

On a clear day you can see for ever: mediation as form and dramaturgy in located performance

The material I present for examination for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work details a body of publicly realised practice-as-research investigations that I undertook across a series of located performance works created in collaboration with Mike Pearson, under the umbrella of our ongoing performance collective Pearson/Brookes.¹ My enquiry across these investigation has explored how both the formal construction of located performance work and the dramaturgical structuring of that work's performative content might be reimagined and reformed through specifically developed procedures of mediation. The term 'located' here is chosen to highlight my predominant concern and engagement with context, as both a physical and social landscape, within the conception and realisation of this research. It also draws attention to the importance of the act of location to the form and function of these performance works, indicating an address to both place and performance within their engagement of site. The present submission focuses specifically on my intermedial approaches to location,² as developed within this series of public works produced by Pearson/Brookes

¹ Mike Pearson was an artistic director of Cardiff Laboratory Theatre (1973-80) and Brith Gof (1981-97), co-founder of Pearson/Brookes (1997-present), and is currently Professor of Performance Studies at Aberystwyth University. Pearson/Brookes represents mine and Pearson's on-going long-term collaboration, our collective proposals and the co-authored performance works we jointly create and produce.

² See p. 7 for clarification on my use of the term 'intermedial' within this submission.

between 1998 and 2012. Key works have been selected from within this series as exemplars of this research.

It is significant here that, in its origins, the collaboration of Pearson/Brookes was overtly established as an exploratory 'duet'; in that our performed work together was initially intended as a visible consequence and navigation of our collective performative choices as two distinct individuals – a visual artist and a theatre performer – working alongside each other, from and towards a set of shared intentions. Those origins have led us to, and sustained, an exceptionally open and integrated collaborative practice, that has not only tolerated but actively encouraged and supported our individual development of personal approaches within its procedures. Equally significantly, our attitude in shaping the resulting collaborative works has always been mutually proactive rather than reactive; and while reference is made here to our divergences in both intention and approach from previous developments in the work of others – most notably perhaps in the work of Brith Gof – these departures should not be seen as a reaction against those developments, but simply as an active exploration of what might be attempted or achieved next. Many aspects of the resulting body of work are, of course, inseparable from that collaboration, yet my emphasis here is intentionally focused on an articulation of the trajectory of my own enquiry across the works delineated within this submission. For that reason alone, while I acknowledge much of what Pearson has subsequently written and published on aspects of a number of these works, I have not made extensive reference to his thoughts or personal intentions here.

The works detailed in this submission embody four phases within the developmental trajectory of my research. The first concerns my initial proposition of new structures of located performance that are constructed to allow culturally resonant material to be activated directly within the locale of that material itself. It is exemplified here by the landscape work *The first five miles* (1998), as the initial manifestation of this phase and stimulus for the subsequent located intervention *Body of evidence* (1998) and the experimental studio work *The man who ate his boots* (1998). The second phase reflects my development of strategies of mediation that are intended to constitute located performance as a 'field' or network of activity, rather than as a single act or object of exposition, while at the same time facilitating an expanded address to place and social space – as it might be both explored and performed. This is considered here

through the pivotal multi-site performance work *Carrying Lyn* (2001), as an exemplar of my enquiry across this and the subsequent multi-site city works *Polis* (2001) and *Metropolitan Motions* (2002). The third phase marks my elaboration of intermedial architectures that are conceived primarily to allow the dramaturgical structuring of a performance work's material content, and the formal actuality of the wider event of that work as a whole, to be constituted as a purposeful assemblage of mediated fragments. This was explored across a series of composite-narrative studio works that included *Rain dogs* (2002), *Who are you looking at?* (2004) and *Something happening / something happening nearby* (2009).³ It is typified here by the performance intervention *There's someone in the house* (2004). This leads, finally, to the fourth phase, and to my development of purpose-built architectures and behaviours of live remediation that are constructed to allow new and located stagings of classic theatre texts to happen,⁴ and be encountered, in ways or places perhaps not previously considered possible in their live public performance. This is most apparent within the large-scale located theatre work *Coriolanus* (2012), which will here be considered as the culmination of explorations I initiated within our located staging of *The Persians* (2010).

³ I use the term 'composite-narrative' here to highlight works with a significant narrative component, in which that narrative is composed through the visible combination of discrete fragments of mediated text, image and action.

⁴ See p. 32 for a clarification on my use of the term 'remediation'.

Origins

Since its inception, Pearson/Brookes – which I co-founded with Mike Pearson in 1997 – has provided a platform for the development of innovative and what I term ‘propositional’ performance works, at a range of scales, within an international context. This platform has supported collaborative practices that have allowed me to constitute performance as social enquiry and action rather than simply as artistic reflection. Within these practices my particular focus has been on the proposal and development of new strategies within the formation, functioning and placement of located performance and live art. My use of the term ‘propositional’ is important here, as it acknowledges my often overt attempts within these works to activate new and alternative possibilities: whether those alternatives imagine new forms and intentions or simply reimagine and reconfigure possibilities that are already available to us.

I initiated the arc of research examined here a little less than twelve months into the Pearson/Brookes collaboration, during the development of our second work *The first five miles* (1998), and directly following the presentation of our first collaborative production *Dead men’s shoes* (1997).⁵ Since then, the expanding propositions subsequently developed under the banner of Pearson/Brookes have pioneered located and mediated performance practices, within Wales and elsewhere, and within both exploratory and mainstream performance contexts. This reach was acknowledged by *The Guardian* theatre editor Andrew Dickson in a recent profile article – citing the work’s origins in *The first five miles* (1998) and *Body of Evidence* (1998), which are both cited within this submission. He writes:

Since 1997 [Brookes and Pearson] have gained a reputation as two of the most adventurous theatremakers in Britain, bringing to life ideas that are part performance, part theatre, part land art, part multimedia event and part uncategorisable. (Dickson, 2012, p. 16)

⁵ The performance and installation work *Dead men’s shoes* (1997) marked the first co-authored collaboration between Mike Pearson and I, during the process of which we officially established our collaboration as *Pearson/Brookes*. The work was produced within the then administrative structure of Brith Gof, and performed in Wales and Brazil in 1997.

As an independent visual artist working in the 1990s, then consciously re-emphasising my aspirations to develop effective strategies of live art intervention in public space beyond those of my object-based studio practice, the formation and intentions of Pearson/Brookes marked a significant moment within the progression of my professional artistic and research practice. Based in Wales, and more specifically within the Cardiff of the period, I inevitably found myself operating amongst the practices of experimental theatre companies such as Brith Gof, Moving Being and the Centre for Performance Research,⁶ not to mention the subsequent generation of performance collectives and practitioners that emerged from them.⁷ This context had also been fed by visiting UK companies such as IOU, Impact Theatre Cooperative and The People Show, as well as international companies as diverse as The Wooster Group and Dumb Type. And, perhaps most significantly, by the early 1990s the context was already informed by a well-rooted set of attitudes and discourses concerning site-specific performance. As Mike Pearson writes in the prologue to his book *Site-Specific Performance*:

That such developments should occur in Wales is not entirely surprising. With a relative paucity of indigenous dramatic traditions, with no mainstream tradition setting what theatre should and ought to look like, with, until recently, no National Theatre prescribing orthodoxy of theatrical convention, performance has had options. Alternative practices have not been marginalised and since the early 1970s have been substantially subsidised; with only a limited range of auditoria such practices have sought other sites. (Pearson, 2010, p. 5)

The intentions that I personally began to shape, within the practices and research that have come to epitomise the collaboration and contribution of Pearson/Brookes, arose from my desire to explore additional formal and dramaturgical possibilities to those with which I had already become familiar through the experimental and physical theatre practices I had encountered by the mid 1990s. They also arose from the desire Pearson and I shared to explore formal alternatives to the large-scale theatrically

⁶ The Centre for Performance Research (CPR) was established in 1988 from the company formerly known as Cardiff Laboratory Theatre.

