Volume 1

Locating Performance: Textual Identity and the Performative



Hayley Newman

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of PhD, University of Leeds, Department of Fine Art, March 2001.

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

THESIS CONTAINS

4

.

•

•

VIDEO CD DVD TAPE CASSETTE

•

٠

.

Acknowledgements

My primary acknowledgement is to the Burton family whose scholarship in the Department of Fine Art provided the foundation for my practice as an artist between 1996 and 1999. Additionally, I would like to thank my supervisor Susan Taylor for her support and advice over the past four years. I would like to extend my

gratitude to Aaron Williamson, for his helpful comments and thoughts on the nature of the relationship between text and performance. I am also grateful to Anne Bean and Rob La Frenais for talking to me extensively about their roles in the performance *Pain Tings*, to Susan Collins for providing me with the necessary information regarding her project *Cruisin'* and to Elizabeth Price for information on her PhD thesis *sidekick*.

I acknowledge the support of the Arts Council of England for commissioning the work *Rude Mechanic* in 1996 and to Beaconsfield and David Cunningham for their support during this

period. I would also like to thank De Fabriek in Eindhoven where I made the work *Hook and Eye*, Cardiff Art and Time for commissioning the work *Smoke*, *Smoke*, *Smoke* and Andrew Chetty and Daniel Brine at the NOW festival in Nottingham for commissioning *Here/There* and providing the venue in Nottingham for my examination performance *Soundgaze*. The development of my interim PhD presentation *Connotations – Performance Images 1994-1998* was commission by Hull Time Based Arts and made with the photographer Casey Orr.

1

My examination performance: *Soundgaze* was generously supported in its initial phase by Work and Leisure International in Manchester and in its second phase by an Arts Council of England Live Artist in residency scheme facilitated by Rob Gawthrop at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside.

Hayley Newman

Locating Performance: Textual Identity and the Performative

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD, March 2001.

Abstract

The thesis Locating Performance: Textual Identity and the Performative takes the form of a self-interview, which by identifying itself as a performance, points to 'the interview' as a structure with both a temporal and physical location beyond the page. Presented in this way the thesis examines the effects of context, time, production and materials on the written word generated within physical circumstances.

Relationships between text, identity and attitudes of writing are contextualised through an analysis largely of my own practice but which also considers works by Dan Graham, Chris Burden, Ulay and Abramović, Susan Collins, Elizabeth Price, Bank, Anne Bean and Rob La Frenais, all of whom acknowledge aspects of physical action in the generation of text. The second volume Writings presents a series of original performance texts written by myself between 1996 and 2000, which, when seen in relation to the discussion presented in Volume 1, represent a three dimensional relationship between performance and writing. Performances 1996-2000 is the third volume and includes works made between 1996 and 2000. Presented as images with supporting texts these examples of practice posit themselves within a tradition of the performance document identified in Volume 1 as a salient characteristic of performance practice since the 1970's.

The final volume takes the form of a video document of the performance Soundgaze, which was submitted for PhD examination on 23rd March 2001.

Contents

Volume 1

Locating Performance: Textual Identity and the Performative

Self-Interview......1



Conclusion..... 57



Contents

Volume 2

Writings

Statement: 1999	36
-----------------	----

Sonic Postcards # 1 (transcript)......46

Sucksniffdribblescratch: Instructions for spitting performance in

Sucksniffdribblescratch: Instructions for making

Sucksniffdribblescratch: My

Sucksniffdribblescratch: Actions to be performed as quickly as



Contents

Volume 3

Performances 1996-2000

*Shot in the Dark......*1

*Endless Loop......*4

*Hook and Eye.....*6

A Translation of the Sensation of the Left Hand into the Right.....8

Sleepingbag/Postbag......9

Smoke, Smoke, Smoke......10

My Mannerisms......14

Thinking......16







Video Documentation

Soundgaze, performed 23 March 2001 at Preset, 3-9 Hockley, Nottingham.

Locating Performance:

Textual Identity and the

Performative

h¹: I'm going to ask you some questions about the thesis you have written, and the problems you have encountered while writing it. Can you begin this self-interview by telling me about the initial difficulties you had in writing for this thesis?

H: Yes, I have been trying to find a way of writing but have encountered considerable difficulty doing so. Recently I have found myself in a cycle of writing, rewriting, starting texts, not finishing them and searching for ways that may help me to write, to find a

context for writing to take place in. While reading I wrote in my mind, but the actual writing did not turn out the way I imagined it. An additional problem was how to interpret what a PhD in Fine Art practice actually was or could be. The PhD was a reason to write but I had no personal need or passion to do so. I had an enthusiasm for performance and identified the possibility that writing towards a PhD could only work if located within my own

performance activities and studio practice.

Adopting the device here of a self-staged interview allows me to utilise my own voice bifurcated into a series of questions and responses. This text is being written with many views in mind. I am the interviewer, interviewee and the editor. In addition to talking to myself I am also directing my conversation to a reader.

h: Do you want people to know that I am you too? I am attempting to sound emphatic while maintaining some formality in my position as interviewer. Which of us is your own voice and in what way does this device of the self-interview help you to locate that voice?

H: The simple answer is that both of these agencies are my own voice. Your voice may be perceived differently to mine, through your position as interviewer and in the language you employ. Your voice is also my voice and so serves as a *modus operandi* allowing a flow of ideas to change direction and move laterally within the parameters of this text.

h: I was thinking also, for the title of this thesis you speak of locating the text within performance. How then have you approached writing the texts presented in this document in relation to your art practice?

H: As with practice I addressed the question of generating text using a methodology that, following a model initially proposed by Fluxus in the 1960's, suggests an experience of immersion through which a certain loss of orientation generates thought and resists

the use of formula to aid the production of ideas². At the onset the writing was in certain ways underdeveloped whereas the studio practice was already articulated. It took time for me to discover ways in which the writing could be integrated within practical work. The process was not a systematic one, but a way for me to find a means of articulation within a new discipline. The different texts presented in this thesis, as with the practice, are submitted as a series of ideas and approaches to writing which do not claim to be conclusive. They represent a body of work undertaken over the period of completing the PhD. Similarly, this interview may be seen as an excursion into thought processes on practice and textuality rather than a resolution of them.

h: Yes, I know from my own experience that writing, like making art is a form of language which takes time, thought and practice to evolve and that there are many different ways of writing. How important was it to you to find your own way of writing?

H: It was essential for me to harness the skills of writing in order to

enable the textual articulation of my own analysis of performance, gained through an experience of performing. I had to complete many texts to find a direction for the work, to pitch the tone of the writing and to gain the proficiency and confidence in it that already existed within my practice as a visual artist. The two skills initially appeared to be at disparate poles but through composing, and reworking texts in relation to studio-based work I found modes of articulation similar to my practice. This text is also a part of that

process.

h: Could you expand on this and explain how this self-interview part of that process?

H: As a device or literary method, the interview allows a text to develop organically since a question provokes an answer, which in turn provokes another question. In using the device of the selfstaged interview I may attempt to write closer to my own style of speech or the manner in which I may think through writing. Whilst I am aware that this approach is a construct in which thoughts behind the material within the PhD texts that follow are being presented. With the interview format, subjects fluctuate and rapidly change and experienced readers, accustomed to these modulations, accept such shifts as being intrinsic to the improvisatory thought process or speech patterns of an interview.

h: So, in this self-interview transcribing the ephemeral nature of speech that typically occurs within interviews may imply the hierarchical precedence of speech over the written word, and poses the question: is this self-interview speech or writing?

H: This text deliberately evokes the oral tradition of the interview, that is; it prioritises speech as a form of communication. As I now

write and re-read this self-interview, I am articulating the words on the page in my head, hearing my own thoughts as speech. The way the texts are constructed may denote pauses, repetitions or errors. In the initial drafts of this self-interview I adopted a style of writing close to my own speech, which I then corrected, removing colloquialisms and clarifying meaning, before finally punctuating the text with references to the spoken word.

h: Speech or speaking is a form of communication that also has a physical aspect to it. Physical factors such as body language and the intonation of the voice combine to shape the communication of ideas through the spoken word. When writing this self-interview you may be imitating certain qualities of speech through the process of speaking the text in your head as you write and then peppering it with references to the spoken word. Yet, it remains a piece of writing.

H: The conversation in the self-interview on this page, comes out of the process of writing. However, the text invokes speech in its fictive status as interview. In being presented as a transcription this hybrid of writing and speech - the interview - can only highlight the ephemeral nature of the spoken word before its establishment as text. For example, the interviewee may repeat and contradict ideas and information, refusing to let the text embed any single position or argument. Furthermore, the interview is a format in which the expression of ideas and experiences are

located within a frame of time and space. In the reader's imagination, an interview may suggest the scene of an actual place for a finite period of time thereby proposing a physical event and

location beyond the page. When read as an event, opinions expressed within the local time structure of the interview are open enough to be reconsidered at a later stage. Hence, the structure of an interview may allow a series of ideas to arise that are unbounded by a 'master' concept and in a form that is less susceptible to closure since the structure of the interview characterises a series of thoughts as occurring within a

temporal frame. In the case of this text, however, the interview has been written over an extended period even though it intentionally suggests the temporal event of a conversation. In reality, this interview is evolving at a much slower pace than a conversation or the time taken to transcribe it. In its affectation of a temporal event or series of moments, it attempts to resist solidity.

h: The interview as a format is similar to performance in that, once beyond the moments of conduction, it occupies a space in the past. Again, performance, like an interview, is an event that can be experienced within either a primary or (where any form of documentation is available) secondary context, as either present or past actuality.

H: Differently to a performance, however, the interview is an occasion in which the document is an intrinsic element of the event as well as being a by-product of it. However, as stated earlier, this particular self-interview is happening at a slower pace than a conversation; it is a considered, explicit construct and so too may

be read as a performance. The audience in this condition is addressed as a readership rather than as listeners or viewers.

h: You talk about your readers as possibly being analogous to an audience, can you explain more about the relationship between the terms 'readers' and 'audience'?

H: The notion of readers as audience is posited intentionally in order to identify this text as a temporal event with performative³ conditions where the interview, read as a document of a past

event, represents the 'live' quality within the original spoken word. By deciding to identify the device of the interview as a temporal rather than a definitive structure, this self-interview positions its readers in a way that is analogous to their forming an audience. In such documentation the 'liveness' of the source allows its audience to accept inaccuracy and deviance, it being a temporal act that has only solidified as a gesture made to the future. Questions arise such as 'who am I writing for' or 'who is the audience? Ostensibly, I am addressing an immediate group of three people that I know will be assessing this text as part of a PhD in submission; at a later stage I imagine researchers coming across this text in a library. While constructing the text I am predicting responses to its content, structure and the way it is written by this imagined audience. I am shaping the text in prediction of some sort of effect or result and am projecting my thoughts to a future moment outside of my presence, to a time in which this text will again be activated through being read. In this way the selfinterview presented as a performance within the frame of this PhD, may be seen as the document of an event, positing its readership

as audience in an attempt to circumvent its own corporeality.

h: In characterising this interview as a performance and its readership as an audience, how then is your identity as a performer formed within the conversation presented here on the page?

H: As I have previously stated, presented here on the page this selfinterview performs in an imagined time and place outside of the

encounter of reading. In actuality, there are factors occurring beyond this page while writing the text that the audience is not witness to: I could be writing this at home, on a beach, in a studio, a library or a bed, alternatively I may be wearing a pair of lucky shoes, a man's suit, a chicken costume, or be on a summer holiday in Ireland. The content, tone, gesture and expression of the text shapes my identity as an author whilst my personal identity masquerades behind the fictional improvisation of a real-time discussion played out through the instruments of the interviewer and interviewee.

