



Marking Time: Collated Abstracts

Plenary presentation

‘Slipping Through My Fingers’: Adventures in Marking Time

Professor Elizabeth Schafer Royal Holloway, University of London

In 1999 *Mamma Mia* repositioned ‘Slipping Through My Fingers’ – Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson’s lament for the passing of time – and brought that song to new audiences. The potential layering of time in this song’s new manifestation(s) will be explored alongside the impact of *Mamma Mia* in enabling Phyllida Lloyd’s anachronistic, all women Shakespeares. Early modern theatre practices that attempt to mitigate against time ‘Slipping Through My Fingers’ such as Caroline playwright Richard Brome scoring his play texts for readers; Ben Jonson’s invention of – ; contrast with the creative anachronism of Shakespeare’s Romans who wear doublets (or women’s prison boilersuits) and who demonstrate some of the pleasures of historically intercultural performance.

Panel 1A: Re-telling historical stories through 21st-century practice

Making room, finding space: explorations of the work of women theatre professionals in WWI

Dr Naomi Paxton Vote 100 project, Parliament

The centenary of the First World War has so far been commemorated and contextualised through a number of large and small scale public engagement events for specialist and non-specialist audiences. Many of these have aimed to challenge dominant narratives and simplified general histories by bringing to the fore 'forgotten' or overlooked stories and individuals through site-

specific public engagement events and practices. This paper will explore how the activities and labour of female theatre professionals in London during the years 1914-1918 have been represented by scholars, and how public engagement events about their micro-histories can make a vital contribution to a broader and more nuanced analysis of not only women's work in wartime, but the role of women in post-war politics and society. This paper will focus particularly on the author's experience of devising a living literature walk entitled 'A Particular Theatre: Shakespeare, Suffragists and Soldiers' in 2016 for the Being Human Festival, and the current process of development for another walk, 'Women, the West End and the Western Front', for the 2017 Festival.

Activating the discourse of An Adventure, 1789-2017

Matthew Schlerf Rose Bruford College

In 1901 a stroll through Versailles changed the lives of two English women, Annie Moberly and Eleanor Jourdain, who believed that they experienced the Petit Trianon garden as it had been in 1789. They published an account of their time-slip experience, including Moberly's vision of Queen Marie Antoinette, under pseudonyms in *An Adventure* (Macmillan, 1911). The story caused a sensation, affirmed by some critics in the wake of Einstein's theory of relativity and denounced by others as hallucination, lies and lesbian madness. "We record these things," the women end their preface to *An Adventure*, "in order that they may be considered whenever the time shall come when a true explanation of our story may become possible."

In 2017 I continue this search for a "true explanation" by activating the century-long discourse of *An Adventure* as a live conversation. I will navigate participants through the story's many perspectives: professional to amateur, psychic to physicist, institutional to internet trolling. The immediate aim is to restore the value of embodied knowledge as the primary source of time-slip experiences. The ultimate aim is to disturb the dominant critical discourse around *An Adventure*—including biases of methodology, epistemology and credibility—through the development of new knowledge that is personal and collective, embodied and conversational.

Panel 1B: New methodologies

Timelines as a research tool: spatial sorting and temporal sequences

Ysabel Clare Goldsmith's, University of London

This paper will explain the principle of the spatial sorting of temporal sequences, suggesting multiple uses and inviting participants to apply it to their own research.

Developed from exploration of the underlying structure of subjective experience in Stanislavsky's System, timelines are a concrete re-presentation of a particular conceptualization of time. But while it is common to use linear organization of information objectively, in the form of lines, maps and diagrams to clarify historical or narrative sequences, what is new is to use it subjectively by locating such lines on the floor and engaging with them in space.

This embodied engagement with temporal sequences immediately and literally potentiates new perspectives, evokes transitions, and helpfully makes clear distinctions between 'on' and 'off' line processes. Subjective projections can be made 'on' the line, and critical evaluations can be clearly distinguished as 'off-line', providing a context for critical analysis without detriment to process.