⁷ These collectives and individuals included, amongst others: The Magdalena Project, Man Act, Earthfall, Good Cop Bad Cop, Eddie Ladd, Marc Rees and Paradox Shuffle.

architectonic staging practices developed by Brith Gof over the previous decade – alternatives that would allow us to shape new and additional forms of performance intervention at site, and to explore ways in which we might increasingly directly locate those interventions within the landscape of their social context.

These intentions were informed not least by the understandings I developed through my meetings, as a freelance technician, with the rigorous and critical design practices of Brith Gof's Clifford McLucas across the initial production processes of Brith Gof's large-scale, site-specific works *Gododdin* (1988) and *Pax* (1990). My attitudes to located performance built on an increasing engagement with the performed nature of place implicit in contemporaneously emerging ideas of the 'placeevent' (McLucas cited in Kaye, 2000, p. 52), and in my consideration of 'performance-specific sites'.⁸ Simultaneously, I was also asserting an emphasis distinct from more overtly architectural and scenographic practices, such as McLucas' notion of the 'host' and 'ghost' as a symbiotic pairing between the existing architectures and narratives of a site and the temporary occupation of that site through scenographic intervention and performance (McLucas cited in Kaye, 2000, pp. 54-56). Instead, I sought to explore relational and action based approaches to location that would operate outside of procedures rooted in practices of stage design at site. My choice to collaborate artistically within the creation of works of theatre had resulted from my recognition that there are expanding possibilities for performed public art within the conventions and context of theatre as a social space. And yet, I perceived these possibilities to be often unnecessarily formally limited through the assumed provision of a designed stage, and the resulting transfer of established theatrical stage practices and audience relationships to site. Such a transfer often necessitated a focus on mechanisms of performance defined through the juxtaposition of theatrical stage 'pictures', audience and site. This procedural juxtaposition is perhaps acknowledged in McLucas' statement that 'the real site-specific works that [Brith Gof] do, are the ones where we create a piece of work which is a hybrid of the place, the public and the performance' (McLucas cited in Kaye, 2000, p. 55). This was later characterised by Nick Kaye as operating through 'leaks of

⁸ An intentional inversion of the term 'site-specific performance', taken from my personal notes circa 1998, which I used at the time to highlight the activation and inhabitation of the temporary places created and sustained by events of located performance.

meaning, through which the artwork and its place may be momentarily articulated one in the other' (Kaye, 2000, p. 57).

With the establishment of Pearson/Brookes, as a conceptual and organisational construct within which Mike Pearson and I would focus our collaboration, came an exploration initiated by our questions about how personal, historical and culturally resonant material might be increasingly directly engaged at scale and/or in situ; about how the resulting performative interventions might inhabit the locale of such material; and about how the event of those interventions might be fully realised without reliance on given theatrical infrastructures, and in forms requiring a minimal physical impact on their locale.

Framework

This submission focuses specifically on my contribution to practices and understandings of intermedial performance within an expanding field of located performance.⁹ The research and wider knowledge contributed by these works, developed over the fifteen-year period between 1997 and 2012, is positioned within contemporaneous discourses of site-specific and public art. The published works evidence the development of my understandings of site beyond its role as host and context to performance, proposing instead an emphasis on the performed nature of place itself. They manifest tendencies in located art that have been increasingly recognised in relation to action and social behaviour, by scholars such as Nick Kaye (2000) and Alex Coles (2000), and that acknowledge shifts from 'fixity to mobility', from 'architectonic to peripatetic', and from 'expositional to relational' modes (Pearson, 2010, p. 9). These practices have developed within a broadening field of practice that Miwon Kwon has designated 'site-orientated', to describe approaches that employ an expanded engagement of site, in that they include diverse social, cultural, institutional or economic contexts within their approach to a given locale (Kwon, 2004, p. 24). Jane Rendell has notably categorised such approaches as 'critical spatial practice' to highlight 'work that transgresses the limits of art and architecture and engages with both the social and the aesthetic, the public and the private' (Rendell, 2006, p. 6).

Artistically, the works discussed here, and my broader professional artistic practice, acknowledge a lineage of conceptual action-based artistic work. This is traceable from Duchamp's 'ready-mades', especially *Fountain* (1917) and *50cc of Paris Air* (1919); through notable task-based sculptural interventions such as *A line made by walking* (1967) by Richard Long, *Shoot* (1971) by Chris Burden, Gordon Matta-Clark's physical

⁹ My use of the term 'intermedial' acknowledges procedures of mediation that might operate 'in between' the conventions of specific media forms, and which engage 'a mutual reciprocity, with two or more media coming together in conversation' (Klich and Scheer, 2012, p. 71). These procedures actively engage the interrelations enabled by such media interactions to shape practices that do not seek to define or position themselves as 'neither this nor that', but rather seek to facilitate a 'this and this' expansion of performative behaviours that might engage 'the potential for interaction and exchange between the live and the mediated, without presupposing the authenticity or authority of either mode' (Klich and Scheer, 2012, p. 71). These interactions aim to combine within the observer's experience, to shape modes of audience reception through a delivery of performative material 'patterned across various media, creating a multidimensional performance text which comes together in the experience a spectator has of the work' (Klich and Scheer, 2012, p. 71).

modifications of empty and derelict buildings such as *Splitting* (1973) and *Conical Intersect* (1975), and direct technological interventions such as the unannounced opening of a live satellite video link between public spaces in New York and Los Angeles by Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz in their work *Hole in Space* (1980); to contemporary performance and live art works as varied in scale and intention as *Looking up* (2001) by Francis Alÿs, Jeremy Deller's re-enactment of *The Battle of Orgreave* (2001) and Blast Theory's *My Neck of The Woods* (2013). In addition to this are traces of a personal adaptation of the creative strategies, if not the objectives, of interventionist tactics such as *détournement* – as coined by the Situationist International, subsequently appropriated and employed across the punk movement of the late 1970s, the culture jamming of the late 1980s, and increasingly visible within current graffiti and graphic street art – which reshape or reframe a familiar construct through addition or subtle alteration. The social and physical constructs engaged with here, in the case of works such as *The first five miles* (1998), *Carrying Lyn* (2001) and *Polis* (2001), or *The Persians* (2010), can be as diverse as an area of the Welsh landscape or the entire centre of a city.

The practices submitted here engage my self-critical explorations of their inherent acts and events of location, within broader practical and performative considerations of place that acknowledge the wider field of critical debate advanced by contemporary cultural and political geographers such as Doreen Massey (2005) and Nigel Thrift (2008); who have, in turn, drawn on spatial and social theorists, particularly Henri Lefebvre and his notions of 'lived space' and 'spatial practices' (1991, pp. 36-39). The propositions inherent to this research arise directly from an address to social space specifically, as a negotiated, and negotiable, 'social product' (Lefebvre, 2009, pp. 185-195), in their attempts to shape art as a 'state of encounter', as a 'social interstice', that 'models more than represents, and fits into the social fabric more than it draws inspiration therefrom' (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 18). This is undertaken through the development of artistic forms that might themselves be 'place-making'.¹⁰ They thus operate within understandings of place 'as the sphere of relations, negotiations, practices of engagement, power in all its forms' (Allen cited in Massey, 2005, p.99), and

¹⁰ While also used by others, the term 'place-making' here is taken from Pearson's use of the term in his writings on site-specific performance (Pearson, 2010, p.109).

as 'the dimension which poses the question of the social, and thus of the political' (Massey, 2005, p. 99).

