I’ve missed you. I’ve been thinking of you. I’ve so wanted to see you again. I wanted to say something to you. I have to go now. I’ll be thinking of you. I’ll be waiting until we can be together again. Goodbye. Goodbye.

[When the audience member has passed through to the other side of the door, the twins kiss on the lips through the crack in the door as the door closes again. The Doris Day song, 'Make Someone Happy' is playing off a computer, but the pitch has been digitally shifted so that it sounds as if it is being sung by a man. There is a mirror and some dressing room lights at the far end of the room. A chair is positioned in front of the mirror, which the audience member is invited to sit in. The performer speaks from behind the mirror:]

I’m glad you came. I didn’t know if I would recognize you. I had a picture of you in my head.

Did you miss me? I mean
Did you ever think of me?
Did you want to see me again? I mean
Did I make any difference?
Did you want to say something just to me?
Did you want to catch hold of something that you thought you might have seen or at least thought you’d caught a glimpse of and at least, for a little while,
Not want to let go?
Was I too late?
Did I say the right thing but at the wrong time?
And what I’m really asking is do I get another chance while everything is changing skin, legs, flesh, hair, head, heart, chest
Did I loose part of myself – the part where I recognize myself but never had the chance to say goodbye?
And, and, and did you ever, did you ever stumble across an old tattered copy of Greyfriars Bobby and skim read about the dog that didn’t leave his masters grave, even in the pouring rain and did you feel against your better judgement suddenly moved and think, ‘Well, there’s loyalty for you’, or maybe you just have one of the cups with a picture of the dog on and were you there when the three old ladies in a teashop in Hull giggled as they ordered Virgin coke and talked about the grandson who couldn’t say his ‘s’es and did you look at the picture in the tube of the actor who plays Josh in Casualty and wonder what you’d do if the person standing
next to you had a fit and did you did you NEED that tiny jolt of electricity just to know you were alive

I'm glad you came
When will I see you again
I'll miss you
I miss you already
Goodbye.

[Audience member leaves, passing through doorway, where twins repeat the same greeting and goodbye kiss as the audience member passes through the door between them. In the corridor an usher approaches, holding a out curious.com CD, shiny side facing them like a hand mirror and hands them a plastic hair comb or a lipstick.]

Helen wanted you to have this. Thank you. Goodnight.

Vena Amoris was funded by an Artsadmin artist bursary and performed in Toynbee Studios, London July 1st and 2nd.
Appendix II

Selected Audience comments, for *Vena Amoris (love vein/vain)* performed 1st and 2nd July 1999, Toynbee Studios, London.

The Theatre was an architectural leper! is one of the best bits of dialogue I've heard! And the rest of the piece.... Thank you. Beautiful. And the mirror the mirror, the mirror I need to go through again NOW. Couldn't listen to the text (was too overwhelmed). Really beautiful. When are you doing it again? Thankyou.

Magical! Experienced something so special, the focus on me was shuddering and unusually strange but beautiful. Thankyou for a journey that took me to a world of amazing constructs and led me to the door where dreams and fantasies reign.

Your voice made me feel very secure despite the potentials of great insecurity. Fundamentally a moving moment in life.

I felt so connected, so guided, so cherished, and so much as if I belonged in each moment of, I would say journey, but I feel as if I have been immersed in the same moment wherever you led me. And now I feel bereft, now you have sent me away....


I think I had forgotten what its like to see sparks come off my own fingertips. I'm still shaking. It's like diving into really cold water and gasping at the thrill and the fear of it. Thankyou.

Funny, shocking, humiliating, sexy, intimate, scary, touching, heartbreaking. How do you know?
Appendix III
The Day Don Came With the Fish
1998
A performance script by curious.com

[Performer stands opposite Super8 projector. House lights down. Music cue. Performer switches projector on. Film image caught on circle of rice paper. Performer eats paper till end of film and music. Moves close to projector light so eventually only mouth is lit]

What day of the week was I born on mother?
Wednesday I think dear,
Hold on and I will ask your father.
Tony,
What day did Don come with the fish?
Wednesday I think dear.
That's right,
You were born on Wednesday,
The Day Don Came With The Fish.

[Image & sound: performer's heart on oscilloscope. Performer stands in front of screen]

When I was a baby I stopped breathing one day.
My mother noticed that I was very quiet
And very blue.
She gave me the kiss of life and then, because we had no phone,
She grabbed me and ran with me clutched to her, to the nearest house.
I often wonder about that run
Just the two of us
Both gasping for breath
Bouncing jerkily together
Suspended in time and running for my life on her big brown shaky legs.

She wasn’t able to speak for weeks after that
And it was my first kiss.

[Soundtrack: Je ne regrette rien with oscilloscope reading Performer signs (ASL) the words to the music, precisely and impartially like an interpreter until record skips. Skip for 12. Scratches.]

I was conceived on Guy Fawkes night
My mother remembers.

After my mother had me
She had a cup of tea
Then she threw up.
Spoken simultaneously with the soundtrack of the shipping forecast:

In this country said the red queen it takes all the running you can do just to stay in the same place.

White Queen complains about the pain in her finger, after putting the plaster on it, I haven't pricked it yet she said but I soon shall. When I fasten my shawl again the brooch will come undone directly.