As an analytical tool, this offers another way to conceptualise acting theory, such as Stanislavsky's life of the part, emotion memory, and the analogous. Other performance praxes can now be re-examined, embodying linguistic and conceptual data in vivid detail.

Similarly, other less obvious practices and processes can be rendered transparent via their embodiment on appropriate lines of time. Participants will be invited to brainstorm how it might be applied to both content and process for the purposes of their own research, whether that be historical, conceptual or embodied practice, and will have a chance to experiment on the floor.

New Media, Unfamiliar Methodologies: Understanding the Online Reception of Theatre Broadcasts Through Audience Research

Rachael Nicholas University of Roehampton

New media often forces us to reconsider our understanding of how audiences receive, experience, and participate with theatre and performance. This is especially true of the live theatre broadcast,

particularly online broadcasts, which give audiences the option to either watch theatre performances live, or to experience them ‘out of time’, by pausing and playing, for example, or by catching up later. Online broadcasts seem to remove the barriers that time and place inflict on accessing live theatre performance, but the fact that audiences are not located in one space at one time makes this new form of theatre audience particularly difficult to research. Unlike audiences in the theatre or the cinema, who are physically present in a defined number of places, digital audience members experience theatre across multiple platforms, spaces, and times. Whilst theatre or cinema audiences can be asked face-to-face what they think and feel, talking to digital audiences requires digital research methods. In this paper I will discuss my approach to researching online theatre broadcast audiences of Shakespeare plays - an online survey and follow-up interviews conducted over instant messaging platforms. As well as drawing on some of the initial results from the survey to explore what this kind of research might be able to tell us about online reception, I will reflect on the merits and challenges of the methodology itself, arguing that understanding how new media is opening up new ways of experiencing performance requires experimenting with new forms of research methodology.

Panel 2A: Time, experience, and performance

Temporality, Experience and The Event: Time marking us

Alessandra Montagner State University of Campinas/University of Roehampton

This presentation enquires into the interrelationships between temporality and experience in the spectatorship of a performance event by operating a reflective exercise on a personal spectatorial experience, as a means to approach this enquiry. The performance in question is *Trans-O-Graphia*, by Lazlo Pearlman, a piece that questions binary conceptions of the body through the presentation of the transgender body. The piece fostered, in its immediate occurrence, a context of conviviality, but the aftermath of the event unveiled other intense affects: the experience of an aftershock, where the affective force of the performance witnessed was fully felt just in its aftermath, as a response that affirmed its force through the passage of time. In the attempt to engage with the temporal problematics posed by such experience, reflecting on the broader issues of temporality and spectatorship, this talk asks: where does the event belong in the spectrum of the movement of time?

When does the experience of the event take place, in its immediacy or in its aftermath? How does time imprint its marks on us, in our spectatorial experience of performance? The theories of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2002/1945), on time and temporality, and Peggy Phelan (1993), on the disappearance of performance, are evoked as conceptual tools to approach these issues.

Some Time-specificities of Performance

Nik Wakefield Royal Holloway, University of London

This presentation puts forward a definition of time-specificity through the One Year Performances by Teaching Hsieh and the philosophy of Henri Bergson. Hsieh completed five year long works in New York at the end of the 1970's and into the 80's, meticulously documenting an anti-heroic series of repetitive actions meant to foreground thinking, freedom and the passage of time. Bergson's philosophy of duration, written a hundred years before Hsieh's work, describes a way of sensing time before reason and analysis. Together, this theoretically sophisticated maker and this philosopher of experience provide a common ground of time as a force of multiplicity, difference, creativity and becoming. Time performs, but not always as it is meant to. Central to Hsieh's practice is the demonstration of contingent change, and Bergson problematises the cultural practice of understanding time through how it is measured with clocks. In this theory and practice, temporality is activity. Hsieh's documentation, for example, is secondary to the action of the performance. The carefulness and legality of the documentation only emphasise the everydayness that escapes it. Bergson's definition of the experience of time, duration, is defined in contrast to the measurable practice of clock time; thus it is through constraint that creativity emerges. Analysing clock time brings the experience of passing time into relief just as the effusive images of Hsieh reveal what is before the photographic. With these generative constraints in mind, I define a version of time-specificity as the experience of duration through performance that includes within its composition a set clock time. Works such as Hsieh's One Year Performances and John Cage's '4'33'" allow for an experience of duration exactly through their use of clock time as a compositional element of the performance work. In this presentation, I will show how time-specificity might bring some answers to the question of how exactly is performance a temporal art.