From their initiation, I have perhaps most consistently described the practices and works submitted here as 'context-specific' – fuelling, as did others, the well-documented proliferation of related terms across the period (see Wilkie, 2002). This is an identification that I have used – and still employ today – to highlight the intentions and bias of my works and to differentiate and distance them from perceptions of site-specific performance as a genre built on site-responsive approaches to devising, site-generic staging practice and community involvement. My designation of these works as 'context-specific' is an important one, as it further reveals my focus on the broader place and 'taskscape' of their location.¹¹ The formal strategies and behaviours of mediation through which I have framed and facilitated that location can be seen to operate within intermedial practices of 'integration' and the resulting interaction and interdependency of media and disciplines within practices of contemporary art and performance.¹² These practices are commonly discussed within the field of performance as 'post-dramatic' (See Lehmann, 2006),¹³ although the prefix 'post' might perhaps misleadingly suggest that the fragmentary and multiple structures of mediation I have developed were motivated by the deconstruction of existing familiar forms, rather than by my preoccupation with the construction of new ones. Importantly, even when self-consciously sited within contexts and conventions of theatre, the forms and structures of performance and mediation developed through this research should not be understood as either enabling or problematising the 'dramatic', but rather as my purposeful address to the form and function of performance in social space within the 'site' of those conventions of theatre.

¹¹ My use of 'taskscape' here is taken from anthropologist Tim Ingold's proposition of the term (See Ingold, 1993).

¹² My use of the term 'integration' here acknowledges the five characteristics suggested as intrinsic to computer-based multimedia – namely integration, interactivity, hypermedia, immersion and narrativity – identified by Randell Packer and Ken Jordan (2002); referenced here as discussed by Klich and Scheer (Klich and Sheer, 2012, pp. 8-9).

¹³ Notably, Lehmann commissioned the multi-site Pearson/Brookes work *Metropolitan Motions* (2002) in Frankfurt, previously cited as part of the wider body of works detailed in this submission.

My research has engaged the use of often intentionally provisional technologies – such as Polaroid photographs, radio, mobile telephones, video camcorders, dictaphones and CCTV surveillance infrastructures – to open alternative ‘views’ onto details of an unfolding work that, as well as allowing access to specific aspects of the performed event, produce real-time encounters with these details or generate discrete and physical media objects that then necessitate being passed from hand to hand. Uses of familiar media tools such as these have allowed me to manifest attitudes and propositional artistic constructs that I have characterised as ‘digital thinking realised with string and plastic cups’.¹⁴ These constructs have actively explored and challenged assumptions of ‘liveness’ and ‘presence’, as well as expanded the shifting relationships between the event of the work and those mediated or recorded traces generated within its performance.¹⁵ They have facilitated explorations rooted in my understandings of live performance itself as an act of mediation, which might integrate procedures of mediatisation that technologically render its performative elements into specific and multiple media forms. They have always insisted on a focused development of strategies of mediation that simultaneously facilitate and define both the act of, and the encounter with, the work’s event. And they have done this without positioning my enquiry within a specific address to either ongoing technological developments in ‘virtual reality’ or emerging notions of ‘virtual theatre’ as variously discussed by scholars such as Gabriella Giannachi (2004) and Matthew Causey (2009).

The structures of mediation described here are most usefully understood as mechanisms that enable and articulate relational encounters and dialogues amongst those present and active within the event of these public works – however that presence might become defined. That is to say, their construction arises directly through the activation and performance of the multiple relationships that they simultaneously establish and engage, rather than simply as a mechanism to reveal or explore those relationships. And, perhaps most importantly, they also allow the form and dramaturgy of such performed events to be constituted as a field of activity, revealed through the

¹⁴ Taken from my statements on the work *Something happening / something happening nearby* (2009); as subsequently quoted by Pearson (Pearson, 2010, p. 150) as well as in the work’s publicity.

¹⁵ The term ‘liveness’ here acknowledges Philip Auslander’s dismantling of the theoretical opposition between live and mediated events – including, for example, considerations of the experience of ‘live TV’, the ‘remediatisation’ of prerecorded material back into the live experience of a performative event, and the social co-presence supported by live group interactions online (See Auslander, 2008).

purposeful assemblage of mediatised fragments and composite encounters, even when those events might necessitate that their fragments be created elsewhere, perhaps even at another time. The work here is manifest in the meetings both with and within those constructs, and by the reflections and negotiations that such meetings provoke and require. It shapes forms that attempt to render visible both the 'throwntogetherness' and the 'event' of place (Massey, 2005, p. 140), in an engagement with 'performance-specific sites' as possible 'heterotopias' (Foucault, 1997). This is in the sense that they might bring together, within a single real place, multiple sites that may in themselves appear incompatible, as somewhere where different or even contradictory practices could take place simultaneously without conflict or hierarchical categorisation (Foucault, 1997, pp. 332-334). This allows an active navigation of the multiplicity of their human and non-human components, of the physical and the virtual, of the 'here' and 'there', the 'now' and 'then'.

Lines of Enquiry

The structures and procedures of mediation detailed here are perhaps most usefully understood as being rooted in two distinct but complementary lines of enquiry. The first of these has considered new approaches to the composition of a work's constituent components, favouring and expanding compositional procedures built on processes of layering and accumulation above those rooted in the conventional sequencing of choreographed or narrative progressions. The second has addressed the formal structure and composition of performance more fundamentally, choosing to consider the realisation of performative material and the reception of that material by its intended audience as two separate and independent mechanisms.

[1] '*...all tracks running...*'¹⁶

The first of these two symbiotic threads of enquiry, which considers new approaches to the composition and organisation of a work's material parts, explores both the conception and construction of performance events and dramaturgies as involving the layered combination and mutual interference of multiple continuous 'tracks' of activity. Throughout this exploration I have considered located performance as a network or constellation of choices and behaviours, within which the constituent acts and consequences of the work will unfold in real-time, and with varying degrees of mutual interdependence or indifference. This understanding has led me to shape formal structures for works that allow, and often necessitate, a 'this and this and this' accumulation of their gathered components. The resulting dramaturgies might allow the continuous availability of all constituent layers simultaneously, while also structuring shifts of focus and emphasis between and across those layers over time. They might also engage the ambivalent multiplicity of the work, as a social event, by highlighting the activation of all that event's key components while simultaneously necessitating their active navigation by its audience. These approaches have led me to propose forms and structures of performance composition that are intentionally distinct from more linear strategies and procedures, such as the choreographed sequencing of discrete acts or moments of performative material that inevitably favour a progressively ordered 'this and

¹⁶ This is a phrase often used in conversation between Mike Pearson and I as a shorthand description of the concurrent activation and development of all the elements of a performance work.