Last night I went to bed with the taste of my own blood in my mouth. I woke up feeling more like myself.

Dunluce Castle just about stands on the tip of the windswept Northern Irish coastline.

The castle dates from 1300 and is described in the guide books a 'one of Northern Irelands most romantic ruins'.

In 1639 a huge freak storm carried off the kitchens of the castle taking with it all the kitchen staff busily preparing for the evening meal. Only a tinker mending pots in a window embrasure survived.

The other day I received a letter from Paul. In it he wrote, 'you know the way one chooses to spend the next moment can change everything.'

Dunluce castle just about stands on the tip of the windswept Northern Irish coastline.

I first saw it on a wild windy October day. It was the day the virus entered Paul's body.
He and Ralph had almost missed the coach and I remember them running through the rain, laughing, exuberant. Ralph died the following Autumn.

The other day I received a letter from Paul. In it he wrote, 'you know the way one chooses to spend the next moment can change everything.'

[backward repeat of time lapse castle]
30-45 secs
Dunluce Castle
Visitor Center
Views
Guided tours July-Aug
Open
Tues - Sat 10am-4pm
Sun 2-4pm
Price 1.50
Child/OAP 75p
On A2 east of Portrush

Visitors to the castle may receive a complimentary copy of the musical notation of The Banshee's Wail - a death boding aire associated with the castle and the blustery caves beneath.

[Time lapse finishes. Sound of beeper going off for 12 counts with oscilloscope. Jump cut to Paul and Helen in sea.]

. I remember moments more than anything.
The way we danced the polka, fast
.... In a nightclub....

thefirstmomentIsawyouIknewIknewIcould

Savage love you
His

Back
Warm

Returning to a cold city his eyes glittering behind glasses
That was a great night - he spoke about it afterwards
So
Unexpected
But you were our beginning and end
As we drove across America in the middle
[Jump cut to images of Paul's body and sound of Radio 4 pips going off. Soundtrack of shipping forecast begins.]

*Spoken simultaneously with the soundtrack of the shipping forecast:*

In this country said the red queen it takes all the running you can do just to stay in the same place.

I haven't pricked it yet said the white queen but I soon shall. When I fasten my shawl again the brooch will come undone directly.

Last night I went to bed with the taste of my own blood in my mouth. I woke up feeling more like myself.

[Soundtrack: *Je ne regrette rien* comes in over the top of the shipping forecast. Image: body of Paul dissolves to image of the tide. 12 scratches. Tide moves out to black and white shot of the Nun's Walk.]

He told me as we walked the narrow precipitous pathway that jutted out below the cliff.
It was dark and wet and we walked unsteadily, pushing against the strong wind blowing off the sea.
After he had told me I looked down at the water swirling below us and thought how silent it was
In a deafening sort of way and I thought about the moment just before the moment that changes everything...
The moment when everything is ok....
The moment when everything is going to be all right.....
And then I thought about the moment that changes everything

The future is now and now and now... any thing can happen now that we have...You can't repeat the past. I said.. Of course you can...
[Freeze frame. Backwards moment. Freeze frame. Forwards moment. Freeze frame.]
And I was thinking what if and.

[Beeper sound. Image frozen on walkway. Beeper continues through text, Image camera moving up and down from convent to sea 2 times.]

Paul will point up to one of the wards, 'that is Kenneth's ward,' he will say
'Let's pop in and see how he is.'
I will sit in a green waiting room and listen to the dull rubbery sound of shoes on the hospital corridor
Drink tea from a green cup
Gagging
From too much milk.
Kenneth's dead Paul will say.
Most parts of England and Wales can expect some reasonable spells of sultry warm sunshine, but a few scattered thundery showers may break out in the afternoon, and drizzly rain is lightly to affect the south-west of England and Wales later. Showers and localised thunderstorms are likely over Scotland and Northern Ireland, but some places will escape the downpours and stay dry. The east coast of Scotland will be plagued by mist and low cloud throughout the day. Tomorrow, most parts of England and Wales will be warm and humid with sunny spells.

Shipping forecast text fades out but image remains

The other day I received a letter from Paul. In it he wrote, 'Before I go, let me tell you this: I was driving back from Manchester on the M1. It had just gone 4 o'clock, so I had to stop at the next available service station to take my protease inhibitors with the obligatory glass of grapefruit juice. Luckily the next stop was only a few miles away. The service station car park was virtually empty as I stood in the sleet, rummaging through my bag in the boot for the pills, the juice, the plastic flask-mug. I then noticed an old man and his son walking to a sheltered veranda-like spot where the son left his father to place his prayer mat on the ground, take off his shoes and pray.'

[Sound of beeper. Shot of Paul and Helen in the sea played backwards.]

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And Paul said, ‘Does that ever effect you?’
And I said, ‘What?’
And he said, ‘You know,
Monday’s child is fair of face
Tuesday’s child is full of grace
Wednesday’s child is full of woe...
And I said, ‘No.’

[Image of Helen and Paul on Screen freezes. Performer stands so that
the image is on her body. During the following speech the image
slowly fades into a blue screen by the end.
I used to love watching old films.
I would gaze in adoration at the actors and ask my father to say which
ones were dead.
Often it could be the whole cast.