This masquerade plays upon the conclusion of reading and, as with a performance that sometimes appears spontaneous and unplanned, it has in fact been carefully worked through. Likewise in this text, the strain of the work process is eradicated or disguised through a highly particular and meticulous approach to writing.

As with other performance works my identification as the performer is re-invented through the context or medium chosen for the event. In the self-interview, the dynamic of the traditional

interview is replaced by the binary of performer/audience. It may be seen that the selfhood of the performer is performed to this (imaginary) audience directly through the form of the interview.

h: Interestingly, the constructed nature of this self-interview reminds me of the web work $Cruisin^4$ (1999) by the artist Susan Collins. Taking the form of a chat-room, the work, inhabited by virtual characters, programmed to respond to questions and talk with whoever logs on to the server, expands notions of textual identity within the anonymous frame of the internet through looking specifically at the chat-room space. An experiment in

artificial intelligence, at first characters such as Gail, The Captain or Fred are believably 'real', but as one proceeds it becomes more apparent which members of the chat-room are human and which are 'artificial'.

Mainly concerned with their own identity, the weather or location, the virtual inhabitants' synthetic chat-room questions and responses create a series of surprisingly lucid and occasionally surreal conversations that highlight the imprecision of both questions and answers tolerated within a live conversation. The gender roles and personalities of the virtual characters in the chatroom are not only denoted by name - Fred, Gail or The Captain amongst others – but are also indicated by individual use of language contextualised through the narrative of the virtual boat, which you eventually find out that they are inhabiting. I first saw this work at an art opening in 1999, where the chat-room, projected onto a large screen at one end of the space, was accessible through a computer placed on a plinth in the centre of the room. Gallery visitors could join the conversation occurring in the chat-room by standing on the plinth and typing. By this

action, the viewers became performers, linked by the computer's

keyboard in the physical space of the gallery to their textual avatar on the projection screen in front of them.

As with this self-interview the act of conversation in *Cruisin'* is conducted solely through the written word⁵. However, unlike this self-interview the dialogue in Collins presents staged language alongside real-time conversation. *Cruisin'* does not identify itself as a performance, although it does similarly harness aspects of

performativity, textuality and identity within the event of conversation occurring in a chat-room. By presenting a series of ideas within the interchangeable convention of a conversation, you create a forum within which the interlocution between different art works is literally translated into the dialogue of a conversation. Within the discussion questions and answers provide the platform from which ideas present within the performances themselves are exchanged. Can I ask you to say more about the relationships between your performance practice

•

H: Well, there is an internal dialogue between individual performances within which some works may form clusters that follow a loosely linear progression. Additionally, individual performance works often deliberately assume alternate positions and approaches relative to the performance *oeuvre* and do not exist in isolation. The performance writings presented as a part of this thesis offer multi-faceted views of writing as an activity without attempting to establish or promote any one approach to textuality

and, as such, are ways of seeing performance at differing stages within the process of practice.

h: Work occurring within a time-based structure must always rely on some form of mediation or transformation in order for the work to be represented within a context of 'history'. The amount of different media available to make a record of an event (photography, film, video, text, audio recording, interview, oral history, and newspaper article) reveals the complexity of the *reconciliatory* process between a present moment and past event

٠

H: In this thesis, it is my intention to look at the role of text generated within the process of practice and its ambiguous relationship to its own subsequent documentary legacy. All the writings included in this thesis are presented as both research and documentation of practice-based activity, generated within the process of completing a PhD, thereby making me question that perhaps the terms 'research' and 'documentation' are interchangeable within the frame of a practice-based PhD? Documentation of practice should not solely be seen as representation or evidence of work done but as the punctuation of an investigation that attempts to increase the sum of knowledge that is defined as research. The various texts presented within this thesis were generated through practical research and include aspects of writing as diverse as the artist's statement, press release, score, instruction and proposal as well as existing solely as performances on paper.

h: In a sense, what you are proposing has already been articulated in Lucy Lippard's book Six Years: The dematerialisation of the art object from 1966-1972⁶. Works in the book, presented chronologically, are mainly represented in the form of text, although some works are included as photographic reproduction. The texts presented in the book take varying forms; single entries made by the editor that include the name of the artist, title and date are presented alongside descriptions of works by either Lippard or the artist. Other examples of the different types of information presented in this book include letters, transcriptions of

talks and excerpts from discussions at symposia. In her introduction to the book, Lippard includes an interview that similarly presents itself as both a document of an event and an introduction to the book. A strategic device, the inclusion of this document within the book's introduction equates Lippard's editorial with those artist's texts and documents presented later in the book⁷. The interview places Lippards' text, alongside many of the other documents in the book, within a temporal and physical location beyond the page.

H: Obviously there are similarities between this self-interview and Lippard's interview however, the two examples also present some fundamental differences. It would have been important in the 1970's that Lippard's interview originated within the event of a discussion, which, when transcribed could be included in the introduction to her book. By this action, Lippard identifies 'the interview' as an event in which temporal-performic sensibilities are commonly harnessed within the convention of transcription. In this self-interview it did not seem necessary to repeat Lippard's action

of transcribing an interview, since, as she identified in her interview in the 1970's, the signifier that points to the interview as a temporal-performic event is the transcription. Like this selfinterview, Lippard's interview reflects her acknowledgement of the construction of identity through the materiality of language. As in Lippards' book, The dematerialisation of the art object all of the texts in this thesis, presented chronologically, offer access to a series of performances recorded through the written word and presented in contexts as diverse as a Press Release or a PhD. However, contrastingly to her work, the performances and texts included in this thesis have been both performed and written by the same artist. Since The dematerialisation of the art object from 1966-1972 artists have become more aware of the importance of their own textual representation within an historical context of performance and have learnt from the varying ways in which other artists have tried to represent their performance practice through Books like Lippard's make one aware that the text. dematerialisation of one art form may only serve to solidify its presence within another.

h: There seem to be two different sets of text emerging from this thesis, both of which are aware, to greater and lesser degrees, of their role in representing performance. In its conscious use of language to construct a performance for the page, this selfinterview predicts its own future, looking forward to a time in which it will be seen solely as text. Other examples of writing such as a proposal or press release, composed within the peripheral activity of administration, were not initially intended to either represent performance textually or to be included in this thesis.

H: One of the ways that a reconciliation between past research activities and the present nature of this PhD may begin to happen

is by presenting texts generated for differing reasons and motivations and written in various styles and voices within the cohesive body of a single text. Presented here, the writings generated from performance works are varied, showing the fluid boundaries of such practice and the variable performance languages communicated to a wide range of recipients in differing contexts. In some instances, these

texts are interchangeable with performance at their conception while others, originally not intended to be seen by anyone other than myself, are used as examples of writings composed without a sense of their own eventuality.

h: Which of these differing forms of writing did you start with?

H: The first writings I can find relating to individual performance works made during the period of the PhD are three short lists written for the performances Shot in the Dark, Crystalline II and Hook and Eye⁸ (vol. 2, p. 2 and vol. 3, p. 1, 3 and 6). When writing these lists in my notebooks I did not intend or know that they would eventually be read by anyone other than me. Both of the performances Shot in the Dark and Hook and Eye occurred in the dark and used a form of self-illumination to reveal my body during moments of performing. In the performance Shot in the Dark I wore a light sensitive dress which, when illuminated by two 1,500 watt flash heads, glowed and then faded over time. In Hook and Eye, I had made a boiler-suit with a series of fourteen microphones sewn

inside it, which as I moved in the performance, amplified the sounds made by the abrasive Velcro sewn onto the outside of the garment. In turn, the sound made by the Velcro triggered a small

disco 'sound to light' unit which activated a 150 watt light bulb hung at my own head height in the performance space. During the performance, I stared into the flickering bulb that in turn illuminated me as I moved. Crystalline II was a sound performance in which, standing on a miked-up surface wearing a pair of vibrating stiletto shoes, I performed a series of drones dependent on the displacement of weight between the two shoes and the

pressure of my feet on the surface I was standing on. Small torches sometimes attached to my ankles were directed down and focused their illumination towards my feet.

The notations for these three performances, improvised around a rehearsed structure, list and identify essential points to remember in the performance. At face value, the lists suggest the possibility that they are examples of experimental poetry or perhaps scores for someone else to perform. In actuality the lists, written solely for my own reference were aides-mémoire to the

h: What is interesting about their inclusion within this thesis is that because of their incompleteness and inability to represent the performances they are attached to the texts appear to be more expressive than straightforward and performance open descriptions.

H: The notes for these three works are skeletal and communicate information in the form of a code initially written to be understood

solely by their own author.

It was after this that I wrote my first texts attempting to adopt the awareness or imagination of a reader other than myself.

Describing performances in my own words, I would write about the experience of performing directly after the event. In these descriptions, it was my intention to articulate thoughts about performing as near to the experience as possible. The writings attempted to capture the physical memory of performing before the experience was replaced by my own future memory of it. In this instance the relationship of the text to the performance was too

subjective, making frequent reference to the social and logistical contexts out of which the performance was made. Dissatisfaction with this way of writing made me start to consider possibilities of writing *as* a performance, where text could be generated within performic circumstances.

h: How then did this transition between writing as a form of reflection after a performance move into thinking about writing in a performic way?

H: The transition between writing as a form of reflection and writing in a performic way happened relatively quickly, spurred on by offers to do a series of performances in the Sensation Exhibition at the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin. A combination of pragmatic decisions influenced by limited finance and PhD commitments led to the three performances; Kiss Exam, A Translation of the Sensation of the Left Hand into the Right and Sleepingbag/Postbag⁹ (vol. 2, pp. 4-32). In all of these performances I attempt to write about an activity at the same time as performing it. In Kiss Exam

(vol. 2, pp. 4-14 and vol. 3, p. 7) I perform kissing against a wall with a volunteer¹⁰ while attempting to write my consequent sensations on a pad mounted next to me. As I kiss the stranger, I write a description of the kiss. Likewise in A Translation of the Sensation of the Left Hand into the Right (vol. 2, pp. 15-29 and vol. 3, p. 8) I sit at a low table-like structure and place my left hand in a pat of butter. With my right hand I write about the sensations experienced by the fingers of the left hand encased within the butter. The texts for both Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . use the grammatical present to link the moments of action to its writing

while the length of both texts were determined by the one-hour duration of the performances.

Alternatively, in *Sleepingbag/Postbag* (vol. 2, pp. 30-32 and vol. 3, p. 9) I lay on the floor inside a customised sleeping bag. A series of smaller zips sewn into the bag allowed me to open the bag from inside and 'post' the postcards, stickers, post-it notes and sheets of paper I was writing on during the performance out of the bag.

h: In titling A Translation of the Sensation of the Left Hand into the Right you must have been conscious of the wordplay between the use of the adjective 'right' and the verb to 'write' which when spoken only distinguish themselves from one another through their context?

H: Yes, I was aware of the interchangeable meaning of both of these titles. However, the titles for both Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . were written on stickers in German¹¹ before being

stuck to my back for the duration of the performance.

I am right-handed, so describing the activity of writing with my right hand was literal in both English and German. Both *Kiss Exam* and *A Translation*... follow a similar format, one of assimilating writing into performance by the subjective articulation of the performer's experience during the event. In A Translation . . . the performance traces tactile information experienced by the left hand up the left arm to the brain where it is made conscious before being articulated into muscular activity in the right arm and then hand in order to be expressed into text.