then this and then this' expositional presentation of that material as content or argument. My initial exploration was facilitated by contemporaneous computer and software developments across the period, such as my use of prototype software to score and control multiple layered 35mm slide projections within *Dead men's shoes* (1997),¹⁷ and my use of developing hard disk digital editing software to realise the complex multilayered bilingual sound work that would form the stereo FM radio broadcast element of *The first five miles* (1998).¹⁸

[2] '*...delivery does not guarantee encounter...*'¹⁹

The second, and most defining, of these two arcs of exploration expands a range of experimental approaches to performance making that developed as a direct consequence of my conceptual separation of what I will refer to here as the distinct acts and mechanisms of 'delivery' and 'encounter' within the event of performance. That is to say, these approaches have developed through my conceptual separation of the procedures by which performative acts are firstly realised and delivered, and of the structures and relationships through which that material is then met by others. This separation was motivated initially by my attempts to self-consciously challenge and reconsider any formal and procedural limitations assumed by my artistic intentions or practice. These attempts to establish a systematically self-reflective practice were in turn motivated by my desire to shape approaches to performance making that might also allow me to knowingly disregard any assumed procedures of theatrical representation or poetic abstraction, and instead to shape a propositional poetic built through actions and encounters in social space. Such a poetic might operate directly within the familiar terrain of our daily social behaviour, rather than as an 'extra-daily' performative response

¹⁷ Kodak's Ektapro series of carousel slide projectors first included micro-processor control in the mid 1990s, allowing them to be controlled from an external computer, connected via a standard RS-232 serial connection.

¹⁸ Steinberg's release of the Cubase VST3.0 software package in 1996 allowed up to 32 tracks of digital audio, up to 128 realtime EQs, and connected external audio devices, to be manipulated and recorded via a single Macintosh desktop computer.

¹⁹ A statement taken from my personal notes circa 2001, acknowledging the inevitable gaps between what is made available within the event of a performance and what might ultimately be noticed, met or engaged with by its spectators.

or representation of it.²⁰ This led me to continually reassess the nature and intention of the actions that have defined this body of works, and to renegotiate the boundaries of what might be physically and publicly done in performance.



Performance stills from the event of *But it will turn out wrong* (2000) [Images: Mike Brookes, 2000]

The early stages of this exploratory renegotiation can be explained through referring to my propositional action and durational image work *But it will turn out wrong* (2000), a work comprising the controlled public burning of a family saloon car.²¹ In burning the car – before a small gathering of spectators and cameras, within an area of open wasteland, on the rural west coast of Wales – my primary intention was to realise a resonant act, as directly as possible, as a durational performative image. Through that act I hoped to offer, and to experience, the reality of an action, placed and met as the defining event of a performance. The work performed a meeting with an intentionally burning car as an open exploration of the ambivalent resonances that might arise within that meeting. I realised it simply as the actioning of that proposition. And in doing so I hoped to allow first-hand and personal encounters with its reality, as distinct from any performative representation of that reality. As an intimate event of performance it reveals my aspirations to identify and realise the actions that might most fully and directly constitute the intentions of the work, even when those actions might initially appear to

²⁰ I use the term 'extra-daily' here to highlight a contrast with Eugenio Barba's contemporaneous focus on the activation of extra-daily performative attitudes and pre-expressive scenic behaviour within the technique of physical theatre and dance performers (See Barba, 1995).

²¹ The action *But it will turn out wrong* (2000) marked the first within my periodic *Something burning* series. The event was realised as part of a commission by the Centre for Performance Research (CPR) and Aberystwyth Arts Centre, for the *Restless Gravity* international festival of performance curated in Aberystwyth, Wales, in 2000. Visual and audio recordings captured during the event, combined with verbal descriptions and reflections, then formed the basis for the subsequent Pearson/Brookes work *Like a pelican in the wilderness [but it will turn out wrong]* (2000).

be impossible or inaccessible within live public performance, while also highlighting the need to then be able to allow broader public encounters with such actions. This desire to enable and effectively deliver located performative actions that might be – rather than simply represent – what they consider or propose, can be seen to have driven my subsequent increasingly separate consideration of the specific processes by which they might be performed and then witnessed.

Key to this procedural separation, as I then developed it across the multi-site works of the following years, has been my recognition of the inevitable gap between ‘delivery’ and ‘encounter’; between ‘what is done’ in performance and ‘what is seen to be done’ by witnesses of that performance. My engagement of that gap was not simply as with another component of a work, but as a defining area of operation within which our choices might shape the form and character of the work as a whole. By focusing first upon a direct realisation of the intended task of the work I can consider the moment and method of my delivery of that task as a construct through which I make it specifically visible as a purposeful act. Similarly, I can also recognise how only in the moment of its encounter does the purposeful artistic event of that task become manifest. The specific strategies I employ within its delivery not only determine ‘what’ is made visible, but also define the parameters for ‘how’ and ‘by whom’ it is encountered. This separation and separate construction of the intended act and meeting of the work might allow each to be realised both where and how they might most usefully happen. A work can then be shaped as a ‘bridge’ between act and meeting, as well as between their often necessarily distinct enabling requirements. Considering the formal structure and behaviour of each work as such a bridge – each built through the performance of a chosen set of procedures – can simultaneously allow for and unify the ultimate event of the work. The form of each individual work has arisen from my consideration of its event as simultaneously the architecture of that bridge and the performance of its bridging.

[+] *...live proximity is simply one structural convention of many...*²²

These two lines of enquiry, with their respective approaches, have directly informed my development of the structures and behaviours of mediation fundamental to

²² A statement taken from my personal notes on structures of copresence and encounter in live performance, circa 2001.

both the formal and poetic propositions of the Pearson/Brookes works submitted here. They have shaped the work's contributions to live art and located performance practices through my development of an expanding range of processes of mediatisation, from the analogue broadcast architecture of *The first five miles* (1998), to the large scale intermedial mechanism of *Coriolan/us* (2012). These works have been uniquely shaped through their development as purposeful formal 'bridges', each evolved to facilitate the desired access to a specific work, within the specific circumstances of its physical context. They have also been shaped by my employment of architectures and procedures of technological mediatisation, which have enabled their acts of live public performance to be increasingly manifest in forms and places perhaps previously considered to be impractical or inaccessible. It is important to restate here the extent to which these enquires have been motivated by the need to enable our particular intentions for each work in context, as strategies and solutions conceived primarily to allow our various imperatives in situ, and not as responses to style or genre shifts in intermedial performance and theatre.

The approaches I have developed reflect the multidisciplinary nature of my artistic and research practice as a whole and operate within broader and long-standing tendencies in artistic explorations of intermediality, in their attempts to shape new practices and procedures that actively 'fall between media', rather than supporting genre or medium-specific conventions and categorisations (See Higgins, 2001). This intermedial bias within my practice has led me to favour forms and structures of performance that might begin to engage the complex interrelatedness of our social behaviour and experience, and to explore ways in which that interrelatedness might be manifest precisely through an overt and artificial isolation of particular threads of that experience across visibly distinct mechanisms of mediatisation. These approaches have resulted from my considerations of mechanisms of audience reception that are directly enabled by the structured delivery of performative material across various media, and of how such simultaneous yet distinct threads of media might 'intermingle like liquids that colour each other' to shape a new whole (Lavender, 2002, p. 187), as well as of the

relationships and refreshed perspectives that might evolve through the resulting immersion in the 'here and now' of an unfolding performance event.²³

My development of the structures and procedures of mediation addressed here, as described and contextualised above, has been driven by my ongoing consideration of new approaches to composition, in parallel with my realisation of performative material and the encounter of that material by its audience as two separate and potentially independent mechanisms whose links, as I specifically structure and animate them, might then define the form and aesthetic event of the work. In what follows I detail and articulate these intermedial procedures, providing a focused description of selected instances and outcomes of the twin threads of enquiry as manifest within four key phases, detailed here to exemplify the progressive range and development of the body of the published works submitted for examination.