[Sound of Radio 4 beeps. Film cuts to shot outside café in France.
Super8 footage of Helen, people in street, sky, trees, café etc. speeds by. ]

You can always tell when people are using a digital watch. Ask them the
time and they will invariably say something like, ‘It’s 4:41.’ How often do
you really need to know the time to the exact minute? An analogue watch
user will just glance at the time piece and say, ‘It’s about a quarter to five.’
In digital time keeping its always one time or another. Its never ‘about’
anything. However, there is an instant when a digital watch is speechless.
When the display flashes from one second to the next there is a tiny gap in
the information. So, although the watch seems to supply a constant and
exact reading of time, it is in fact a discontinuous display sampling
individual moments of time and displaying them.

? It was an old camera, the first time we pressed the trigger, to film a
French cafe
? We realised that releasing the trigger did not make the camera stop
It was a runaway.
? An entire roll of film sped by before we discovered how to switch it off.’

[Film goes black but the sound of the projector remains throughout.]
Summer
Few seconds of film,
On the beach with my parents.
Watching these moments over again.
Summer
On the beach with my parents
Sometimes, no matter how careful I am,
The projector will destroy a few frames.
Tonight, for example, the film won’t feed properly and a full thirty frames
will be severed.

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The severed moment will only this big.
The images are tiny,
But clear:
A blue sky,
Three figures,
Three smiles.
could try and stitch them back together
But the moment would lose its smoothness.

[Performer holds up a severed piece of film and shows it carefully to the audience.]

This is the moment when my father points to something in the distance and my mother and I follow his gaze.
I particularly like this bit.

[Jump from black to time-lapse of Dunluce Castle slowed down and this time the complete soundtrack of Edith Piaf.]

I used to listen this song when I was young.
I would accompany it with actions.
These would be executed with great passion and feeling.
The record belonged to my father and it always had a scratch in it.
I only ever knew that the song sounded like this.
I would always be waiting for that moment.

No, no nothing.
no I regret nothing.
Nothing good...?
Nothing bad... something for my father
something else?
No, no nothing.
no I have no regrets.
This country... valiant... forgotten...
I will...?

With my memories,
I light the fires
My shame and my pleasure
I need nothing.

...something of my loves
With their... with their... tremours?
Valiant forever
I will not something
No, no nothing, no I regret nothing
.... Nothing //////////// good for my father
Nothing bad...

No, no nothing, no I have no regrets.
....
....
Calme, my joy?
Be still my life? Be still my joy?....
Today...
Something ...with you...?

[Film goes into Performers heart beat]

What day of the week was I born on mother?
Wednesday I think dear,
Hold on and I will ask your father.
Tony,
What day did Don come with the fish?
Wednesday I think dear.
That's right,
You were born on Wednesday,
The Day Don Came With The Fish.

[Screen image slowly fades. Performer leaves platform and walks back
down to film projector. She hangs the fragment of film on the fish
hook, turns on the empty film projector so the light shines on to the
piece of film, and leaves the space. Radio 4 pips are heard.]

*The Day Don Came With The Fish* was commissioned by The London
Filmmakers Co-op and performed in The Lux, London December 12th,
1997.
Appendix IV
Random Acts of Memory
1998
A performance script by curious.com

Audience enter into baked goods and licorice smell and Radio 4 ‘smell’ program. House lights are on. Helen and Leslie sit on chaise subtly copying members of the audience as they sit down and adjust themselves, chat, etc. Performers will cue start; house lights down, set lights up, video of Esther Williams on and music, Mouse on Mars, ‘Audiotracking’. Leslie crosses to bar cart, gets tray, places it on coffee table, a memory game begins. The tray is placed in front of Helen with objects on it, covered with a cloth (an antimacassar). Leslie lifts cloth to reveal objects, replaces it and takes an object away, revealing the tray once more so Helen can guess what has gone. This repeats a couple of times. Helen doesn’t seem to be very good at this game. Finally, Leslie quits and goes to the camera. Helen picks up antimacassar and inhales the lingering odor of the cloth. Music fades out. Text spoken through the worn bit in the antimacassar. Football score results fade in, drone in the background.

Helen: This smells just like my grandparents house. My grandmother had these antimacassars on the back of all the armchairs. Their whole house smelt like their chairs. You could bury your face in those armchairs - deep in the crevices between the arm and the seat and smell the whole house. We went there every Sunday. There were wooden bowls of toffee on the table and football all afternoon.

‘Westbromich Albion: 1 Manchester United: Nil
Bristol Rovers: 2 Liverpool: 1’

This was on my grandfather’s chair - you can see where my grandfather’s head wore away the material. He sat in the chair to the right of the fireplace as you came in. He died in that chair. The cat from next door was still asleep on his lap. He was wearing his blue and white striped apron still on from cooking the dinner. It was New Years eve. I found him. I came in to see if he wanted to go for a drink. ‘Granddad, do you want to go for a drink? He was dead in the chair.

‘Crystal Palace: 1 Queens Park Rangers: 1
White Hart Lane - Huddersfield: Match postponed’

Leslie goes to blinds, opens them, a motorized sequence begins whereby the blinds rotate from side to side, 180 degrees. Live feed projection begins onto the screen behind them. Leslie returns to camera.