In A Translation . . . I remain seated, whereas Kiss Exam is

performed standing up. By performing the work while standing I intended to place the resulting description within the oracular tradition of speech since public speaking is normally conducted standing-up. But whereas in public institutions the mouth is normally used to speak, in this instance it is used to kiss. As my mouth responds physically to the kisser, my hand articulates the transformation of the sensation of kissing into text. In the performance Sleepingbag/Postbag I lay on the gallery floor and posted the texts outside the bag. The hand used to write

the text privately inside the sleeping bag was the same hand that delivered the text to its audience outside the bag.

h: It seems to me that the hand plays alternative roles in each of the performances. In Kiss Exam, the mouth occupied with the action of kissing devolves the articulation of the encounter to the hand, which in turn writes rather than speaks its experience. In A Translation . . . the left hand is a receptor, receiving stimulus, while the right hand is the mechanism by which such information is transposed into text. In Sleepingbag/Postbag however, the invisible act of writing on postcards inside the sleeping bag remains obscured and the hand is only seen as it emerges from the bag to deliver the text to its audience.

The text for the work Kiss Exam was written during the performance on a pad of A4 paper placed on the wall next to you in pink and red felt-tip pen. What is the significance of this and of the emphasis on handwriting presented in the other performances?

H: The choice of pink and red pens reflects the colour of the mouth, whilst the lined paper indicates the linear constraints of

writing while kissing. On the paper my writing starts off neatly, following the ruled lines on the page. As I succumb to the physical sensations of the performance my writing becomes unruly, almost illegible, slipping beyond the confines of the space delineated for writing. The writing thereby communicates a physical response to the kiss not only within the text but also by the expression of the handwriting on the page. As body-language is used to signify meaning in speech, the quality of handwriting in Kiss Exam provides information that emphasises the reading of the work.

Contrastingly, the text for A Translation . . . was written on

green and yellow paper, reflecting the visual properties commonly used to package butter. Unlike Kiss Exam, the handwriting in this performance is controlled and neat, reflecting its more meditative character.

h: The performance A Translation . . . makes me think of scientific methodology in which an experiment is recorded through the observation of one or more factors. In the writing you describe the sensation of the hand in the butter and what it looks like as well as

supplying an initial paragraph describing your intention within the

work. You also contextualise the work as a live performance by

referring in the text to two people who are present documenting the work as well as a member of the audience.

In Kiss Exam, you also outline your intent and contextualise the writing by referencing the location of the work. However, what I essentially find interesting in this text is that the direct documentation of an intimate experience, which may normally be recorded after the event in a diary or similar device, happens here

in a public frame. This immediate expression of the intimate experience of a kiss makes reading the text awkward and places the reader in an uncomfortable and voyeuristic position. Whereas an entry in a diary is written in private, solely for the eyes of its author, the text of *Kiss Exam* was written in public. Alongside *A Translation* . . . this text has subsequently been made into an artist's book¹².

H: After the event, the books allow both myself and the reader to witness the experience of performing made explicit within the moments of corporeal action documented during the event of the work itself. Such writings present a way of documenting work from within, pointing towards a more direct relationship between the practical and textual investigations and the role that documentation plays in the retrospective consolidation of performance as a temporal activity.

As objects, the original hand-written texts are artefacts and maintain a physical link back to the time of performing. The sheets of paper are the remains of an activity which crease, fade and

discolour with proportional relation to the past event and present/future moment. Analogically, the text unites the sensation of performing with the attempt to drag the moment of performing into consciousness, an *impasse* activity. This is particularly apparent in my experience of performing *Kiss Exam* in which the struggle to articulate sentiment was challenged by my growing desire to 'abandon' myself to a kiss.

The documents present varying insights and ways of reading the performance works presented to them. The stillness of the exterior performance image presents itself as a photograph while

the flux of the interior performance experience is presented as text.

h: It occurs to me that these two performances (Kiss Exam and A Translation . . .) share some formal similarities with the work Performer / Audience / Mirror¹³ by the artist Dan Graham. In the performance, Graham faces his audience with a mirror behind him and begins to make a continuous verbal description of both himself and the audience seated in front of him. Turning towards the mirror he begins to describe both his own reflection and the

audiences reflection in the mirror.

H: Yes, I agree that they do share some similarities. In his piece, Graham uses the spoken word to articulate an improvised analysis of the visual signification of both the audience's and his own physical appearance and behaviour within the performance. Similarly with Kiss, A Translation . . . and Sleepingbag/Postbag, text is intrinsic to the performance, generated out of a given situation, and performed 'live'. However, Graham's analysis of the live situation is articulated during the performance as speech, while my account remains unspoken and is accessed by the audience through reading. In Performer / Audience / Mirror Graham literally attempts to collapse the space between performer and audience within the single plane of a mirror, while my own work invites its audience into the physical space of the performance, encouraging the audience to read my writings on the feelings experienced as they occur.

In the transcript for Performer / Audience / Mirror some of Graham's words are described as 'inaudible' just as some of the transcriptions written during Kiss, A Translation . . . and

Sleepingbag/Postbag are illegible. Pauses and sounds like uh or umm made by Graham while thinking punctuate the text and refer the reader back to the 'live' nature of the original spoken performance, just as crossings out imply hesitancy and thoughts occurring during the moments of the written improvisations of both Kiss Exam and A Translation. . . Such asides in Graham's piece, like the 'inaudible' alongside the inclusion of mistakes and pauses and again in the case of Kiss Exam and A Translation... the inclusion of spelling mistakes and grammatical errors direct us

back to both performance situations. All of these instances suggest that such loss of information is inherent to the nature of a document.

As with Kiss and A Translation . . Graham's transcript of Performer / Audience / Mirror reads quite quickly, as a breathless stream of words and phrases. However, the quick speed at which one may read the transcriptions of Performer / Audience / Mirror does not reflect the slow and considered pacing of the spoken analysis as seen in the video documentation of the performance itself¹⁴.

h: Graham's identity in this work is complex. In titling the work Performer / Audience / Mirror, he tells us that his identity is that of

performer, an identity confirmed by the content of the improvised observations spoken by him during his monologue. Yet, as the stages of the work progress and Graham's perspective fluctuates between observing himself and then the audience, his identity is altered by his own commentary just as the audience's behavior is also modified by it. According to Graham's description, some of the audience laughs at his comments, while individuals at the back of

the small room, remain rigid and unmoved by the experience of the performance. Others start to communicate with one another by changing their stance or exchanging glances through the frame of the mirror before them. Initially, when thinking about Graham's identity in this work, I considered his stance to be both neutral and analytical and his identity as a performer to have been naturalised through the presented work's method of enquiry. It was only later that it occurred to me that this was a misreading and that what I had considered to be a 'neutral' identity was in this instance the invisible dominance of the institutional male voice of authority played out through the device of a performance using the format of a lecture. Graham may have attempted to analyse the hierarchical power base inherent within the relationship and space between Performer and Audience by compressing and uniting them within the single image of a *Mirror*. However, this analytical gesture is reduced to mere illustration by Graham's use of speech, located within the traditional format of the lecture, which points to his own complicit role in the establishment of the frame of the work.

Questions arise such as: 'does the audience really see themselves as a single unit?' or 'how does Graham's physical presence in front of the mirror interrupt the audiences view of the whole reflection

presented to them?' It must also be noted here that not all of the audience present in the room actually see themselves in the mirror.

H: I agree with the argument that neutral habitude sometimes subordinates individual identity, and directs critical attention toward a more formal reading of the work being performed. In Dan

Graham's case, the location of the analysis of the relation between performer and audience within the performance lecture format presents an ambiguous problematic when reading the work. The performance attains its goal of assimilation of performer and audience in the single image of the mirror. Yet, both the analytical intonation of Graham's own voice and the dead-pan manner in which he makes his analysis, endorse the hierarchical structure of the lecture and the traditional position that the male voice of authority holds within that context. Interestingly in a statement about his work Graham speaks of his disinterest in being a performance artist, but expresses an interest in being seen as an art guru¹⁵.

h: There are other examples of how writing in practice relates to textual identity and institutional power found when looking at copy for press releases or catalogue entries (vol. 2, pp. 35-43). In these instances an artist may literally assume the role of press officer or take on the anonymity of the authority from which the information in press releases and copy are sourced. For example while writing

a press release or copy for a catalogue, the artist may assume an alternative identity to fit the convention of the medium. Is this area of any relevance to you in your practice? H: When writing press releases or copy I would usually use the third-person singular to describe a work, writing about myself 'objectively' under the guise of an anonymous authority. In a proposal¹⁶ (vol. 2, pp. 38-41) or report (vol. 2, pp. 42-43) I may boast about or distort the value of a work to fit the submission's agenda, while writing a press release (vol. 2, p. 35) or copy (vol. 2, p.37) for a catalogue I may highlight aspects of my artistic identity according to the focus of the publication. In 1999 the artist's group Bank exposed the anonymous authority of the art world press release in their 'Fax Back Service'. In this work Bank handcorrected both grammar and spelling alongside 'wooliness', 'pretentiousness', 'ambition', 'corporate authoritarianism' and 'over use of cliché', marking the press releases out of ten and faxing them back to the institution of origin¹⁷. By revealing the textual identity of individual galleries represented in the anonymous authority of the written word in their own press releases, Bank

attack the power inherent in such modes of address, reducing them to the personal and therefore to whimsy.

h: It occurs to me that by including texts like press releases or reports not written specifically as PhD material but generated during the time period of the PhD that you are pushing for the recontextualisation or re-evaluation of such writing within a formal frame. It also occurs to me that such texts are part of the process of the administrative role of an artist thereby posing the question of where these texts position themselves within a PhD submission?
H: Other performance-writings included in this thesis also present themselves as ways of locating practice, each occupying a different status as a document in relation to performance. Some, like this interview, have been written to address the PhD requirement, while others were generated in performances that were made as research toward this PhD.

Press releases, proposals, copy and reports are another

category of writing that in a different context may be considered to be archival material. The activity of documenting and archiving performance encompasses the use of differing material in an attempt to represent cohesion beyond actual events. Likewise, the text in this interview and the writing within the body of the thesis recognise the role of differing forms of the written word as ways of seeing practice, documenting thought and presenting a set of ideas.

Examples such as the proposal or press release present forms of writing that occur within the process of practice and often represent the first formal textual articulation of a set of ideas relating to a new work. When thought of in terms of representing identity the word 'copy' can be seen to echo both the 'copying' of a convention of writing as well as literally 'copying' the identity of the individual artist into a publishable format.

h: Alongside Press Releases, proposals, reports and magazine copy, you have also used other conventions of writing. Can you say more about these formal frames and their importance as a context for

the texts?

H: One example of the importance of framing writing formally is the series *Sonic Postcards* (vol. 2, pp. 45-46). In each town I visited I would buy a postcard and then find the viewpoint from which the postcard was originally photographed¹⁸. Having found the viewpoint I would sit down and write an audio diary of what that place sounded like during the moments of writing on the back of the card. I made a note of the time and then dated, addressed and

sent the postcards to my home where they would generally be waiting for me on my return.