Panel 2B: Time in literature

Stage Managing Wasted Time: As You Like It and Theatre's Industrial Temporality

Martin Young Queen Mary, University of London

As You Like It has long been recognised by literary critics as a play about time. This paper, drawing from a broader project on temporalities in the theatre, reads this dramatic theme through the materialities of performance, focusing in particular on the temporalities of backstage work. It centres on the 2015 National Theatre production, in which the play's concern with the social construction of time in the 'working day world' is exemplified by setting the early scenes in a disciplined and regulated corporate office environment. Following Barbara Hodgdon's attention to the 'material remains' of performance (2012, 2016), my consideration of this production's staging choices is informed by focusing on examples of theatre's industrial documentation, including Stage Manager reports and the shift records generated by Front of House staff. Through their notes of scene change timings, missed cues, and audience latecomers, these records express the temporal discipline and regulation which characterise the theatrical workplace (as well as revealing telling moments of slippage and error). The production suggests connections between these capitalist ideologies of work and time and the early modern temporal values which *As You Like It* reflects; by focusing this paper on the industrial conventions that underpin theatrical production, I hope to facilitate a consideration of the play's 400-year-old concern with the temporal organisation of work and leisure.

The womb of time: Untimely Birth in Shakespeare's Richard III

Jennifer Hardy King's College London

Modern research suggests that human gestation lasts an average of 268 days, yet early modern medicine declared that any time between seven and eleven months was "good and viable". Though such gestational elasticity invariably complicated issues of paternity and legitimacy, the concept of underdeveloped or 'abortive' births also provoked concern for correctly timing birth. Instead of acting as just a measure of biological development, time was believed to exert significant influence on the success of pregnancy. Whilst the timing of conception could help shape gender and

disposition, the (mis)timing of birth could have grave implications for the physical condition of a foetus. This paper will highlight the importance of untimely birth in Shakespeare's *Richard III*, and will investigate how Shakespeare's deviation from other historical and theatrical sources draws attention to the ways in which physical and personal identity could be shaped by timeliness. Though time and pregnancy have both recently become topics of critical concern, the intersection of these two areas in medical and theatrical discourse has yet to be explored. By shedding new light on the timing of birth in *Richard III*, this paper will seek to emphasise the overlooked role time played in early modern pregnancy and birth.

The Reluctant Anarchist: wage labour, capital and time in Tom Stoppard's Albert's Bridge and If You're Glad I'll Be Frank

Carlo Vareschi Università degli Studi di Verona

In Tom Stoppard's early radio plays *Albert's Bridge* (1969) and *If You're Glad I'll Be Frank* (1973) the measuring of time is the central theme around which the plots revolve. In the former a rearrangement of the schedule of the anti-rust treatment of a bridge leads to disaster i.e. the collapse of the bridge; in the latter the protagonist, Gladys, is brainwashed and kept hidden in the Central Post Office as the voice of the Speaking Clock. Both plays may be read as a critique of capitalism at large: Gladys is an extreme example of reified worker, while *Albert's Bridge* exposes the danger of applying Ford's methods of mass production to public utilities, reminding us of the views expressed by Ken Loach in *The Navigators* (2001). This is surprising since Tom Stoppard's political stance is far from Loach's: even if in a 1979 interview Stoppard called himself "a conservative with a small 'c'", his views have often been aligned with the official line of the Conservative Party, especially as regards the freedom of the press (*Night and Day*, 1978). I will argue that Stoppard both accepts the measuring of time as an element of order, and rejects it as a limit to human freedom, and that the issue of time is central in disclosing the inner conflict between his libertarianism and conservatism.