²³ My use of the term 'immersion' here recalls Oliver Grau's definition, as being characterised by both diminished distance from, and increased experiential involvement in, the material event of presentation (See Grau, 2002).

Phase One: *The first five miles* (1998)

'...a perfect PA...'²⁴

The full prerecorded broadcast audio elements of *The first five miles* (1998) are available on DISC 1 of the two-disc set of supporting documentation included to exemplify this first phase of my enquiry, as an unedited audio CD copy of one of the original broadcast master tapes. The gaps within this prerecorded composition where Pearson's four absent texts were included live in performance can be found in this CD copy at: 00:25:30-00:33:00, 00:38:10-00:42:00, 00:44:40-00:46:10 and 01:00:00-01:03:10. DISC 2 of this set includes additional visual and diagrammatic material generated across this work's process, and referenced within the text below.

Please open the *Phase One: The first five miles* documentation disc set, and listen to the stereo audio composition recorded on DISC 1, before continuing to read the text of this section. The use of headphones is recommended.

At 9:00pm on Sunday 23rd August 1998, Mike Pearson and I began a five-mile walk across the open hilltop and high pasture of Mynydd Bach, above the village of Trefenter in West Wales. Pearson had costumed himself in the top hat, coat and gaiters of an early nineteenth-century country gentleman. He also wore a short-range radio-microphone headset and carried a powerful battery-powered industrial fluorescent lantern, which highlighted our movements and illuminated the ground immediately around us. I carried an array of two-way radio equipment mounted on a backpack: including a receiver to pick up the signal from Pearson's live microphone as he walked beside me, a larger transmitter to rebroadcast it across the hillside to an outside-broadcast van parked on the hill's peak – from where Pearson's voice would be transmitted via live satellite link to the studio of Radio Ceredigion twelve miles away in

²⁴ A phrase taken from my contemporaneous descriptions of the structured use of radio broadcast technology that I employed, as a reimagined 'public address' sound system, to combine and deliver the audio elements of the located landscape work *The first five miles* (1998).

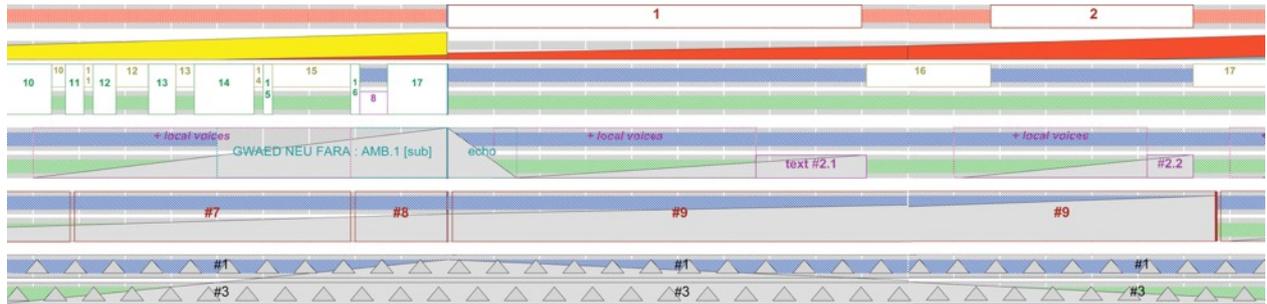
Aberystwyth, to be combined with the work's prerecorded sound elements and rebroadcast over an area fifty miles in radius from where we currently walked – and various other receivers and transmitters allowing me to communicate with the van and studio, and to access the resulting broadcast soundwork as a whole. For the next five miles we walked side by side, periodically encountering small groups of people who had ventured out into the dark landscape to meet us – either peering out from the high fidelity sound bubble of their broadcast-filled cars, or standing out in the open with the headphones of their personal FM radios pressed tightly to their ears. Over the following seventy minutes, at designated points, cued by my hand signals as we walked, Pearson spoke live the four texts that completed the complex bilingual radio work that we had subtitled *Rhyfel y Sais Bach [The War of the Little Englishman]*, an exploration of the story of Augustus Brackenbury, his purchase of 850 acres of common moorland from the Enclosure Commissioners in 1820, the subsequent enclosure riots, and the frustration by local inhabitants of his repeated attempts to build houses on the land. It referred to a critical period in the history of the landscape and community amongst which we now walked. Through these live texts, and in contrast to the poetic and narrative tone of his writing for the prerecorded voices of the broadcast, Pearson delivered an edited selection of first-person statements taken from the testimony of Brackenbury himself. The liveness and more informal delivery of these four texts provided a clear contrast with the precisely positioned studio quality recordings combined within the prerecorded broadcast audio as a whole. This rendered our presence and actions within the open landscape readily audible by capturing the sounds of Pearson's breathing and physical exertions as he walked and talked, as well as the wind and other open ambient sound qualities of our location.



Detail from the ground plan of *The first five miles* (1998) [Image: Mike Brookes, 1998]

From its inception, I intended the form of *The first five miles* (1998) to propose new approaches to the activation of culturally resonant material in situ, thereby allowing the work's content to be developed within and amongst the landscape and community for whom that material might have most resonant significance. But also, and more importantly here, I intended that proposition to open up new possibilities for the located delivery of such material as performance, positing a reconsideration of the work's theatrical elements and intentions to shape a propositional theatre stage reimagined at the scale of the landscape that it addressed. The performed route is detailed in the documentation included here by reproductions of two original versions of my process ground plan drawing for the work [see *The first five miles*, DISC 2, files: *01-ground-plan.pdf* and *02-blueprint.pdf*] and contemporaneously scanned reproductions of a series of 35mm colour slides through which I recorded progressive views along that route at fifth-of-a-mile intervals [see *The first five miles*, DISC 2, folder: *03-slides*]. It marked a linear five-mile journey across the land whose history the narrative content of the work would directly explore. Our performed act of walking, as well as its implicit invitation to be witnessed, located and juxtaposed our address to that material within the actuality of its landscape in the present.

In this particular instance, at the origins of my exploratory separation and then bridging of the work's 'delivery' and 'encounter', my need to provide a familiar and immediate mechanism of live spectator access – as a bridge that could allow first-hand personal encounters with both our actions and the narrative material that we intended to deliver, at both proximity and distance – had led me to focus on the possibilities allowed by the work's mediatization and primary delivery as audio. The structured mechanism of short-range, long-range and satellite radio broadcast technology that I constructed to define the form and functioning of *The first five miles* (1998) was specifically conceived to allow uncompromised full quality stereo audio access, as an open portal onto the reality of our physical journey and the work's located narrative content, from wherever and however its audience might choose to engage it, while remaining otherwise inaudible to all others. It was also conceived to shape that mechanism into a form that necessitated no physical infrastructure to be installed or imposed at site, save for the equipment that we personally carried and a single outside-broadcast vehicle.