Leslie: Could you repeat that story about your grandfather, but this time cheat your face towards the camera a little?'

Helen: This smells just like my grandparents house. My grandmother had these antimacassars on the back of all the armchairs. Their whole
house smelt like their chairs. You could bury your face in those armchairs – deep in the crevices between the arm and the seat and smell the whole house. We went there every Sunday. There were wooden bowls of toffee on the table and football all afternoon.

‘Westbromich Albion: 1 Manchester United: Nil
Bristol Rovers: 2 Liverpool: V’

This was on my grandfather’s chair - you can see where my grandfather’s head wore away the material. He sat in the chair to the right of the fireplace as you came in. He died in that chair. The cat from next door was still asleep on his lap. He was wearing his blue and white striped apron still on from cooking the dinner. It was New Years eve. Uncle Michael and cousin David found him they came in to see if he wanted to go for a drink. ‘Granddad, do you want to go for a drink? He was dead in the chair. It wasn’t me. I didn’t find him. I just sometimes see it - feel it so clearly that sometimes I remember it that way.

Leslie snaps a still image on the digital video camera, so that as Helen leaves antimacassar on chaise back and goes to bar cart and replaces tray, her image, cloth over face is frozen on the screen behind the chaise. Football scores fade out. Helen picks up shaving lotion bottle. Frozen image cuts to live feed of Helen at bar cart.

Helen: When my grandfather died, he left me his shaving lotion bottle collection. Which was odd, really. Considering that he had eight grandsons. I suppose it was because they all came in bottles shaped like cars and when I was little I used to love playing with them on the carpet.

Leslie crosses to cart and takes bottle from Helen while video source switches from live feed to prerecorded section: Leslie standing in front of bar cart saying, ‘When my grandfather died, he left me his shaving lotion bottle collection. Which was odd, really. Considering that he had eight grandsons. I suppose it was because they all came in bottles shaped like cars and when I was little I used to love playing with them on the carpet.’ Source switch back to live feed, Helen at bar cart, head and shoulders. Helen starts telling story evoked by smell as if it has jogged her memory. She can only remember the story as the smell exists so has to tell it on long intakes of breath. As Helen inhales, Leslie dabs her grandfather’s shaving lotion onto the antimacassar; when Helen speaks, Leslie polishes the smell meticulously into the surface of the metal table.

Helen: Breath. The thing with smell is that you remember the whole smell – not like half remembering a face. That was definitely the pantry – I can feel the light coming in the tiny side window and the biscuits kept in the yellow and blue Tupperware boxes so all you can smell is the Tupperware and all you can taste is the Tupperware. Breath There is this man who works on an exhibition called the London Experience and he has to create the smell of London in the old days. That was father’s suede
jacket -- smoke, city air, leather -- and him coming home every Friday in his dark suit with sweets in his brown leather briefcase. Lime chocolates for my sister and black licorice for me. Breath So that is his job -- and its not just the smell of food and street fumes that he recreates - he even does the great plague -- apparently a dead pig smells just like a human corpse. That was the building we used to have history in. It took me ages to realize that was the smell of a damp building rather than the smell of history or the smell of the history teacher. Breath Once a week a group of old people come to the exhibition on a trip down memory lane as he takes them past recreations of old fireplaces and the smell of the blacking reminds them of their mothers. There is a smell that has always scared me. I don't even know why. I don't know what it is. Can't define it. But sometimes without warning I can suddenly smell it. Breath The smell of Brilliantine reminds them of fast boys -- or was it more that the boys who wore that had reached the age when they were interested in girls -- and then they wonder what came first the hair wax or the sex and then they all go back home. The smell that most excites men is pumpkin pie whereas women respond more readily to licorice.... Music fades in. I think that was the smell of me...

Helen crosses to camera, focuses in on Leslie, who is finishing polishing the surface of the table with the shaving lotion smell. When she has covered the entire surface, she lights a cigar, inhales and then slowly exhales a fog of smoke over the surface of the table three or four times until the entire surface has been touched by the smoke. Music fades out. Leslie speaks into the camera.

Leslie: One cell, one memory may not be exactly the way things work, but it seems to be the first way that people think about the problem of locating memories in cells. Even if you aren't familiar with how computers store data, the take home message of most introductions to the brain is that there are pigeon-hole memories -- highly specialized interneurons, the firing of which might constitute an item's memory evocation. On the perceptual side of neurophysiology, we call it the grandmother's face cell (a neuron that may fire only once a year, at Christmas dinner.) Obviously, my father has many more memories of my grandfather than I, and I've come to realize that this is the reason I liked my grandfather better. Recall, of course, is not the same thing as recognition, and my grandfather never gave my father the recognition he deserved. No present technology provides an analogy to help us think about the problem of associative memory and distortion. He never forgave him, but he was holding his hand when he died.