These texts embodied certain performic concerns, being location-specific and requiring me to make an audio transcription from the viewpoint of the postcard's image. Representations of both sound and vision were joined within the object of a single postcard: an old photo on one side and on the other my hand-written text describing the sounds heard from that viewpoint. As with this self-interview, the identity of the text as a

performance fluctuates according to the context or the medium chosen for it to take place in. As the performer of the work *Sonic Postcards*, my identity is split as the writer and sender of postcards from various places to 'myself' at home. When writing the postcards, the town I am visiting is not my home and I may be seen by others to be a tourist or person working away from where I normally live. When I later receive and read the postcards at home I experience myself as a person outside of my normal habitat, writing to 'me' from a distance.

h: The writing of these texts in a public space might also be considered to be performative: in this particular case, the private activity of postcard writing is transformed into performance through your acknowledgement of the physical frame of the postcard as a medium.

•

H: Yes, by using the postcard as my medium, I chose to denote the action of writing on it as performance. As a medium the postcard structurally limits the length of text by the area of writing space available on the back of it. In turn, this observation led me to

consider methods to delineate length of text other than the conventional areas of space. These later experiments also occurred in public spaces such as coffee shops and included writing for periods that lasted the length of time taken to smoke a cigarette, or to drink a cup of coffee (vol. 2, pp. 47-48). The contents of the texts arose from visual observation and reverie in public spaces, framed by the structure of the production.

h: Both *Sonic Postcards* and the writing experiments in coffeehouses relate to a scenario of private writing in public spaces, recalling, say, images of a tourist writing postcards or, in the case of the texts written in coffee houses, of a Beatnik stereotype sitting smoking, drinking and writing.

H: The intention when setting out to write on postcards and in coffee shops was to set up a structure in which I would explore certain difficulties in writing. At first I did not understand or have the experience of a methodology of writing and felt unsure of my own ability to write. I was not excited by the idea of writing as a

self-reflexive activity and felt confronted by the page. To get over my self-consciousness and insecurity I found different circumstances and strategies for writing as a physical activity. By adopting stereotypical personas such as that of Beatnik or tourist, I was able to locate the act of writing within a physical realm, while at the same time affiliating myself with the varying literary personas of the writer.

In contrast, the next investigation took place in my studio and involved writing a passage on a typewriter. Whilst raising my arms up and down and letting them dance through the air I began

typing. In this way I played an improvised description of arm movements out on the typewriter. The text, starting as a graphic description of my arm movements while writing, developed into an abstract passage of words and letters produced by the improvised movement of fingers across typewriter keys (vol. 2, pp. 49-50 and vol. 3, pp. 21-42) Over the duration of the experiment, the instrument of the typewriter was effectively transformed from a writing tool into a device for producing musical sounds.

--

h: In all these instances your position as a writer is located between an imagined fantasy of the act of writing and an exploration of the medium of writing in relation to performance. The interplay between fiction, fantasy and textual convention is also explored in the work *Connotations - Performance Images*¹⁹ (vol. 2, pp. 52-60), can you say something about this work?

H: In *Connotations* I began to think about the traditions of text within the *oeuvre* of performance documentation. Looking specifically at the conventional book format used for the

distribution of performance work, I singled out texts that artists

had written in the 1970's to describe their performances. Within

such conceptual artworks of that period I identified a common

trajectory in which the performance was developed from an idea on paper through to realisation, before being returned to a paper format through photographic and textual description. This trajectory follows the rubric; plan – performance – document. The actions undertaken by many of this generation of artists, in being led by conceptual ideas, lent themselves to description in text, thereby making them ideal for the text/image binary. In this construct the text operated as a document often written after the event, which, composed in the past tense was considered to be a record of action just as the photograph was also a document. I observed that it was in these texts where specific circumstantial detail such as date, time, place and duration were combined with a description of the event and personal recount in order to expand the information presented in the image. The conceptual nature of much of the work described in this way is represented in texts often no longer than a paragraph in length.

h: In a sense, the mechanics of performance practice from this period corroborate its location within a conceptual frame. The significance of such works from the 1970's can be seen to be relative to a synthesis of concept and performance, which is reflected in artist's descriptions of such works. Accounts written by the duo Abramović and Ulay for example emphasise the conceptual nature of their work by communicating individual roles within the performance but without conveying their individual experiences of performing²⁰. Presented in three different ways, some of their texts

use the plural voice 'we', describing the mirrored action of both parties in a performance, while in other performance descriptions they use in the first person singular T in conjunction with either the name *Marina* or *Ulay*. The texts that use the first person singular give voice to both *Marina* and *Ulay* as individual collaboators, either duplicating their experience of the performance with both Abramović and Ulay relaying the same performance descriptions, or by revealing the different roles undertaken by each artist in the work.

H: The text panels for *Connotations* were written observing the often 'matter of fact style' used by Chris Burden while recounting his own work, while one of the *Connotations* pieces B(in) (vol. 2, p. 55 and vol. 3, p. 27) was loosely based on *Deadman*, one of Burdens actions from the 1970's²¹. Burden's use of language in his descriptions may be considered to be analogous to the visual information presented in the photographic documentation of some of the works. For example, in the photograph for the performance 747²² we see an image of Burden with his back to the viewer

holding a gun which he is pointing upwards at the sky in the direction of a Boeing 747. This image is extended through a single sentence that describes how Burden had shot at a Boeing 747 aeroplane²³.

h: It seems as if the cool detachment of the text copies the factual authority of the camera in its documenting of work, thereby acknowledging the difficulty of reproducing tone, cadence or emphasis in written language.

By playing down both the extraordinary physical feats and emotional content of the performances, the prosaic nature of Burden's texts limit our view of the work. This seems to imply that any readings of the text and image must be made through the work's absence.

H: Yes, I agree. Considering the oblique nature of such information provided as documentary evidence the question occurred to me: how do we know that Burden performed this or any other of his such as Deadman²⁴?' Again, the photographic works

documentation of this performance shows a close-up of what may be a body covered by a dark blanket de-marked by two flares with a moving or parked car in the background. The video document²⁵ of this piece is a wobbly film of two light blobs on a dark screen with Burden's voice introducing the performance video, apologising about the quality of the image. I am not suggesting that this performance did not happen but that a visual document (video/photograph) and text (speech/writing) are being used to authorise one another and that in their collusion they are self-

reflexive.

h: Perhaps this is similar to the convention in the mass-media by which a photo may be validated by a caption explaining the image or where a caption makes sense only in relation to its counterpart image.

H: Yes, precisely. Outside of the actual performances these text/image documents from the 1970's appear to attempt selfreflexivity and become the product of action. The structure of the

text/image based work Connotations, follows or imitates these conventions of performance description from the 1970's to 'authenticate' a series of fictional performances. Writing in the past

٠

tense and using the first person to provide background information such as date, time, place, photographer's name and title of work, the texts also describe action and (occasionally) the consequences of that action. In making Connotations, I was aware of how the image and the text in this sense sustain each other's narrative. In direct relation to this, explanations in the artwork for the CD Pointy Stunt (vol. 2, p. 68) by myself and Kaffe Matthews were

written in speech bubbles, making a direct link between a description and its author through the cartoon-like device of the bubble. In this case, both the text and image attempt to overcome the proximity of self-reflexivity by embedding themselves within the same frame.

h: In his essay for the 'Out of Actions' catalogue²⁶ Guy Brett discusses the point that performance is an area of practice in which no-one can be a specialist since it is impossible to have seen all performance work in its primary form. The problem of not seeing work in its primary form but instead considering secondary published material, such as a photograph with its supporting text creates a vacuum that is often filled by anecdote and mythology. Is this phenomenon an aspect of Connotation's design?

H: The individual pieces in this series rely on the interplay traditionally set up between text and image within performance documentation, subsequently reflecting the responsibilities and limitations of documenting the complexities of a 'real' event. In

providing no information beyond the basic conceptual outline for the performance, the texts actively encourage anecdote in their repetition and acceptance as documentation, or as truth.

h: Was the process of writing descriptions of work that did not happen simplified by not experiencing the performance as outlined in the supporting texts?

H: Since writing the explanatory texts for the *Connotations* pieces was not complicated by the experience of performing, the individual texts were freed to operate purely as indicators of the

concepts within each work. As the performances did not happen as outlined in the texts, the descriptions did not have to negotiate the responsibility of representing complications that may occur in the actual realisation of a performance work.

h: When a selection of the photographs from the series was shown at the ICA in London during the Spring of 2000, a few of the reviewers in the press wrote about some of the works as if they had actually happened. How do you feel about the work being

understood in this way?

H: In the exhibition of the work there is an introductory text (vol. 2, p. 52) explaining that the performances were not made within the circumstance outlined in the text panels that hang next to the individual photographs (vol. 2, pp. 53-60 and vol. 3, pp. 22-42). This introduction also offers a deconstruction of the authorial nature of the descriptions in the individual works, while even as, contradictorily each text panel acts to expand the visual information presented in the photographs. In making the work I

was aware that not all of the audience would read all of the texts

and that - perhaps omitting this contextualising introduction -

people would leave the exhibition believing what they had seen and read to be factual. I was aware that the provision of two contrary sets of information would cause confusion. When it was reported in some of the press that I had performed the works described by the show I was pleased, despite having categorically stated over the telephone to a couple of the journalists who perpetuated the fictions that I had not realised the

performances as outlined in the supporting texts²⁷.

h: Why where you pleased?

H: The press, in writing about the work as if it had actually happened, extended the fictional life of the pieces to a new audience and contributed to the work's mythical status. At the same time, the articles, when read as documents, will provide confusion for any future archivist, allowing my own practice as an

artist to escape their closure.

h: Newspapers are sometimes the source of both the anecdote and mythology surrounding performance works, repeating or copying stories from one newspaper to the next²⁸. A story in which (as depicted in one of the *Connotations* pieces) an artist runs into a pub dressed as a ghost and steals drinks from customers is more immediately sensational or 'journalistic' than a report about an artist who has made a staged photograph in which she 'pretends' to have run into a pub dressed as a ghost and stealing drinks. The

journalists' article may be seen to be staging its own theatre of words, playing on the legitimacy of text and context, just as the descriptive texts in Connotations play on their own legitimacy and authority.

H: Interestingly, in another performance work that resonates with issues raised regarding authority, textuality and the 'theatre of journalism²⁹', performance artist Anne Bean invited the then editor of Performance Magazine, Rob La Frenais, to collaborate in one of

her works by reviewing it on stage during the performance itself³⁰. Bean's invitation points to the reviewer as the textual communicator of action and highlights the role of language as a performative medium with the potential to effect a physical response on its subject. Within this invited intervention, La Frenais sat at a desk with a pen and paper and, as Bean performed, true to his role as reviewer, spoke the requested review into a microphone. It is the production of the text - usually written by a reviewer from the position of the audience and after the event of performing that, in this work, is located in the physical and temporal circumstance of a performance. By physically presenting the reviewer within her performance, Bean makes explicit his/her role as both documentor, commentator and shaper of the live medium³¹.

h: In this instance it sounds as if the critic was required to respond to the 'liveness' of the performance work in progress with his own spontaneity³², his words remaining airborne without embedding themselves within the physical substance of a written text or



publication.

Reviewers are not always present at performances and it is often the responsibility of the artist to write an account of the work

done. In contrast to the 'fake' testimony of *Connotations*, you have also written straightforward descriptions of works that did not initially have a text-based component to them. Can you say more about these descriptive texts?