Detail from the aural score of *The first five miles* (1998) [Image: Mike Brookes, 1998]

The resulting broadcast sound work combined Pearson’s live text delivery from the hill top as we walked it with prerecorded dramatic narrations in Welsh and English, recorded interview and song extracts, orchestrated ambient sound loops and musical underscoring [see *The first five miles*, DISC 1]. As evidenced by the copies of my original aural score for the work, from which the broadcast audio was directly engineered and mastered [see *The first five miles*, DISC 2, files: *04-sound-map-pages.pdf* and *05-sound-map-full.pdf*], these elements were both conceptually and compositionally structured across eight separate tracks of activity, arranged into four continuously and concurrently active stereo pairs, with each individual audio element being positioned both temporally and spatially within the mix. Precisely scored arrangements allowed overlapping Welsh and English speaking voices, for example, when separated spatially across opposing stereo channels, to be layered and run concurrently, rather than simply consecutively sequenced [see 00:09:30-00:11:30 of *The first five miles*, DISC 1 audio recording for an example of this layering; the use of headphones is recommended]. This allowed listeners to shift their engagement between both. This exploratory proposition initiated spatially biased procedures for the layering and composition of mediatised aural material that I have since repeatedly reengaged and reexamined, and which have ultimately informed much of my subsequent work across the body of research detailed in this submission.

Phase Two: *Carrying Lyn* (2001)

'...we will enable a number of things to happen simultaneously and provide a telescope for looking...'²⁵

A prototype interactive DVD-ROM document combining and re-presenting all the mediated material made available within my live assemblage of *Carrying Lyn* (2001) has been included as DISC 1 of the two-disc set of supporting documentation for this second phase of my enquiry. DISC 2 of this set includes elements of photographic and video material generated within the performance of this work itself.

Please open the *Phase Two: Carrying Lyn* documentation disc set, and view the DVD-ROM document contained on DISC 1, before continuing to read the text of this section. To launch the document simply insert the disc into your computer, open the disc in file or folder view, and open the file named *open for Mac OS X* or *open for Windows PC* as appropriate.

On Saturday June 2nd 2001 – a day that also filled the city of Cardiff with supporters gathered for a Wales versus Poland soccer international – a team of four suited men (Paul Jeff, Richard Morgan, Mike Pearson and John Rowley) carried disabled transsexual performer Lyn Levett, who had chosen to wear a bright red dress, across the centre of the city. Twice. The first journey, leaving Cardiff's crowded Central Station at noon and arriving at Chapter Art Centre two and a half hours later, manifested a direct performative intervention into the city's social space, met and experienced primarily by passers-by 'en passant'. The second journey, beginning at 7:40pm that same day, retraced the earlier task and route exactly; through the streets of a city centre now already changed – in both character and use – with the shift from daytime to night.

²⁵ A conversational statement of my formal intention within the multi-site city work *Polis* (2001), subsequently quoted by Pearson (Pearson, 2007, p. 18).

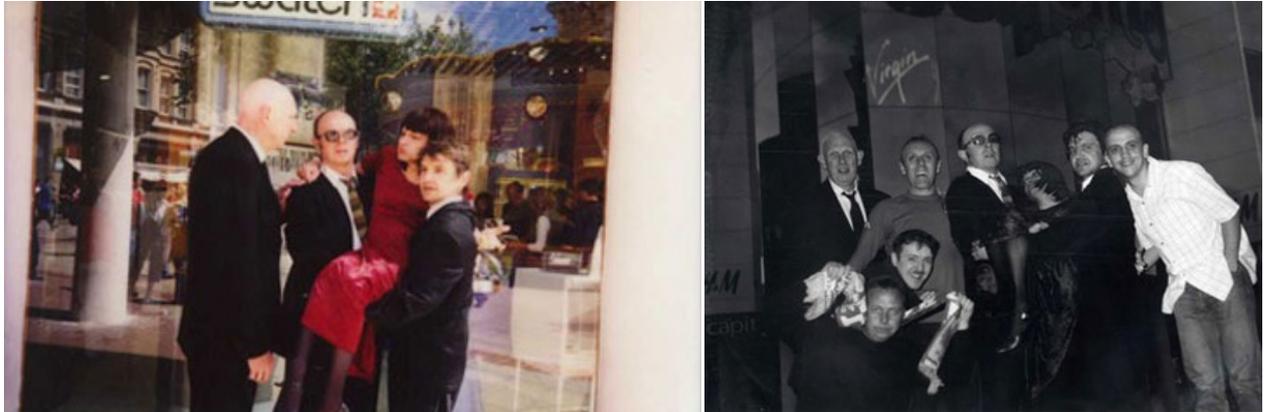
The formal and procedural structures I proposed within the event of *Carrying Lyn* (2001) – including the generation of media traces within the act of the work, the physical movement of those traces across the city during the event itself, and my purposeful assemblage of them during the performance – expand directly upon my conceptual separation of the work’s delivery and encounter initiated within *The first five miles* (1998) and the intermediate works *The man who ate his boots* (1998),²⁶ *Body of evidence* (1998),²⁷ and *Like a Pelican in the wilderness [but it will turn out wrong]* (2000).²⁸ In this work I focused on the construction of a bridging mechanism that would allow distinctly framed encounters by two separate audiences in different places – one rooted in a passing but direct proximity to the action and the second in more formal and detached spectatorship at distance – while locating the work within the broader landscape of the city for both. This focus reflected our intended expansion of the event beyond the direct act of its local intervention into a multi-site work, operating at the scale of the city centre it traversed, that might also support more sustained and reflective considerations of both our direct act of intervention and the city itself. More specifically, it developed from our decision to include access for an audience gathered within Chapter’s studio theatre space, where both journeys would ultimately combine and complete. Most importantly, my development of the bridging mechanism shaped to consolidate the work’s elements also began a conscious expansion of procedures through which we might explore

²⁶ *The man who ate his boots* (1998) reconsidered aspects of the ambient aural experience of *The first five miles* (1998) within a studio environment. Pearson performed a four-part monologue live amongst the informally gathered crowd of a promenade audience. The aural architecture that I constructed for the work filled the studio with a driving ambient sound work that made it impossible to engage with Pearson’s spoken text acoustically, yet simultaneously it provided the direct and intimate personal delivery of Pearson’s voice to each spectator individually, via a short-range radio link and the personal headsets of an infrared audio loop.

²⁷ *Body of evidence* (1998) located Pearson’s monologue *Blood* – a frank personal examination of the facts and evidence surrounding the brutal murder of Lynette White, a young Cardiff prostitute, in her James Street flat on Valentine’s Day 1988 – directly within the locale environs of White’s murder. At 10.00pm on Friday 2nd October Pearson and I drove into a vacant car park off James Street in the Butetown area of Cardiff Docks, where an audience had gathered, and stepped out of the car. Pearson, wearing a headset radio microphone, discretely delivered the text in the light provided by the car’s headlights. I made his voice specifically and intimately audible to the previously gathered audience as it crowded around the open car, via a short-range radio link through the car’s built-in hi-fi.

²⁸ *Like a pelican in the wilderness [but it will turn out wrong]* (2000) proposed a performed assemblage of video and audio recordings of my burning of the car in *But it will turn out wrong* (2000), combined with live readings of the statements and descriptions of those who had been present, as a new studio work.

located performance as a field of activity and behaviours, rather than simply as a moment or object of presentation and scrutiny.