Less than a week before... Leslie forgets words, Helen prompts her...Less than a week before I had been sitting on my Grandfather's red leather foot stool next to him. She goes and gets a script, reads surreptitiously throughout this section. He was watching a program about Polar Bears: the Loneliest Creatures on Earth. The polar bears on TV were beautiful and white, roaming across beautiful white fields of ice and snow. They did look a little desolate, all alone in those big white ice
fields, and I started to feel sorry for them. Then we watched a polar bear eat eighty pounds of flesh in one go and slope off with bright red blood splattered down the front of his fluffy white fur. The commentator noted that male polar bears have a nasty penchant for eating their own offspring, after which I lost sympathy with the notion that they might be the loneliest creatures on earth. The commentator described how the killer whale stalks the polar bear from beneath the ice; watching for its shadow, then diving down and coming straight back up through the ice at amazing speed, clamping the bear in its jaws and pulling it down into the freezing water. My grandmother was aghast.

'Did you know that?

My grandfather adjusted his morphine drip and said, 'No, but if we're going to learn, let's do it now.'

Puts script down, clearly remembers the following: Memes are those things that are copied from mind to mind. The cultural analog to the gene is the meme (as in mime or mimic); it's the unit of copying. The spread of a rumor is cloning a pattern from one mind to another, the hushed whisper of leaves rustling in a breeze through axon branches. He was holding his hand when he died. After he was buried, he broke out in shingles. Traces will linger, in much the same way that blackboards retain ghostly images of former patterns. The synaptic strengths should remain charged for awhile making it easier to recreate part of this array, the ugly wallpaper pattern in the back bedroom.

Helen's clone (enters. Helen snaps a still of Leslie at the table and while Helen's clone is speaking. While Leslie's still image is frozen in place on the big screen, Leslie carefully replaces the antimacassar on the back of the chaise and positions herself back in the picture in time for the resumption of the live feed at the end of Helen's clone's speech.

Helen's clone Al: Copying is pedestrian. Copying is peculiar. On the other hand, copying makes us what we are. Our bodies take shape from the transcription of protein templates, our languages from the mimicry of privileged sounds, our crafts from the repetition of prototypes. Cultures cohere in the faithful transmission of rituals and rules of conduct. To copy cell for cell, word for word, image for image, is to make the known world our own.

Leslie: Do you remember when you discovered that you were going to die some day?

Helen's clone disappears, re-enters stage left of TV. Helen snaps a still of Leslie at the table. Leslie's still image is frozen in place on the big screen, as Leslie carefully replaces the prompt sheet under Helen's chair and positions herself back in the picture in time for the resumption of the live feed at the end of Helen's clone's speech.
Helen’s clone A2): Medieval scribes knew each line of text...copyshop attendants are scarcely aware of what they copy at 135 copies per minute. Copying to disk requires no knowledge at all of the contents.

Leslie: Because it seems to me like you should be able to remember something like that.

Helen’s clone disappears, re-enters stage right of screen.

Helen’s clone A3): We use copies to certify originals and originals to certify copies.

Leslie slips underneath the Helen’s clone image beside the blinds just before it disappears.

Leslie: One day I stood behind the orange curtains in the breakfast room. After a while I cut the side of the curtain with a pair of large orange handled scissors. It was just a tiny cut. Not even an inch. My Mother was furious. ‘Who cut my curtains!’ In fact she still mentions it to me, ‘remember when you cut my curtains!’

Leslie draws blinds to reveal prerecorded film, wherein Helen takes Leslie’s drink and throws it in her face and the two start wrestling. On stage meanwhile, Helen removes her jacket and starts dancing. Leslie pours herself a drink at the bar cart.

B1) ARVID random sequence of moving images, including these clips: ashtray, martini, gum on shoe, Leslie & Helen dancing, Helen smoking, foot-tapping. Random sequence continues for 5 minutes.

B2): Helen’s clone dances on top of Helen

Source switch back to live feed at end of VHS2. As music fades out, Helen says, into the camera:

Helen: What I really would like to do...
What I would really like to say...
Where my interest really lies
Is not the so much in RAM of the machine
But in the body electric
So Zeus like with his ‘watch out folks here comes another one’ thunderbolts tearing through the sky
I’ll turn myself on
Harness my own electricity
Charge myself with static
And stand here glowing gently in front of you
Running the lighting rig off my thigh.
Leslie snaps a still of Helen alone by the curtain and in the 5 second gap before the camera resumes live feed, Leslie squeezes herself in behind Helen. The live feed image is a tight shot of Helen's head, just a shadow of Leslie behind.

Helen: One day I stood behind the orange curtains in the breakfast room. After a while I cut the side of the curtain with a pair of large orange handled scissors. It was just a tiny cut. Not even an inch. My Mother was furious. ‘Who cut my curtains!’ In fact she still mentions it to me, ‘remember when you cut my curtains!’

Helen stays by the curtain drinking. Leslie’s clone enters and moves around the stage.

Leslie’s clone C1): Biology itself is invested with the rich ambivalence of myth. The stories we tell about our bodies, are as generative as they are genetic; we are said to begin, literally and originally, by making copies of our cells.

Leslie’s clone shifts position reappears:

Leslie’s clone C2): More and more frequently, we equate the computer’s binary opposition of data with processes of human memory and learning. Our thinking is signal processing, our lives are databases and we need downtime. In the company of laser copiers, faxes and scanners, we are drawn to assume that what we copy instantly we know immediately.

Leslie’s clone shifts position reappears:

Leslie’s clone C3): An estimate of the number of different ideas the human mind is capable of is 3,655,760,000. While there is hope that all the ideas have not yet been bespoken, there is a high probability of coincidence or unconscious repetition.