Panel 3A: Time and identity

Seven times a day will I praise You: Christian liturgy and the temporal performance of identity

Chris Dingwall-Jones St Stephen's House, University of Oxford

From the inception of the religion, Christians have followed the Jewish practice of praying at set times of day, either alone or in groups. Particularly in religious communities, such as monasteries, theological colleges, and even parishes, this regular cycle of prayer involves not only the recitation of set words, but also group singing and more-or-less choreographed gestures. In other words, Christian daily prayer provides an embodied practice of marking time within a particular community.

This paper will examine the history and ideological function of these embodied practices, exploring how the development of this daily prayer (the 'Divine Office') worked historically to inculcate a sense of a shared history (particularly in the commemoration of martyrs and certain feasts).

By reflecting on my own experience of life in such a religious community, the paper will also suggest that, while this 'top down' model offered a means of institutional control, the diversity of approaches to daily prayer which now exist, as well as the local diversity which has always existed, provide a more complex picture.

Within this more complex approach, the embodied practices of daily prayer allow individuals and groups both to assert their identity as part of a community extended in time, and to claim their own individual expression of that community. Liturgies of time are thus sites at which both conformity and resistance, continuity and rupture are, paradoxically, performed simultaneously.

'I knew all Hamlet by heart': Fracturing time and identity in the Royal Shakespeare Company's community plays

Corinne Furness University of Birmingham

In 1983 the Royal Shakespeare Company embarked on its first large scale professional-amateur collaboration, *The Dillens*, following it in 1985 with the companion play *Mary, after the Queen*. Inspired by the history focussed community plays of Ann Jellicoe, together the two plays overlaid

the story of one Stratford family in the first half of the twentieth century on to the streets, fields, and warehouses of the RSC's hometown. Part exercise in dramatic archaeology, part defiant response to the political climate of the UK in the early 1980s, I argue that the plays repeatedly fracture their historical source material to consider not only the moment of their production but also the possibility of an alternate narrative of national identity to that usually associated with the RSC. Through consideration of a range of archive material and largely unanalysed participant and audience responses, I explore how the plays exploit tensions of place and time to question the RSC's identity. Finally, in light of the RSC's renewed interest in professional-amateur collaboration, I explore what the act of 'forgetting' these plays might reveal about the RSC's relationship with its own history – and its future.

Retrogardism: Re-mythologising the European Traumatic Historical in the Present

Simon Bell Anglia Ruskin University

This paper proposes that the work of the Slovenian performance-art collective NSK (Neue Slowenische Kunst) and more specifically its sub-group Laibach, posit a challenge to Fredric Jameson's conception of the postmodern "fragmentation of time into a series of perpetual presents", whereby the postmodern condition is one of multiple identities pieced together from the multiplicity of mediated messages.

With the provocative strategy of Retrogardism and a 'third-generation' avant-garde distinctive to Eastern European aesthetic praxis, Laibach and the NSK 're-mythologise' the iconography of the European traumatic historical and challenge the dominance of a Western performance aesthetic which has become an indictment of contemporary capitalism itself; an alarming and pathological symptom of a society incapable of dealing with time and history.

The Retro-avant-garde is not an approach based on constructing a new future by negating the past but rather an attempt to free the present and change the future via the reworking of past utopianisms specific to the Central and Eastern European mnemonic construct. In the words of NSK collaborator Eda Čufer: 'traumas of the past affecting the present and future can be healed only by returning to the initial conflicts'.