Polaroids generated during *Carrying Lyn* (2001), by Jeff, on Queen Street, at 13:00 and 20:40

The resulting structural proposition subdivided the carriers' journey into ten predetermined legs, with each to be undertaken within a specifically scheduled ten-minute period regardless of distance and informally recorded by a single ten-minute camcorder video [complete remastered copies of the resulting videos are included within the supporting documentation; see *Carrying Lyn*, DISC 2, folder: *01-videos*]. These ten legs were separated by five-minute pauses, again at exactly predetermined times and locations, where each pause was recorded by a single group Polaroid photograph [scanned copies of these are also included; see *Carrying Lyn*, DISC 2, folder: *02-polaroids*]. In addition to those directly engaged in the act of carrying, this structure incorporated a team of cycle couriers on the second journey who could criss-cross the city, passing the resulting media objects from hand to hand, as required. This structure necessitated that I conceive and construct a new form of studio environment within Chapter's theatre space, for the presentation and encounter of the unfolding work and its accumulating fragmentary mediated traces. This was an environment where the studio audience and I could navigate and perform the parallel room event that would form the hub and culminating gathering point for the wider work as a whole. This environment provided the context and social forum within which, from 8pm that evening, I simultaneously constructed and presented possible versions of both journeys, in real time, from the available documentation: mixing video and audio recordings from the first

journey with footage from the second couriered to me directly from the street, and juxtaposing this with the still images captured on Polaroid and a series of recordings of Pearson's short textual reflections on the contemporary city. My performed reconstruction followed the structure and schedule of the street action's journey exactly, unfolding with a constant twenty minute time delay – during which time each ten-minute leg of the carry was completed and filmed, and the tape then handed to a waiting cycle courier who carried and delivered it into my hand, a delay that was both revealed and confounded by the eventual arrival of the rest of the group within the room of the studio.



Polaroids generated during *Carrying Lyn* (2001), by Jeff, on Cowbridge Rd East, at 13:45 and 21:25

The studio environment I constructed manifested a further development of my approach to the spatial separation of media playback, physically assigning the delivery of various elements to separate sources within the room of this assemblage, allowing multiple layers of audio and video material to be run simultaneously and navigated simply through the choices and spatial movements of individual spectators. Importantly, it was here that I first conceived the procedures of tabletop event mapping and overtly visible media use that would prove fundamental to my construction of subsequent multi-site and composite-narrative studio works. In this case I installed a single ten-metre by one-metre table running centrally down the middle of the otherwise empty room, around which the audience and I gathered and focused our navigation of the work. This tabletop visibly supported the playback and monitoring equipment that I used to distribute the assembled media fragments to projection areas and suspended speaker points around the perimeter of the room, while also positioning my performed reactivation of those

fragments firmly within the act of the work itself [fragmentary views of this table were captured in the performer's final video on returning to the studio on completion of their journey, see *Carrying Lyn*, DISC 2, folder: 01-videos, file: 10b-night[21.55-22.05].mp4]. Equally significantly, the table also supported my eight-metre long timeline and structural map of the event. This map diagrammatically outlined the sequence, locations and times through which both the street and room events were travelling, while also providing labelled areas within its progression where the accumulating media objects could be placed, physically located, read and revisited at will. This information readily allowed audience members to read both back and forwards along its unfolding sequence, even to the extent that they were able to anticipate the moment of the ultimate arrival of the carriers and chose to make their way out to the front of the building to greet them.

The interactive DVD-ROM document of the work included here [see *Carrying Lyn*, DISC 1] contains all the information and mediated material that I accumulated along that tabletop. It manifests my contemporaneous explorations of how I might re-engage the bridging function and media behaviours I employed within our performance of *Carrying Lynn* (2001) to provide possible first-hand encounters with the work for additional audiences at other times and places through a direct re-presentation of the fragments of material that our actions had generated.²⁹ This document incorporates only those elements that were present within the duration of my assemblage, and it includes those elements in their entirety.

Additionally, aspects of the route and movement of the street action are further detailed here by the inclusion of fragments of CCTV surveillance footage [see *Carrying Lyn*, DISC 2, file: 03-cctv.mp4]. This footage was not used or intended for presentation within the event itself, but was gathered in collaboration with BBC Wales and South Wales Police as an exploratory element of additional documentation.³⁰ Its generation

²⁹ I produced the prototype DVD-ROM document of *Carrying Lyn* in 2004, and first presented it to the AHRC-funded *PARIP (Practice As Research In Performance) International Conference*, hosted by Leeds University, in July 2005 – along with a short series of my reflective notes on the process and intentions of documentation, which were subsequently referenced and presented within the AHRC-funded joint Exeter and Stanford University *Performing Presence* research project at Exeter University in March 2006, and within the book chapter *y si el acontecimiento somos nosotros (what if what is happening is us)* (Brookes and Casado, 2014, pp. 39-41).

³⁰ Fragments of this surveillance footage were incorporated into the BBC Wales feature article on *Carrying Lyn* (2001), produced and broadcast within their arts and culture series *Double Yellow*, in June 2001.

initiated a consideration of CCTV surveillance use in public space that would inform my expanded use of informal video documentation within subsequent multi-site city works such as *Polis* (2001) and *Metropolitan Motions* (2002),³¹ as well as the video content of future composite-narrative works such as *Rain dogs* (2002),³² *Who are you looking at?* (2004) and *There's someone in the house* (2004).

³¹ *Metropolitan Motions* (2002) was developed and realised in collaboration with Prof Heike Roms, and postgraduate students of the Goethe University Frankfurt.

³² *Rain dogs* (2002) was created in collaboration with playwright and director Ed Thomas. The work was performed live by Mike Pearson, Ed Thomas and I, but incorporated fragments of prerecorded material produced with ten male actors who then only appeared on video. This material included five sections of unedited CCTV surveillance footage from the streets of central Cardiff, generated by South Wales Police. Each section recorded CCTV surveillance views of one of those individual actors stood still amongst the flow of pedestrian and traffic movements within a separate city centre location.

Phase Three: *There's someone in the house* (2004)

'...digital thinking realised with string and plastic cups...'³³

A DVD copy of an unedited single-camera archive recording of the studio event of *There's someone in the house* (2004) has been included as DISC 1, within the two-disc set of the supporting documentation selected to exemplify this third phase of my enquiry. DISC 2 of this set includes unedited copies of the original video fragments and Polaroid images produced by the performers within their performance of this work itself.

Please open the *Phase Three: There's someone in the house* documentation disc set, and view the DVD video document contained on DISC 1, before continuing to read the text of this section. Moments within this footage when media fragments are delivered into the studio space have been chapter marked within this DVD.

On September 12th 2004 Mike Pearson and I presented *There's someone in the house* (2004) within the studio and adjacent spaces of the Phoenix Arts Centre in Exeter.³⁴ The work had been commissioned for Exeter University's *site/sight: source/resource* symposium and was described within the symposium's publicity as:

[...] the latest in a series of multi-site performances created by Mike Pearson and Mike Brookes [...] that employ simple technologies to bring other times and places to a given location. As a stream of material is constantly returned to a room rendered porous so a picture is built of events that happened 'just there', 'just now' [...] The work challenges notions of site as a singular entity,

³³ Taken from my statements on the work *Something happening / something happening nearby* (2009); as previously cited in footnote 12.

³⁴ The work had been conceived under the full working title *There's someone in the house, there's someone in the house, oh my god, there's someone in the house* – taken from a four line rhyme that I had written in my initial notes – but the title was ultimately abbreviated in the work's publicity.

of documentation as a post-event phenomenon and of co-presence as a definition of performance (Exeter University, 2004).