Leslie’s clone shifts position, reappears stage left of Helen and Leslie, who are stage right of screen:

Leslie’s clone C4): A recorded playback of Ella Fitzgerald’s high C can shatter a crystal goblet more regularly than Ella.

Helen throws drink in Leslie’s clone’s face. Leslie’s clone disappears. Leslie challenges Helen. They begin to remove their jackets as in the prerecorded footage, but are interrupted as Dolly Parton, ‘Muleskinner’ song is played and twin pairs of her smiling faces appear on the TV screen, the film screen and in the middle of the room between them (ARVID projector). As the song blares out, the Dolly Parton’s morph into Dolly clone sheep who wink, then morph back into Dolly Parton.
Leslie: Cut the power!

Power goes off. Silence and darkness remain for a moment. Then Helen returns to chaise, strikes a match and starts to speak.

Helen: The exact day the house had started to fall in on itself was a point of debate. What was never in question was that absolutely no blame whatsoever was apportioned to them for not noticing. At any rate certainly not at the beginning. Especially as it had started in the high up and out of the way topmost corners where the wall meets the ceiling in a last sigh of arriving and where you could be forgiven for not looking.

Another match struck and sentence continued...

Helen: Later, of course, it was unforgivable. Polystyrene balls ran like mercury along the floor of The Girls' Room. 'Spiders eggs' he said. It wasn't funny and it wasn't true. She believed him and stopped going in there. They brought the house in the first place because of the garden. She had said this time she was going to have a modern kitchen just like the girls at work: 'This time I am going to have a modern kitchen just like the girls at work!'

Another match struck and sentence continued...

Helen: But it was too late! Already he was miles away, wandering dreamily out into garden. Overgrown pine tree shady shadowy jungle garden. Impenetrable. Perfect. Secret. Hidden. Safe. 'This is the place!' his eyes shining. 'This is the very place!'

Leslie, who is at the bar cart, strikes match.

Leslie: The devastating thing about my inheritance is that it smells like him, but it doesn't smell of him.

Another match struck...

Leslie: Southerners respond to grief with lard and sugar. It was, therefore, a mark of the community's esteem for my grandfather that the Baptist church pot-luck supper following his funeral was the grossest display of food I have ever seen.

Another match struck...
Leslie: The mourners loaded up their plates and sat down to eat, while I stood by the coffee urn and watched them all, but what I was really thinking about was the time Grandpa carried me out into the pasture on his shoulders to look at the bull.

Another match struck, Leslie lights the nine candles in a flat silver candelabra of tea lights.

Leslie: The body was perfectly intact, except for a black charred horn and a trickle of dried black blood running down from its mouth. The tip of its horn had been the highest point in the field when he was struck by lightning.

Final match burns out as Super 8 digitized film comes on. Helen moves into the audience, Leslie remains at the cart, illuminated by the candles. Helen: '...a sort of 'odor of memory,' she wrote, 'like a person who has come from some place that we have forgotten and would give our life to recall.' Pause. Walking down the Boulevard de Saint Michel, I look up and see my dress hanging from the railings of our balcony, where I placed it this morning to dry in the sun. It makes me happy to see it there. Pause. There's a little square with four identical fountains, one in each corner, where we go some days and watch the people. Pause. Leaving the gallery, we hear fragments of a woman's voice singing an operatic aria and follow the notes until we see the singer, standing in an archway on la place de Vosges. Sitting by a fountain in the park nearby we listen to her sing and watch a small boy run round and round the fountain, a string in his hand attached to a blue boat.

Leslie opens a book and reads by the candlelight.

Leslie: In Greek myth, the Lethe is the River of Oblivion, or forgetfulness in the Underworld. Legend has it that streams carry the memories that Lethe has washed from the feet of the dead to a well of Remembrance. Water that washes became the source of remembrance, the wellspring of culture, and acquired the features of woman. This well of remembrance, the Greeks call Mnemosyne, from whose name we derive memory, mimeses, memos...A mortal who is blessed by the Gods can approach this well and listen to the muses sing in their several voices: what is, what was, and what will be. Even the immortals must draw on her waters if they wish to remember.

But the first woman of oral tradition is forgotten when the oral transmission of epic ceases. Not one Greek city has preserved an altar dedicated Mnemosyne. Her name becomes a technical term for memory, now imagined as a page; the stuff of memory turns from water into a shard. Written language, which has fixed words on clay tablets, acquires more authorship that the re-evocation of fluid, living speech.

Helen: I am left this morning with the lingering sadness which the book evoked. Intoxicated by the smell of paper and ink, I purchase a bottle of
'encre blue nuit' with the picture of the moon on a dark night on the label. I will spend the afternoon listening to the sound of the pen scratching each carefully flourished letter, then head into the city with blue stained fingers.

Leslie: Before epic tradition was recorded, before custom could be fixed in written law, thought and memory were entwined in every statement; the speaker having no way to imagine the distinction between thought and speech. The idea of desiccating and freezing the voices of the Muses in writing was deeply offensive. Among the gifts Prometheus brought to mankind, as a culture hero, was the combining of letters wherewith to hold all things in memory. For presuming to imprison the Muses in script, Prometheus was cruelly punished by Zeus.