H: Yes, these examples are short texts written as brief descriptions of actual works (see pages). As descriptions, they offer a simplistic

overview of a series that are relative to one another; they do not analyse what happened but instead offer themselves up for analysis. Written in an attempt to reconcile the past moments of a performance within the context of a wider body of work, as representations, they do not constitute a whole and may be too subjective or lacking in detail. Yet they are useful evocations of my *oeuvre* and acknowledge the implicit role of the performance document when viewing an artist's whole output.

h: They appear to me to be conventionally written documents that follow the rubric that you described earlier as plan – performance document that was identifiably a part of 1960's/70's classic performance.

H: Yes, I agree, and in an attempt to break out of this I set up a formal frame in which I wrote for an extended period of time, using an approach that was similar to my own studio practice. In this, I physically located the activity of writing amongst materials which could be used to create performance work; setting up residence in

-

a friend's holiday home, I wrote on a laptop computer or pieces of paper next to places in the house where I was performing various activities (vol. 2, pp. 70-74)³³. Objects and actions became the



focus point for the generation of text in this ten-day period. Using this method, both the writing and performing of an action occupied the same physical space and were united within a single work process. In contrast to the texts from Berlin (*Kiss Exam* and *A Translation* . . . [vol. 2, pp. 4-27]) that engaged writing in an attempt to articulate the moment of performing during the event, the untitled texts written at the friend's holiday home were written

in loose dialogue with action.

I would start, for example, by doing something very simple; sitting at a kitchen table writing while my feet were in a bucket full of cold soapy water, or sewing myself to a seat while trying to write a description of the activity. From that point I would move on to another action which would release me from the first one and then write about that. The structure used to generate work and ideas in this interplay between text and action was improvisational. What I found was that stopping to write altered the action, making it slower and more considered. Once I had started I would sometimes carry on writing descriptions of actions beyond those that I had already performed.

In these instances the action would then exist only in text form, suggesting that it should be performed after it had been written. Additionally, in sitting or needing to be placed near a computer or pad of paper, the actions became contained and could not move great distances or involve large or fast movements. The whole process would take a long time, since an action taking two minutes to complete in actual time would take an hour to execute

while improvising both the writing and performance at the same time. This 'same time' structure brought together text and action in the grammatical present to create an illusion in which both text and action occupy the same temporal/physical location. Other actions were not executed at all but solely invented in the text (see *action no.4*, vol. 2, pp. 71-72). In locating the generation of text within what I consider to be a studio-based approach, the selfconsciousness that I had previously encountered while writing was broken down by the creativity and play of a physical practice.

h: The texts themselves feel like sketches and in that sense they are also located within the private activity of studio practice. In this instance you write down an action both before and after the performance, suggesting a symbiotic relationship between performance and text. Within this relationship, as with performance *Pain Tings* by Anne Bean, an action may be either instructed or recorded by the written word. Can you say more about this relationship?

H: In Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . the sense of performing,

recorded from within the moments of doing so is written down in a process which altered my own internal experience of the work. Unlike the works of Anne Bean and Dan Graham, in which language is used to externally modify physical behavior, in my experiences during *Kiss Exam* and *A Translation*... the action modified the writing.

h: Can you tell me more of the internal life of text and language in these two performances?

H: Both the performances Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . are relatively static and are presented to their audiences as

performance images in which most of the work's 'action' is communicated externally only through the written word. The internalisation of the performance experience may be literal, as in the case of *Kiss Exam*, where the kiss that takes place between the two mouths of the performers is only partially visible to the audience. The collision of two different activities such as kissing and writing meant that the internal experience had to remain a

conscious one. In A Translation . . . the static placement of the left hand in a pat of butter forced an internal dialogue between the slow effect of the sensation of butter melting and the relatively quick experience of thoughts being consciously articulated in text. The static nature of the enquiry in this performance made me very self-aware regarding the style and content of the writing as opposed to the different levels of consciousness revealed in the transcript for the performance *Kiss Exam*.

Alternatively, the texts for Shot in the Dark, Hook and Eye

and *Crystalline* were written as short lists of key phrases in my sketchbooks, helping me to remember main elements of the performances. While performing the work, action was recalled through the body's physical memory while the list, committed to memory as an image of a single page was referenced during the performance when needed.

h: We have talked about many different ways in which text may relate to performance. Are there any examples of writing which stand outside of the symbiotic relationship that you have identified

between performance and text?

H: Another possible way of looking at textual representation of performance is through its role as 'key', or as a piece of writing which, when used to explain aspects of a performance, does so without using traditional methods of description. This is seen in the list for the work Soundgaze (vol. 2, pp. 76-82 and vol. 3, p. 11), a performance in which two sets of weighing scales send weight value as data to a computer³⁴ which emits a sound from a corresponding file. The text relating to the work is a piece of writing that lists numeric weight values and the corresponding sound file names used by the computer program in the performance. Listing sound files and their weight values is not an attempt to interpret the performance but to represent an aspect of it factually, through text. without intonation or interpretation. The list, based on an incremental ladder of weight values, is a key to the work rather than a score or textual representation of it. And, as a key, the list has not been authored in the same manner as other texts presented here in this thesis. It is only in conjunction with other

supportive information that the list for Soundgaze may reveal logic behind the work itself.

h: Are there other instances of lists in your writings?

H: Yes, there are. For example, the scores for the work titled Sucksniffdribblescratch³⁵ are performance instructions or scores written as a series of lists. Sucksniffdribblescratch is the collective

title for a series of four performance works that were written as instructions to be performed individually and in rotation by five different women over the eight week period of an exhibition. The individual works took place in four different locations within a flat

in Stockholm. In the bathroom one of the performers was instructed to repeatedly fill her mouth with water and then spit it out over the tiled room (Instructions for spitting performance in bathroom [vol. 2, pp. 84-87 and vol. 3, p. 12]). In the kitchen a performer made soup by filling her mouth with water and chewed vegetables, which she spat out into the various simmering pots on the kitchens hob (Instructions for making soup [vol. 2, pp. 88-91 and vol. 3, p. 13]). At a window a performer sat and opened a pile of 150 letters, reading and performing the hand-written instructions written on the individual pieces of paper (My Mannerisms [vol. 2, p. 92 and vol. 3, p. 14]). While in a small passage room a woman is instructed to perform a series of actions as quickly as possible (Actions to be performed as quickly as possible [vol. 2, p. 93 and vol. 3, p. 15]). These scores (excluding My Mannerisms, which approached the use of the list in a non-linear manner by splitting it and relocating its components across a series of 150 letters) were written to be played-back to the performer during the performance as a real-time instructional audio recording. In the work the performer listens to the text read aloud over the set of headphones she is wearing. The length of time taken to read out each of the sentences paces the action in the performance. The exception, My Mannerisms involved composing a list of my own mannerisms, which, subsequently written by hand as single sentences repeated over 150 sheets of paper, were sealed in envelopes. The performer, sitting at a windowsill with the pile of

150 envelopes at her feet, opened the envelopes one by one. Each performance of My Mannerisms lasted approximately one hour, the

•

time taken to open all the letters, read the text and perform the mannerism described in the letter.

h: I saw this performance in Stockholm in 1999, and it seemed to me to invoke the conventional domestic vignette of a single female sitting reading letters and resonating with a past time in which letter-writing between women was part of a domestic literary

tradition³⁶. The performances of your mannerisms were barely visible through the actions of the performer and were often perhaps read as her own body language. But in fact, the performance very subtly hinged on the fact that it was your physical identity that was being transposed onto the performer in your absence through the device of the letter. It was only when I picked up one of the letters that I realised the performer was adhering to a set of instructions similar to a score, randomly organised as a pile of 150 letters³⁷.

H: By characterising the text as a letter sealed in an envelope, I was using an existing, recognisable form of communication to suggest its external influence intersecting the performance. By sealing the text in an envelope I literally placed myself – external to the reader - in the role of author. Yet, in the performance of the work, the volunteer takes on my (the author's) physical identity as described in the series of hand-written letters.

Another exercise in which identity is conveyed through text and written within the convention of letter and postcard writing is

apparent in *Sleepingbag/Postbag* (vol. 2, pp. 30-33). The materials used to write with in this work were postcards of the *Sensation* Exhibition in which the performance took place, as well as post-it notes, stickers and A4 paper. Hidden inside a sleeping bag, my physical identity in the performance remained unknown to the audience. As I lay on the floor in the bag I wrote about the artworks and artists depicted in the Sensation Exhibition postcards that I had previously bought in the museum shop. At the same time, I revealed aspects of my own identity such as age and colour of eyes in the written material posted out of the bag.

h: Writing a postcard or a letter and sitting at a typewriter are all traditional physical approaches to writing. In your description of writing the passage on the typewriter I have an image in my mind of you sitting and playing it like a piano, while in your description of writing the postcards I imagine you finding the place where the photograph on the card was taken and writing about the sound heard from that point of view and in My Mannerisms I see the image of the performer sitting on a windowsill while opening a pile of letters. Is it not the case that the actual writing in these

instances is made transparent by the dominance of the image of physical activity it references?

H: Yes, I would agree that some of the writing listed above is somewhat transparent and would not withstand say, a literary criticism if seen solely as text. The accompanying texts in this thesis were written as attempts to employ an unproblematic referentiality of words whilst ultimately recognising the impossibility of doing this. However, by presenting a series of texts

to accompany this thesis that are at least partially transparent by suggesting that they may be 'seen through', I am able to locate them within the physical and conceptual expression of my own

performance practice. However the writing can neither be wholly transparent, allowing the eye to fall through the words onto the situations they reference, nor reflective in its attempt to illustrate the work represented³⁸. The writings recognise the language of practice out of which they are written and in doing so refer to the gesture of performance in order to enable the reader to 'view' aspects of that practice. These may be physical experiences as with

Kiss Exam and A Translation, the physical identity of an absent author projected onto a performer as presented in My Mannerisms or even the temporal and physical separation of the activities of reading and writing in Sonic Postcards and Sleepingbag/Postbag.

h: In my experience as an artist, working with my own body, I have also encountered the problem of translating a physical form of expression into a medium, like writing, in which I have no actual physical presence.

H: Yes, that has been the problem: translation. By locating text within the process of both making and performing work, it is also my intention to embody a sense of a physical experience or presence beyond the page. Like the texts written during the performances of *Sonic Postcards* or *Kiss Exam* and *A Translation*..., the writing presented as research needs to be acknowledged in the terms of its own physical generation.

h: In comparison, the text presented here may propose a structure

which, seeming to happen in a time and place beyond the frame of the page would normally be read as transparent yet, in this case, it is in the use of language as well as the visual format of the interview presented on the page that the performance and conceit of the work is articulated. Since this self-interview is written on a computer and does not employ conventional props or overt physical manufacture it is very different to the other performance enquiries. Played out in the language on the page, the interview refers to a gesture of action rather than an actual physical frame

or context of performance.

H: Writing this text on a word processor may also present a less immediate opportunity for the writer's physical manufacture of text since it is within the computer's software that the writer may find tools to write. Within a program like 'Word', tools check spelling, offer a thesaurus, copy, paste and delete words, format text and change font as well as facilitating many other actions. This text has been written on a computer but its identity in this thesis takes the form of a traditional typed page and is not readable in the format of

its own production since the traces of it's own manufacture have been erased.

In her text sidekick (1999) ³⁹ Elizabeth Price presented a single text comprising six drafts of the 'same' piece of writing that were written between August 1998 and June 1999. The writing, a description of the ongoing process of making the work Boulder, meditated on the physical activity of making a large ball out of packing tape, mirroring those activities through repetition and its own presentation as a potentially endless piece of text⁴⁰. By

presenting six versions of the same piece of writing at different stages of development, Price acknowledged the role of the computer in the seamless manufacture and development of text.