Panel 3B: Shakespeare's time as source material

'Why is everybody so obsessed with text?': Emma Rice, the Globe, and theatre history in practice

Robbie Hand University of Roehampton

Emma Rice's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which began her tenure as Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe, opened in April 2016 to general acclaim. It also, however, ruffled some feathers with its use of artificial lighting, apparently abandoning the Globe's near-unique status as a modern theatre in which actors and audience share the same light. This issue, though seemingly trivial for many theatregoers, grew into a highly polarised debate, ultimately resulting in the surprise announcement that Rice would be stepping down after only her second season.

Drawing on my work as a research assistant at the Globe during the handover period, this paper situates the 2016 *Midsummer* in relation to the Globe's often amorphous artistic policy over its 20-year history. Informed by Sarah Werner's work on the Globe's peculiar mixture of the pseudo-historical and intentionally anachronistic, I discuss the way that Rice's introduction of one of the most familiar features of modern playhouses – controllable lighting – came to be seen as radically innovative, while the Globe's 'traditional', though highly unusual, house style was portrayed as unimaginatively conservative. The 'radicalism' of Rice's production, I argue, was based on a clash between the old and new. This clash, in other forms, has formed the basis of some of the Globe's best work, but in this case it resulted in a serious and often acrimonious debate regarding the relationship between its role as a modern producing theatre and the historically-informed academic project that helped bring it into being.

Negotiating the gap of time: Developments in Jacobethanism through the history of stage and costume design for Shakespeare

Ella Hawkins Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

The period of Shakespeare's lifetime has long proven popular as an onstage setting for the playwright's work. Dating back to the 18th century, Elizabethan and/or Jacobean aesthetics have been incorporated into stage and costume design to various degrees and ends. While a desire for

the authentic reconstruction of early modern playing practices underpins some Jacobethan-inspired productions, most are instead driven by artistic, political, or critical aims. To better understand our evolving relationship with Shakespeare, and the playwright's position within our perceived cultural heritage, more must be known about how, why, and to what end(s) directors and designers have represented the Elizabethan/Jacobean period(s) through design across the history of Shakespearean performance. Looking back to the work of specific practitioners (particularly John Philip Kemble and William Poel) between the 1700s and 2000s, I use costume designs, illustrations, photographs, and descriptive accounts to identify distinct strands of development in the adaptation of Elizabethan and/or Jacobean clothing and iconography for contemporary audiences. I argue that Jacobethan aesthetics have been employed in stagings of Shakespeare's plays to promote a sense of nationalism, as a progressive political statement, and as a form of criticism.

AIDs, Section 28 and Queer Futurity

Robin Craig Shakespeare's Globe

Since Lee Edelman published *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* in 2004, academics have embraced a 'queer negativity' that rejects heteronormative futurity centred around reproduction. However there is an absence of study on what an alternative 'queer futurism' could be and how it can work against heteronormativity, particularly in regards to AIDS and HIV. My paper addresses this gap, exploring how queer theatre attempted to create alternative futurities during the 1980s in the face of growing homophobia and the AIDS crisis.

Specifically examining how theatre companies used the canonical figure of Shakespeare to legitimise alternative sexualities, this paper will examine *This Island's Mine* by Gay Sweatshop Company in relation to trauma theory, historical revisionism and Edelman's work on the death drive. The role of theatre in creating communities will also be examined, reflecting Philip Osments' claim that he 'no longer belonged in a Britain increasingly hostile to everything [he] believed in' while writing the play. The paper will examine how Osment used the cultural canon to create a future for queerness during the AIDS crisis.

I argue that while Edelman's queer embrace of the death drive is radical, it ultimately neglects the need for queer futurism in response to homophobic narratives. By creating a narrative that showed

a positive queer future, Osment contrasted dominant ideas surrounding AIDS in the 1980s and worked to legitimise homosexuality during a period of extreme homophobia using the cultural weight of Shakespeare.