Leslie shuts the book and blows out the candles.

Helen: vous avez distingue dans l'homme certains sentiments, et leurs causes les plus communes; mais vous voyez qu'il y a, dans ce que vous appelez homme quelque chose de permanent qui n'existe pas. Vous etes semblables a des savants fort serieux qui noteraient avec soin les mouvements des poissons, mais qui n'auraient pas decouvert que ces poissons vivent dans l'eau.

Leslie: The Sufis of Central Anatolia believe that because water conducts electricity, our thoughts as electrostatic impulses are transmitted by the moisture on our breath.

Helen: Do you take one last look behind you when you leave? Moving house and saying goodbye to the cupboard underneath the stairs. And arriving in a new place with all the same furniture. Fitting all the old stuff into new places. And acting as if nothing had happened.

Film ends. Static on screen. Leslie draws blinds shut as Helen speaks and then walks off stage. Helen ends speech standing in front of the drawn blinds, glimpses of the static viewed between the slits. Helen walks off stage.

Helen: We draw ever closer to the surface of the screen; our gaze is, as it were, strewn across the image. We no longer have the spectator's distance from the stage – all theatrical conventions have gone. That we fall so easily into the screen's coma of the imagination is due to the fact that the screen presents a perpetual void that we are invited to fill.

ARVID D1): hand strikes match

Leslie: Have you ever noticed that most of what we seem to know about memory, we know through amnesiacs?
Leslie: I saw a man on television – a smart man, he had been a law student at Cambridge – and he had suffered a hemorrhage to the brain which obliterated his ability to store new memories. So he remembers everything that happened before the trauma, but nothing since.

Leslie: So he knows who he is. But he doesn’t know what he has been doing.

Leslie: And in order to maintain his independence, his ability to live alone and function as an adult, he records what he is doing throughout the day into a small Dictaphone at two or three minute intervals, which he sits down at night and transcribes into notebooks that he keeps in a black metal trunk behind his sofa.

Leslie: I wonder if he is ever tempted to cheat and upgrade his memories - more action, more color, more drama - knowing that in a few minutes time he’ll be none the wiser.

Helen: Do you remember learning that you were going to die? It seems like you would be able to remember something like that. But then again, memory recall, to a psychologist or neurophysiologist, is an artificial construct because it isn’t anchored by current sensory input. Recalls are created on the fly, sometimes differently on successive occasions and potentially tainted by injections from one’s imagination. Which leaves me to wonder if and how you’ll remember tonight.

House lights up. Radio 4 smell tape #2 on. The End.

Random Acts of Memory was funded by the Arts Council of England and the Institute for Studies in the Arts, Arizona State University. It was performed in Drama City, Phoenix, November 1998.
Appendix V

Excerpts from audience responses
Random Acts of Memory

These comments represent a broad section of audience response to the performance of Random Acts of Memory sent via email during the months of November/December 1998, Phoenix, AZ.

Your aesthetic presentation was excellent and I had some great sensory experiences. When I realized that you would be delving into one of my primary areas of research, neurobiology, I thought, another great artistic project is going to be tarnished by an inaccurate and artificial connection to complex science. I was particularly thrilled, therefore, when the connections you made were smooth, appropriate and accurate. The discussions of memory formation, association and recall were very well presented technically, metaphorically and artistically. The computer animation of neuron function was fantastic.

Mike Seulla - Professor of Science

Random Acts of Memory is highly original work, intellectually and conceptually brilliant, and really capable of stirring the moorings of any particular soul. I am quite amazed at the depth and intensity of your connections between personal and shared experience, coupled with artifacts of the culture, be they machine-driven, stories-told, put-on's, ambiguities or pure insight laced with deep feelings. The parallel tracks of your mentalities, interlaced in past, present and future histories weave a different tapestry every performance. I have experienced it three times now, and like a good novel, film or painting, I always find new multiple Meanings. I am excited by the risks you have taken with the technology...image, idea, virtual, real, symbol, text...much to be coordinated in a constellation of choices for the viewer. I remember the first interactive performance I did in 1988, ‘Smarter Than Dogs.’ I recall that crude use of light/sensor technologies and trying to imagine how such applications would develop over time, and find there way into performance that really counts. I sense the same feeling with the maiden voyage for ARVID, the hard-drive storage capabilities and the new questions that are provoked by anyone so daring to work with them. Thank God, two marvelous minds driven by exceptional ideas were the first to introduce these technologies into a performance that certainly counts. No one can charge us with techno-phobia or obsession.

- Richard Loveless, Director, Institute for Studies in the Arts

Thank you so much for giving me the performance to think about. At the end you left me with a question as to if I would think about the piece after I left. In the following meeting I had after I visited the piece I could not really step back into my real life for awhile. I
looked at people's faces talking to me and placed slowly moving blinds in front of them; cool tones of 'memory' over the 'space' that I was attempting to function within. My life felt as if it was still being contained within the performance, and I liked it that way. I enjoyed the piece so much that I wanted to step into the 'ideas and thoughts' of RAM within my own life. Unfortunately playing in my mind instead of responding to questions being asked of me, 'If you were to not take a Sculpture seminar what would you take? How can you justify a philosophy class as a substitute for this?' 'I am sorry could you repeat that question and look towards the camera a bit more' was not an option within my art school experience. We are all real hard working artists trying to make a living. No time to horse around. I could not stop talking about your performance. All I can do is think about the RAM performance and how everything seemed so tight. I liked that tightness. Thank you for giving me some breath/smell to continue, I don't feel so crazy, alone, off base.