By dating the drafts that made up the single texts, Price arrested the writing process while at the same time continuing to develop her ideas and correct her writing style within the subsequent drafts. The ongoing process of Price's writing points to the implicit potential for text stored electronically to be changed, thereby suggesting, like her ball of packing tape, its own endlessness.

h: In the typewriter's 'one off' approach, the physical impetus of keys striking paper and the inclusion of mistakes and misspelling may be nearer to improvisational methods in performance, whereas the performative capabilities of the computer are located at the interface between the user and the program used to write with⁴¹.

All of the texts that you have written seem not only to refer to the performative nature of their own generation, but to their physical reception within the act of reading. With Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . audiences have to read during the performance in

order to fully access the content of the activity before them. Likewise, in Connotations, the gallery viewer reads the text panel to access the work. In My Mannerisms the performer is seen to be reading and in Sonic Postcards you send yourself a series of postcards which you read at home upon your return. When writing these texts did you know that the act of reading would in itself become performative?

H: Certainly in Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . it was my intention

that the audience would gain access to my internal experiences by reading the descriptions as they were being written. In My Mannerisms I not only present a tableau of a woman reading but structure the work so that the actions in the performance are instructed through reading and contextualised by the actions of the performer as she opens, examines and then disregards the hand-written letters. By sending myself a postcard from somewhere else and then reading it upon my return in *Sonic Postcards* I physically and temporally separate the two actions of writing and reading.

h: You also made a work which proposed a more immediate physical interface with reading when in 1999 you produced two artists books that made use of the original texts from the performances Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . The books, entitled Kiss and Butter, included a facsimile of the original hand-written text, a transcription of those primary drafts, which retained all syntactical errors and spelling mistakes and was placed alongside a Braille version of the original hand-written transcripts. The inclusion of the Braille version made the experiences written about in the performances accessible again to some readers through the sensation of touch, this being one of the senses also experienced while writing on a typewriter or a computer. Reading a postcard, letter or book are all examples of an intimate act of reading. However, in 2000 you made a performance that was written to be read individually and in public by an audience as a collective live experience. Can you talk about this performance and your decision to provide the audience with the same text to be read collectively rather than the conventional and more intimate circumstance of a single person reading a postcard or a book?

H: The performance in question was made in my absence and was titled *Thinking*⁴² (vol. 2, pp. 95-100 and vol. 3, p. 16). In this work,

the audience watches the performance while reading the main text, a descriptive list of thoughts alongside times at which those thoughts are suggested to the performer (who does not have the printed text) who is listening to an audio recording on a set of headphones as it discloses this list of thoughts, at the specified times.

During the performance the seated audience may switch

between reading the individual texts they have been supplied with, watching the performer listening to the same text and looking at a clock located on the wall next to her. Since the list of thoughts is not spoken aloud, the audience has to read the text in order to access the work. For the audience, the experience of reading switches between differing forms of information presented in the performance; they scan the list in front of them, watch the performer's response to the list as it is spoken through the headphones she is wearing while at the same time checking the time on the clock face next to the performer.

The communal activities of reading the text, the face of the person listening to the text and neighbouring clock may be seen to place the audience collectively within the role of a performing body and in this sense, the list becomes a score, which by being read, is executed by audience and performer simultaneously.

h: The audience also perform the work in different ways. The reiteration of the first two words of the sentence beginning *Think about* . . . instruct the reader to think while the latter half of the

sentence, suggests a mental picture of action. Some thoughts such as *Think about sniffing a pile of leaves* induce a mental performative act, in this case *sniffing a pile of leaves*. Therefore, it can be said that the audience not only perform by collectively reading together, but also by imagining the actions implied through the text as was read.

H: Yes, I agree. Similarly to Kiss Exam and A Translation . . ., the action in *Thinking* happens internally in response to external stimulus.

.

h: The context for these thoughts was provided in three different communications. Can you say more about these?

H: Sent as organisational instructions before the event, these included a letter to the gallery owner (vol. 2, p.96), to the curator (vol. 2, p.97) and an e-mail sent to the performer (vol. 2, p.95), all of which were photocopied and distributed to the audience immediately before the performance alongside the main text. They thus became devices communicating formal aspects of the work to both their initial recipients and the eventual audience in my absence.

h: Taken together, all of these communications conveyed information that would usually be contained within an artist's statement.

H: Yes. As with *Thinking*, the text for *Bubble* (vol. 2, p. 102) was sent to the gallery before the performance and as all other possible

information was contained within this text panel for the exhibit, no other description of intent or outline of the project was needed.

For the performance I walked from my studio in the East-End of London to the Lisson Gallery in the West wearing a brand new pair of shoes. Upon arrival at the gallery I removed the shoes. sawed off the uppers and nailed the soles flat to the wall next to the mounted text. In hindsight, the text is similar to a proposal in that it both orientates intention while at the same time acknowledging the evolution of certain changes demanded by making work in practice. Within this text I provided the same 'character' of information as in those for Connotations such as date. location, time and description of the performance while at the same time allowing the speculative nature of its planning and realisation to be revealed through the body of the text's prediction. In this way and additionally to its use of the predictive future tense, the text attempts to avoid the stasis that characterises written documentations of past events since it is unable to reflect or depict the performance's own closure or conclusion. Through offering only a forecast, the text is neither reflection nor instruction

and so disrupts the rubric plan - performance - document that I had identified as the salient characteristic of performance documentation in the 1970's. The accompanying text for the work Bubble, reminiscent in some ways of the ideas and concepts in Connotations, was written in the future tense before the event as both a script of intent and a prediction of the performance's outcome in order to bypass any confusion on the part of the press with the fake testimonies of Connotations that had been shown in London just before Bubble was exhibited.

h: In Bubble the shoe-soles offer a physical record of the activity of walking from your studio in the East End of London to the gallery

in the West End, literally tracing the transportation and delivery of an art product. The text for Bubble was completed when you arrived at the gallery by filling in the title of the work and then signing and dating the panel, thereby completing its prediction. (The title Bubble, was the name of the style of shoe used to walk from your studio to the gallery: an indeterminate factor when the text was completed). How do you see the role of the text more

generally in relation to its status as art product or commodity?

H: By choosing to sign the text and not the shoes (vol. 3, p. 17) I reattribute its role and transform it from information panel to document, both making the performed action explicit and acknowledging the fulfilment of the prediction. As with the accounts in Connotations the text-panel for Bubble is an integral part of the artwork and attributes the authorship of such information to the artist rather than to the anonymity of the institution. In contrast, the experiences written about during Kiss

Exam and A Translation . . . occupy an alternative temporal space to the descriptions in both Connotations and Bubble. The manuscripts for Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . were produced within public situations and used the present tense to describe the immediacy of thoughts and emotions felt during the performance. This made the documentary process structurally intrinsic to the moments of the performance since physical experiences were being transformed 'live' into text.

However, similarly to Connotations and Bubble, the texts for

Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . operate simultaneously as both artefact and document. As artefact, they might be valued as an object through the means of production and the circumstance of

their origination but they may also be seen as documents integral to the conceptual nature of the work. In this sense they follow the trajectory plan - performance - document and yet still disrupt this path by placing the document within the performance rather than in an external position before or after the event.

h: The text for Bubble is written as prediction pointing to a structure in which you, as performer, experience the work for the first time within the exercise of the performance. In Kiss Exam, A Translation . . . , My Mannerisms and Thinking both the audience and performer are encountering the work for the first time. In Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . you articulate thoughts occurring to the performer, which are then made immediately accessible to the audience through reading. In the work collectively titled Sucksnifdribblescratch (including My Mannerisms) and likewise in Thinking, you construct the text previous to the event and then find a device through which the work may be encountered and

performed for the first time by someone else. Was this an intentional strategy?

H: I was interested in working with the live moment and with nuances of the 'first time' encounter as a live experiment in performance. I wanted to see how a performer may use their own life experience to navigate a prescribed situation. Such performances could be jerky, hesitant, uncomfortable or fluid and have a built in frame of production that would both encourage and

allow for mistakes. Both Sucksniffdribblescratch and Thinking are actions based on scores written by myself but intended to be realised by someone else. In all instances the performer is briefed

in detail with regards to the context of the work, but the actual content of the score remains unknown to her until the event. In Thinking and in all the works (except My Mannerisms) within the series Sucksniffdribblescratch the score is recounted to the performer live in the form of an audio instruction. The performer does the described action or, as in the case of Thinking, is instructed to respond to the content of the recording by thinking of that which is being suggested in the text. Writing scores for other people to execute circumnavigates the problematic of the unique presence of the performer, thereby offering the possibility of repetition outside of the artist's presence. At the same time, the list differentiates from a conventional understanding of a score since it is written to enable the performer to encounter the work for the first time while performing it.

h: I want to finish this interview by talking about the editorial decisions made in the presentation of this thesis. You have

included examples of the writings we have cited and discussed in the body of the thesis. Are they different to the original texts - have they been changed or altered?

H: The texts that were generated in performic circumstance have not been edited while other secondary texts presented have been re-written, to varying degrees.

h; Can you say more about these editorial decisions?

H: The texts generated in relation to action all occurred in very different circumstances; some were written 'live' in public

situations or written with an event in mind. Others were written 'live' in private or privately in public. There are also texts that have been written without any wider physical frame and which may be reflective or descriptive. Accounts written as description, reflection or analysis such as the short untitled performance descriptions (vol. 2, pp. 61-67) have been re-worked and corrected. Generally, however the manuscripts written within performances have not been edited or reworked and include errors that would have appeared in the original texts described in this self-interview. As an example of the former, both Kiss Exam and A Translation . . . from Berlin were written in a live situation and were influenced by that environment. What is essential to them is their failure to express or describe the performic moment in a way that encapsulates it. They falter, question themselves and are at times almost embarrassing but they offer an insight into the experience of live performance because they are integral with the performance itself. Attempts at editing would destroy the struggle for articulation

made explicit within the work.

Sonic Postcards are another example of editorially closed texts, once posted they are deemed complete and once received they are readable as text sent from somewhere other than where they are being read. Thinking in contrast was edited during the writing process. The editorial point of closure that transformed the Thinking text into a document happened when the work was performed. The writings included in this thesis have been selected according to whether they are considered for discussion within this

self-interview.

h: Talking about documentation makes me think about the place you are carving out for yourself in posterity and not necessarily about the performances themselves.

H: Connotations is a work that analyses the authority of the text and image and the fiscal and cultural values ascribed to the tradition of performance documentation out of which they come.

Other writings and texts included in this thesis straddle the binary of performance document and research outcome, where the writing of the work takes place within the process of making or understanding the work. They genuinely struggle with their own articulation and acknowledge their role in the translation of performance into text and *visa versa*. As documents, within the body of this PhD thesis, the writings are about the performances themselves and their inclusion acknowledges a degree of transparency in accessing the performance works they represent.

The texts can never actually *be* the performances and so are seen to present a series of tangential reconstructions based on the works themselves. And yet, by approaching the status of being to some extent performative in itself, the desire is that this PhD submission may somehow 'stand in' for those other performances. To be 'representative' rather than a representation of them.

Conclusion

h: In your comments on editorial decisions regarding works discussed in this self-interview you talk about the complexities of closure and so I sense your reticence to provide any conclusion to this interview and its investigation into performance and textuality.