Sherrie Medina - artist and web designer

I was wondering before the show what you would do with the subject- though you both have an interesting relationship to technology, I believe that you are each more...tectile? Something that's more real than technology, if that makes any sense. It's far more personal, or filtered through humanity, than a simple display or critique of technology. To be real best becomes you both.

Raised awareness of memories, and the faults of memories, have led to a lot of thinking on my part. I've always been aware of the imperfection of remembrances; I have often witnessed others construct memories of incidences that clearly did not occur, but they wanted to have been true. It's made me reconsider some things about my past - there are times and places I remember, but I seem to remember the appearance of the event or place in precisely the way that photos of it represent. I know something's wrong there, but what about the memories I have that I can't remember the pictures from?

In the film Mystery Train, a Japanese tourist in Memphis says he takes pictures of hotel rooms and bus stations, because the other stuff he'll remember. But as photos can be used to augment memories, would this approach be considered more or less likely to produce inaccurate memories? Or are our memories accurate as long as it is what we believe, even if they didn't actually happen?

Ken Decore - Architect

The many questions raised about memory and how we remember were painful but very illuminating. I am so much more excited about the opportunity to create work with your guidance.

Greg London - Actor
I thoroughly enjoyed the show! Congratulations on a job well done! I liked it the minute I walked in and saw you guys sitting there waiting for us. So many shows begin with a dimly lit set with no presenters until everyone is snugly in their seats and the lights go out and the actors come on and then the show begins (so that was refreshing to see). I loved the way you looked, the suits and slicked back hair and the headpieces were very hip! I liked the set. It reminded me of looking into an art piece on the wall, an art deco interior design magazine, and a virtual reality room, combined. It must be a nice feeling and sense of accomplishment to be in control of what you want to do and how you do it. I am curious as to how long you have been working on this piece and how it started. Did it start with an intellectual curiosity about memory or did it begin with recalling stories? I wanted to get up and dance!

Mary Hodges - actor

I thought Random Acts of Memory was very stimulating and provocative. Boy, what a fabulous demonstration that we need not fear technology in the arts, but that with imagination, it expands our opportunity to explore subjects previously off limits. On the cusp of beginning rehearsals for RIGA in LA, I am so envious of the technological advances your show dramatized since we did RIGA at the ISA four years ago. Morphing! Congratulations on a triumph of imagination enhanced by technology!

Marshal Mason – Theatre director

Compelling! As I watched the performance, two ideas interlocked and stayed with me for a while: I have long treated cognitive psychology with suspicion, not for its principles and tenets, per se, but rather for its methods. As demonstrated by your performance, cognitive approaches to memory are troubling because the very structures of beliefs are fluid, non-fixable, stable only for a moment. How, then, do we "read" memory?
The second thought concerns the relationship between technology and speech; in this way, I suppose I am very much of the Greek. Words that exist in speech, in and of my body, are more credible and memorable than words that exist within structures of technology (from writing with a pen to constructing through a microchip).

Fred Corry – Dean of Communications

The show was fantastic! I had such a different perspective (naturally) as an audience member (kind of saw myself at times—my role as set/performance Manipulator as a video editor/shooter). So much to think about—glad I'll be involved in the edit to catch things I might have missed.

Rochel Robinson - videographer

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Your performance has come back to me in frames and clips since Friday night - memories. First of all, my congratulations on a piece that was cerebral and provocative and visually interesting. I found much of the writing stirring and poetic and some of those lines have also come back to me. I guess that is what I enjoyed most about the work - that it has a life, it continues to roll in my mind. Some of my favorite moments: the C/U video of Helen's mouth through the white cloth; Helen's breathless soliloquy; both of your candle speeches; the lovely segue of the music from the aria to techno - what was that? The treatment of your Paris video and more, I'm sure, that will come back to me in quieter times.

Sheilah Britton - writer

A strong memory for me - When you spoke of the orange handled scissors cutting the orange curtains, I couldn't help but think of when I was about 8 and very angry at my parents I used little stick pins and made little tiny holes all over their waterbed. Just few enough that they never noticed in the day but with the pressure of the bed at night their covers would get wet.

Thanks for a delightful viewing - dance it off Helen.

Cyndi Coon - artist

I was most intrigued by your piece Random Acts of Memory. I loved the use of the technology!

Darby Winterhalter - actor

Rich tapestry of images, sounds, and stories busting out of all linear conventions

Minds have moved from analog to digital. Colors linger for me when I revisit Random Acts - blue, orange, black and white, blood red against fluffy white - the color of death. Someone handed me a pair of orange handled scissors today so that I could secure a water bottle for a fluffy black bunny - my mind took a still of the scissors setting in my hand - I had an uncontrollable urge to cut a little piece of curtain - well it would have only been an inch or so....

Frances Mc Mahon – artist and filmmaker
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