H: Yes, this reticence points to my engagement with art-practice as an open process of re-evaluation and reflection. I propose, based on the logic of the arguments set out in the body of this PhD, that the conclusion for this thesis is to be found in future, as yet unmade, works.

For example, in the short term, a project called The Daily Hayley, (represented in this thesis as an AHRB funding proposal) is scheduled to take place at Matt's Gallery in London during September this year. As a work that I am planning to realise in the

future, The Daily Hayley laterally extends the investigations in this thesis through looking at textual reportage of events in our daily national newspapers. Building on observations made in this PhD, research for The Daily Hayley will involve an attempt to read every daily national newspaper printed in the six-month period between 01.01.01 and 30.06.01 (an attempt which anticipates its own failure because of the sheer volume of information). The main objective of this exercise is to analyse the relationship between an event and its representation in a newspaper. I will be examining the role of the newspaper journalist as documentor and mediator of the event, in the light of my own photo/text work Connotations -Performance Images. The project implies an extension of previous investigations into physical events and their documentation, looking specifically at representational effects produced collusively

between text and image. I anticipate that the ambition of this project, intrinsically informed by the material explored and presented in this thesis will to some degree afford its conclusion.



¹ H and h are suggestive of the initials GG and gg used by Glen Gould in his self-interview Interlude: Glen Gould interviews Glen Gould about Glen Gould. In the interview GG signifies Gould's position as interviewee while gg points to his role as interviewer. Glen Gould, The Glen Gould Reader (Ed. T. Page, Vintage Books, 1990), pp313-328.

² It is in other words, an attempt to formulate the possibility of, in one sense or another, getting lost, since immersion renders the Cartesian divide between subject and object as uncertain or shifting, deframing the subject's outlook onto the world' - Ina Bloom, 'Boredom and Oblivion' in *The Fluxus Reader* (Ed. Ken Friedman, Academy Editions, 1999), p.63. ³ The term 'Performative' used in the title and throughout this thesis is a term that encompasses expanded notions of performance. It is used to suggest acts that are either located or received, or have the potential to be located or received, within a physical circumstance. The term performative was coined by the philosopher J. L. Austin in his book of lecture notes How to Do Things with Words; 'The name is derived, of course, from 'perform', the usual verb with the noun 'action': it indicates that the issuing of an utterance is the performing of an action -it is not normally thought of as just saying something.' J. L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words (Second Edition reprinted 1978, Oxford University Press), p.6.

- 4 The website Cruisin' <u>http://www.e-2.org/c-ship/acsc.html</u> was commissioned by e-2 and launched at the 291 Gallery on the 29th September 1999.
- ⁵ Transcribed dialogue from the opening night of Cruisin' is

available in downloadable form from: http://www.e-2.org/cship/291_launch_chatlog.html.

⁶ The full title of Lippard's book as it appears on the first page is as follows; Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972: a cross reference book of information on some esthetic boundaries; consisting of a bibliography into which are inserted a fragmented text, art works, documents, interviews, and symposia, arranged chronologically and focussed on so called conceptual information or ideas art with mentions of such vaguely designated

areas as minimal, anti-form, systems, earth or process art, occurring now in the Americas, Europe, England, Australia and Asia (with occasional political overtones), edited and annotated by Lucy R. Lippard. (Studio Vista, London, 1973).

⁷ Because Six Years is about ideas changing over a period of time, it seems only fair to subject myself to the same lack of hindsight about which the artists themselves had reservations when I asked permission to use old work or statements. Therefore, the following excerpts from a December, 1969, interview by Ursula Meyer with me, have not been revised according to what I think now, but

stand as things looked then. The Postface offers some contradictions.' Ibid. p.6.

⁸ Shot in the Dark was performed between 1996 and 1999. In this performance I wore a dress, which, painted with a 'Glow In The Dark' silk screening ink became luminous when exposed to light. The performance, which took place in the dark was illuminated by two 1500w flash heads triggered by myself during the performance via the mechanisms of a cable release and a camera and winder. The sound of the camera mechanism was amplified in the performance by a contact microphone which, when stuck onto the body of the camera, provided a live soundtrack to the performance. Hook and Eye was performed between 1998 and 1999. In this performance I wore an all in one suit, which had Velcro sewn onto it in such a manner that, as limbs were bent and then straightened they stuck to themselves. The sound of Velcro unsticking itself was amplified by a series of fourteen microphones sewn throughout the suit. During the performance, the EQ of the microphones are set at low, mid and high frequencies in relation to their position in the suit; for example a microphone sewn into the

leg of the suit would have a lower EQ than a microphone sewn into the arm. The work, performed in the dark, is self-illuminated by the sound of the amplified Velcro, transformed into light through a sound to light unit. *Crystalline I, II*, and *III* are three versions of a performance in which, wearing a pair of stiletto shoes with motors inserted into their heels, I place the shoes against a miked-up surface to make a sound piece out of the series of amplified drones produced by the motors. *Crystalline I* is performed lying down with my feet held against a window and *Crystalline II* is performed standing on a table-top or similar surface. *Crystalline III* is performed in the dark, while seated on a swing. Torches attached

to my ankles illuminated the work.

⁹ The performances Kiss Exam and A Translation of the Sensation of the Left Hand into the Right took place over the weekend of the 16th and 17th January 1999. The programme, curated by myself and produced by Freunde Guter Musik Berlin e.V, was titled Small Pleasures and took place within the context of the Sensation exhibition at the Hamburger Bahnhoff in Berlin. The programme included the artists Bruce Gilchrist, Susannah Hart, Claire Shilitoe and the two artist groups Beaconsfield and Project Dark. Some of the performances in the event took place within the exhibition itself, while others happened during an evening of performance and music. All of the cited works were located amongst the exhibits in the Sensation Exhibition. Kiss Exam took place next to the Chapman Brother's sculpture Zygotic acceleration (1995), A Translation of the Sensation of the Left Hand into the Right was performed opposite the piece Text Painting (1995) by Peter Davies while Sleepingbag/Postbag occured next to the work Au Naturel (1994) by Sarah Lucas.

¹⁰ The producer of the *Small Pleasures* event, Mattias Osterwold and myself approached an architectural assistant in a Berlin bar a couple of nights before the performance and asked if he would be my kissing partner in a performance at the Hamburger Bahnhoff.
¹¹ The German translation of Kiss Exam is Küß Prüfung, while A Translation of the Sensation of the Left Hand into the Right translates as *Ubertragung der Empfindungen der linken Hand in die* Rechte.

¹² The two books titled Kiss and Butter were made in 1999 for the project DOT which was curated by Elizabeth Price and hosted as

an ongoing archive of artists work in our studio at 5 Teesdale Yard, E2, from the 1st April 1999 to the 1st April 2000. The archive was subsequently closed and taking the name Snowballing was exhibited at the Arthur R. Rose Gallery in London and The Henry Moore Institute in Leeds during 2000.

¹³ In the book Two Way Mirror Power: Selected Writing of Dan Graham on his Art (Ed. Alexander Albero, The MIT press 1999), we are told that Performer/Audience/Mirror was first performed by Dan Graham at De Appel, Amsterdam, Holland, June 1977.

¹⁴ Graham, Dan. Performer / Audience / Mirror, Video 1975, 22:52

Mins, Black and White with sound, Electronic Arts Intermix: http://www.eai.org.

¹⁵ I did performances because many other artists then also did performance. I was not interested in being a "performance" artist, I was more interested in the position of the art-guru (enhanced by media reproduction and occupied by artists such as Joseph Beuys, politicians such as the Kennedys, rock figures such as the Beatles), or in illustrating the ideas of psychologists such as R.D.Laing and Gregory Bateson.' Dan Graham, 'Performance: End

of the 60's', Two Way Mirror Power (MIT Press, 1999), p142. ¹⁶ I have included a proposal for the exhibition The Daily Hayley (working title), that will be taking place at Matt's Gallery, London in September 2001. At the time of writing this thesis the proposal is still active and has not yet been submitted for consideration. The proposal has been included as it extends ideas regarding performance and textuality to a future point beyond the submission of this thesis.

17 In January 1999 the artist's group Bank exhibited a selection of the Fax Back Press Releases in a show called Press Release at the Gallerie Poo Poo on Underwood Street in London. In the exhibition Bank displayed a framed selection of the faxes in their White Cube' Gallery and produced the book Press Release to accompany the show. A second book also titled Press Release was sold at the exhibition of the same title at the Rupert Goldsworthy Gallery, New York in September 1999. ¹⁸ Sonic Postcards are a series of four postcards, written in February and March 1999 while I was Arts Council of England Live Artist in Residence at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside in Hull. All the postcards, written in Hull, were sent to

my home in the East End of London.

- ¹⁹ Connotations Performance Images (originally titled Connotations
- Performance Images 1994-1998) was commissioned in 1998 by Hull Time Based Arts as a part of the Year of Photography. The work, initially presented as a retrospective exhibition of performance works from 1994-1998, (Connotations - Performance Images 1994-1998, 10-25.10.98, Beverley Art Gallery, Beverley)
- included textual and photographic documentation of 21 performances I did not make.

²⁰ Three different examples of Abramović and Ulay's texts relating to their collaborative performance works (the title of each work has been written in bold):

AAA-AAA

In a Given Space.

Performance.

We are facing each other, both producing a continuous vocal sound.

We slowly build up the tension, our faces coming closer together until we are screaming into each other's open mouths.

.

Duration: 15 minutes.

February,1978

RTB, television studio, Liège, Belgium.

Performed for Television.

March, 1978 Amsterdam.

Performed for film.

Relation To Movement

In a Chosen Space.

Performance.

Ulay

I am driving the car for an indefinite time in a circle.

Marina

I am sitting in the car, moving for an indefinite time in a circle, announcing the number of circles by megaphone.

Duration: 16 hours

September, 1977

10e Bienniale de Paris.

Visitors:200

Interruption in Space

The given space is divided by a wall into two equal parts.

Performance.

Marina

- I am walking towards the wall.
- I walk towards the wall touching it with my body.
- I run towards the wall hitting it with my body.

Ulay

I am walking towards the wall.

I walk towards the wall touching it with my body.

٠

I run towards the wall hitting it with my body.

Duration: 46 minutes

January, 1977

Kunstakademie "Rinke Klasse", Duesseldorf. Visitors:120

In: Marina Abramović, Artists Body, with texts by Marina Abramović, Toni Stooss, Thomas McEvilley, Bojana Pejjić, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Chrissie Iles, Jan Avgikos. Thomas Wullfen, Velimir

Abramović. (Edizioni Charta 1998), AAA-AAA p.184, Relation in Movement p.162, Interruption in Space p.142.

²¹ The text for B(in) states that I spend the day inside a bin bag in

New York waiting for the garbage men to pick me up and that when they arrive I jump out of the bag and run home. The work itself, initially a resolution of an idea to make a performance inside a bin bag is also a comment on or re-negotiation of Burden's performance *Deadman* in which, hidden beneath a canvas tarpaulin on La Cienega Boulevard in L.A, Burden puts both himself and drivers in danger by becoming unrecognisable as a

living human form. Burden's work resolves itself when the police arrive and arrest him for 'causing a false emergency to be reported' (see *Deadman* description under endnote number 21). In B(in) I remain hidden and like Burden use a material and location to hide within that may be associated with death. Differently however, Burden's work presents an immediate physical danger from the passing cars on the freeway while mine proposes minimal potential danger in the form of bin men arriving and placing me in the back of a garbage truck. B(in) ends when, as the bin men approach, I

claim to run home away from the danger, puncturing the heroism of Burden's arrest.

- ²² 747, January 5th, 1973, Los Angeles, California.
- ²³ Burden's description of the work 747 reads as follows:

747

JANUARY 5, 1973

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

At about 8a.m. at a beach near the Los Angeles International

Airport, I fired several shots with a pistol at a Boeing 747.

Chris Burden (BLOCNOTES editions. 1995).

²⁴ Burden's description of the work *Deadman* reads as follows:

Deadman

NOVEMBER 12th, 1972, RIKO MIZUNO GALLERY, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA At 8p.m. I lay down on La Cienega Boulevard and was covered completely with a canvas tarpaulin. Two fifteen minute flares were placed near me to alert cars. Just before the flares extinguished, a police car arrived. I was arrested and booked for causing a false emergency to be reported. Trial took place in Beverly Hills. After

three days of deliberation, the jury failed to reach a decision.

Chris Burden (BLOCNOTES editions, 1995).

²⁵ I saw this video in an exhibition, while performing in Duesseldorf in 2000.

²⁶ Guy Brett, 'Out of Actions, Between Performance and the Object'. Guy Brett's essay titled 'Life strategies: overview and selection' starts on page 197 (Thames and Hudson 1998).
²⁷ 'For her pub piece, Spirit, Newman dressed in a white sheet covered in fake blood. She wanted people to think she was a ghost

as she wandered around a bar. She said that the piece questioned "what's real and not real". On whether her work could be described as art, she said: "I'm grounded in an art context". *Kissing artist hopes to embrace £20,000*, Dalya Alberge, The Times, Tuesday 22 February, 2000.

²⁸ 'She went into a pub dressed in a white sheet covered in fake blood, hoping that people would mistake her for a ghost, and wandered around snatching customers' drinks (I've heard that one before). This was apparently a piece of "performance art", called *Spirit*, and was intended to question "what's real and what isn't real". The thirty year old senior lecturer from Chelsea College of Art has defended whether it's artistic by proclaiming: "I'm grounded in an art context".' An Art Attack, The Publican, March 6 2000.
²⁹ The term Theatre of Journalism' is my own invention and is influenced by Antonin Autaud's essays on *The Theatre of Cruelty* (two manifestos in *The Theatre and its Double*, Grove Press, 1958).
³⁰ Anne Bean's performance *Pain Tings* took place on 1 May 1986 at the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle as a part of New Work Newcastle.

³¹ In a conversation at her house on 9 February 2001 Anne Bean expressed an interest in exploring a dialogue in the relationship between artist and critic in which the critic is seen to be the shaper of work. In the performance *Pain Tings*, Bean remembers drawing on a series of panels hung around the walls of a museum gallery and that the critical comments made by La Frenais changed the drawings as she was making them.
³² In a telephone conversation about Anne Bean's performance *Pain Tings* with Rob La Frenais on 27 February 2001, he told me that he saw his role as that of a critical reviewer who was trying to analyse what was happening in a spontaneous way.

³³ I made the piece while spending two weeks alone at Tim Head's and Susan Collins' summerhouse in Whitby during the summer of 1998.

³⁴ Soundgaze is a performance in which two sets of electronic weighing scales are used to trigger over 300 sound samples. The

objects used in the performance are organised according to their weight value and placed onto the scale. The weight values of these objects are sent as data from the electronic scales to a piece of customised software on a computer. Within the programme up to 400 sound samples may be ascribed to any weight value between 0 and 150kg at increments of 0.005kg.

Soundgaze was made in 1999, initially commissioned by Work and Leisure International in Manchester as 10s 12lbs, it was developed and completed through the Arts Council of England's Live Artist in Residency scheme at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside. It was first performed on 23.10.99 at The Feren's Art Gallery as a part of the festival TOOT hosted by Hull Time Based Arts.

³⁵ The performances in *Sucksniffdribblescratch* were executed by five volunteers between 20.11.99-19.12.99 the exhibition *Patentia*, took place at a flat in Drottinggatan 81, Stockholm.

³⁶ In the novels of Jane Austen the sending and receiving of letters shaped the narrative of a plot as well as being a device that allowed characters in the books to express private thoughts. See for example, Austen, Jane. *Sense and Sensibility*, (Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1995).

³⁷ The work *My Mannerisms* used George Brecht's box set *Water Yam* as a model. *Water Yam* is a series of musical scores written and collected over a period of years. The scores, written for anyone to perform are presented as a series of unbound cards in a box,

thereby allowing random and non-linear access to the works George Brecht interviewed by Michael Nyman (Studio international: Journal of Modern Art, Art & Experimental Music, November/December 1976), pp. 256-265. ³⁸ In this forward After The Words, After Philosophy and After Jean-François Lyotard writes: The written sentence is never transparent like a window pane or faithful like a mirror.' Joseph Kosuth, Art after Philosophy and After: Collected Writings, 1966-1990 (edited with :- Cambridge, Mass; London: MIT Press 1991).

³⁹ The contents list for the work of Elizabeth Price reads as follows:

sidekick (version as of June 1999); sidekick (version as of May 1999); sidekick (version as of February 1999); sidekick (version as of January 1999); sidekick (version as of October 1998); sidekick (version as of August 1998). Elizabeth Price, Sidekick, PhD submission, Leeds University Department of Fine Art 1999. ⁴⁰ In a conversation in my studio on 9th February 2001 Price told me that she had begun writing sidekick while making Boulder and that her observance of action while making Boulder changed when

she knew that text would be used to represent her activities. She suggested that, within the process of writing about action, the text sidekick eventually obscured the action of making Boulder.

⁴¹ Tomoko Takahashi's web work Word Perhect www.e-2.org/word_perhect presents a version of the word processing program Word as a hand drawn interface. On the site, the viewer may choose from a list of drawn objects and surfaces to write on as well as the style of handwriting in which you would like to type. Within the hand-drawn interface of the writing program you can write in the handwriting of your choice on the selected object (London A-Z, Receipt, Cigarette packet) by typing as usual on your computer. The hand drawn interface also offers the usual options of printing and saving your text as well as hand drawn notes which, when you click on options such as right alignment cause a •

hand drawn note to appear saying I don't do that'. Of Additional interest, Microsoft has recently unveiled a new prototype product called 'the tablet' which allows users to write on it by hand and then move text around in the same way that text may be moved on a word processor. See: *Is Microsoft's tablet the wonder drug?* Jack Schofield, The Guardian: Online, Thursday November 16 2000.

⁴² Thinking was performed by Caroline Achaintre at the Richard Salmon Gallery, London on the 20th May 2000. The performance, which took place as a part of the exhibition titled *Point of View* curated by the collector Thomas Frankenburger, was part of a night of performance including Stuart Brisley, Joshua Sofaer and Gary Stevens.

Bibliography

Abramović, Marina and Atlas, Charles, Biography (Reihe Canz, 1994).

Abramović/Ulay, Performances 1976-1988 (Stedelijk Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven, 1997).

Abramović, Marina, Artists Body (Edizioni Charta, 1998).

Adams, Brooks: Jardine, Lisa: Malony, Martin: Rosenthal, Norman:

Shone, Richard. Young British Artists from the Saachi Collection:

Sensation, (Thames and Hudson, 1998).

Austen, Jane, Sense and Sensibility (Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1995).

Austin, J. L, How to do Things with Words, (Second Edition reprinted 1978, Oxford University Press).

Bank. Press Release 1999 (Gallery Poo Poo, London).

Bank. Press Release 1999 (Rupert Goldsworthy, New York).

Bank. Colophon (Black Dog Publishing, 2000).

Body and the East: From the 1960's to the Present, Ed. Badovinac, Zdenka (MIT Press, 1999).

Brecht, George interviewed by Nyman, Michael, George Brecht (Studio international: Journal of Modern Art: Art & Experimental Music, November/December 1976) pp. 256-265. Butler, Judith, Introduction: On Linguistic Vulnerability', Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative (Routledge, 1977). Collins, Susan, Cruisin', <u>http://www.e-2.org/c-ship/acsc.html</u>

1999.

Chion, Michael. Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen (Columbia University Press, 1994).

Chris Burden (BLOCNOTES editions, 1995).

Ford, Simon. Wreckers of Civilisation: The Story of COUM Transmissions (Black Dog Publishing, 1999). Friedman, Ken (ed), The Fluxus Performance Workbook, (Editions Conz, 1990).

Gould, Glen, Interlude: Glen Gould interviews Glen Gould about Glen Gould' in The Glen Gould Reader, Ed. Page, Tim (Vintage Books, 1990) pp. 313-328.

Goldberg, Roselee, Performance: Live Art 1909 to the Present (Thames and Husdon 1979).

Goldsmith, Kenneth, Fidget (Coach House Books, 2000).

Graham, Dan. Two Way Mirror Power: Selected writings by Dan Graham on his Art, Ed. Alexander Albero (MIT Press1999).

Graham, Dan, Performer / Audience / Mirror, Video 1975, 22:52 Mins, Black and White with sound, (Electronic Arts Intermix http://www.eai.org)

Kaye, Nick, Art into Theatre: Performance Interviews and Documents (Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996).

Jones, Amelia (survey) and Warr, Tracey (ed), The Artists Body (Thames and Hudson, Phaidon 2000).

Kelly, Mike and McCarthy, Paul, Sod Sodie and Sock (Secession, 1999).

Kosuth, Joseph. After Philosophy and After: Collected Writings, 1966-1990 (edited with :- Cambridge, Mass; London: MIT Press 1991).

Lippard, Lucy R. Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972 (Studio Vista, London, 1973).

MacLennan, Alistair. Is No 1975-1998 (Arnolfini, 1988). Mueller, Roswitha. Vallie Export: Fragments of the Imagination (Indiana University Press, 1994).

McCorquodale, Duncan: Siderfin, Naomi and Stallabrass, Julian. Occupational Hazzard: Critical Reading on Recent British Art (Black Dog, 1998). Noever, Peter (ed). Chris Burden: Beyond the Limits (Canz, 1996). Nuttal, Jeff, Performance Art, Volume One: Memoirs (John Calder, 1979)

Perec, Georges, Two Hundred and Forty-three Postcards in Real

Colour - for Italo Calvino' in Species of Spaces and Other Pieces
(Penguin Books, 1997) pp. 218-235.
Price, Elizabeth Sidekick, PhD submission (Leeds University, Department of Fine Art, 1999).
Richard, Alain-Martin and Clive Robertson, (eds) Performance Au • In Canada 1970 - 1990, (Inter Edituer, 1991)
Rugoff, Ralf: Stiles, Kristine: Di Pietrantonio, Giacinto. Paul MaCarthy (Phaidon, 1996).
Schimmel, Paul and Stiles, Kristine, (eds) Out of Actions: Between

Performance and the Object 1949-1979, (Thames and Hudson, 1998).

Schneemann, Carolee, More Than Meat Joy: Performance Works and Selected Writings, ed. McPherson, Bruce (New Paltz, Documentext, 1978). Schofield, Jack, Is Microsoft's tablet the wonder drug? The Guardian: Online, Thursday November 16 2000. Stiles, Kristine, Between Water and Stone: Fluxus Performance: A Metaphysics of Acts, In the Spirit of Fluxus (Walker Art Centre, 1993).

Takahashi, Tomoko. Word Perhect <u>www.e-2.org/word_perhect</u> Williamson, Aaron, Writing Art (Art Monthly, number 230, October 1999), pp. 13 – 17.

Ziranek, Sylvia. Very Food (Bookworks, 1987).