Outside the studio two performers (Paul Jeff and John Rowley) manhandled a passive third performer (Steve Robins) upward through a series of public and secluded spaces within the building. Their journey began as they drove into the centre's public car park and ended, thirty minutes later, on a section of its roof. Across that journey they were tasked with creating six short performance sequences which they themselves also recorded, producing two minutes of video footage [see *There's someone in the house*, DISC 2, folder: *01-videos*] and a single Polaroid photograph [see *There's someone in the house*, DISC 2, folder: *02-polaroids*] during each. Jeff then immediately delivered the resulting tape and Polaroid to me within the closed studio theatre space around which their actions circulated, entering to place new material in my hand at five-minute intervals, before returning to his colleagues to continue their task. Within the studio – where I, Pearson and the audience were gathered around a single eight-metre long table on which all the media fragments of the work were both mapped and accumulated – I replayed these traces, of what had just happened, in juxtaposition with texts read by Pearson directly from the table, fragmentary live conversations with the performers via walkie-talkie, ambient sound loops and an informal real-time tracking video detailing the ground and floor surfaces over which the performers where journeying that I had walked and recorded earlier that same day [see *There's someone in the house*, DISC 2, folder: *01-videos*, file: *00-tracking-base.mp4*].



Polaroids generated during *There's someone in the house* (2004), by performers Jeff and Rowley

Within this work I presented specifically focused developments of the strategies of mediation and assemblage that I had initiated within *Carrying Lyn* (2001) and the later work *Polis* (2001).³⁵ Through its focus on the structured combination of distinct threads and forms of performative material – threads also generated at distinct times and places – the work built directly on strategies that I had originally shaped to enable my previous multi-site explorations of how performance might take shape and then function as a field of interrelated activity across a social landscape, and of how documentation itself might be folded back into the dramaturgy of such events and allow reconsiderations of presence, absence and liveness in our understandings of performance. Yet here the focus of those strategies shifted, from the bridging of dispersed moments of located performance, to a consideration of how such diverse performative elements might be generated and combined within the construction of a composite-narrative studio performance work exclusively. My formal consolidation of the procedures of mediation evident in *There's someone in the house* (2004), and my extended employment of them to create performative material and construct mechanisms for the delivery and encounter of that material, exemplify the ongoing development of my approaches across the composite-narrative studio theatre works in this third phase of my enquiry. These include *Rain dogs* (2002) and *Who are you looking at?* (2004),³⁶ both of which were realised in Cardiff in collaboration with playwright Ed Thomas over the previous two years. The modes of performance visible within this work would also then be further explored, with an increasing focus on my layered assemblage of multiple live threads of mediated material, within subsequent composite studio works such as *Something*

³⁵ *Polis* (2001) was a large-scale three-hour performance event built upon the structured encounter of twenty-five performance fragments, all realised across the centre of the city of Cardiff within the same three-hour time period. The primary threads of material were provided by documentary traces of these twenty-five acts, filmed and recorded by small groups of spectators who were taken to the encounter with each isolated fragment by guided taxi – material that was then re-presented and combined within the room of a developing studio event. The resulting studio environment assembled multiple projection and video monitoring, with maps of routes and locations, texts, Polaroid photographs, ambient sound samples, and the accumulation of artefacts and traces generated through the performers' activities and the spectators' encounters with them.

³⁶ *Who are you looking at?* (2004) was performed live by Pearson, Thomas and I, yet built on core material produced in collaboration with five young female performers – each of whom documented 3 minutes within a particular public city centre location, on the same evening, through video footage of each location from three simultaneous and expanding points of view: [1] from a hidden camera on the performer themselves; [2] from a hidden camera, recording their movements, carried by a shadowing colleague; and [3] a wider locating shot taken from within a tracking car.

happening / something happening nearby (2009).³⁷ Most significantly, the work applied strategies of mediation and composition that I had shaped to allow my application of them not only as mechanisms through which remote or dispersed performative acts might be specifically or additionally encountered, but as strategies for performance itself. That is to say, they served as a set of performative procedures through which we might create new theatre works as purposeful assemblages of mediatised fragments of narrative or poetic material generated elsewhere at other times, and through which combinations of live and recorded material might be layered and orchestrated within the dramaturgy of such works in the creation of performative meaning.

My continued engagement with aspects of timeline and material mapping with the works of this phase, in this case across a purpose-built tabletop that then became both a structural and material focal point within the studio event of these works, can also be plainly seen here. The archive footage of the event included within this phase's supporting documentation [see *There's someone in the house*, DISC 1] records views of the physical arrangement of that table within the space of *There's someone in the house* (2004), as well as of our progressive use of it to structure both our performance and the audience's experience of the work as a whole. This footage captures the arrival of mediatised fragments at the table, my reactivation of that material, our progression along the length and timeline map supported by the table's surface, and the direct engagement by both Pearson and the audience of material positioned within that map. Yet here the fragments of performative material being generated outside the studio are elements of an evolving work of theatre that only exists within the room of its own unfolding assemblage. Here the room event is *the* event, where the mediatised fragments of actions being performed elsewhere, and then gathered together within our 'porous' studio space, have now been conceived and realised specifically to provide aspects of the material needed to complete that studio event. This material has no

³⁷ *Something happening / something happening nearby* (2009) was commissioned by Exeter University's culminating symposium of the AHRC-funded, joint Exeter and Stanford University *Performing Presence* research project in 2009. The work combined, within an otherwise open studio space, multiple live video and audio feeds from activities happening in dispersed locations within and around the building. These live media feeds were delivered to the studio space via connecting cables - which ran through doorways, along corridors, and up and down stairwells - between the studio and each individual site of activity. This arrangement allowed spectators to follow individual cable runs through the building to discover the isolated source of each media feed. Aspects of the work were developed in collaboration with Spanish artist Rosa Casado.

necessary meaning or purpose external to that event, and is now performed and intended solely for the singular audience engaged within its assemblage.

In the works that mark this phase of my enquiry an array of site-specific acts were performed and mediated, then reactivated within the live assemblage of a studio theatre work. The work itself was realised through the performance and live manipulation of spoken text in combination and juxtaposition with video and audio material generated through those previously performed acts. This led to my exploratory application of strategies of remediation as a mode and medium for the performance and delivery of located material within an intermedial theatre work,³⁸ which initiated the final phase of the enquiry submitted here. Across this final phase I developed behaviours of remediation through which the performance, delivery of and encounter with disparate and dispersed theatrical material might be conflated both 'through' and 'as' a single intermedial performance mechanism. Through this I ultimately realised the intermedial infrastructure that enabled and formally defined our most recent large-scale located theatre production *Coriolan/us* (2012).

³⁸ My use of the term 'remediation' considers procedures through which one medium is incorporated or represented in another, even to the extent that the 'older' media might be absorbed or refashioned entirely within the 'new'. Such acts of remediation, however, might also activate and present refashioned media 'in a space whose discontinuities, like those of collage and photomontage, are clearly visible'; a space in which 'the new medium remains dependent on the older one in acknowledged or unacknowledged ways' (Bolter and Grusin, 2000, p. 47).

Phase Four: *Coriolanus* (2012)

'...a landscape with a lid...'³⁹

A full-length DVD record of the mediated elements of *Coriolanus* (2012), combining the audience's live audio headphone mix with both live video screen mixes from a single performance, is included as DISC 1 within the two-disc set of supporting documentation for this final phase of my enquiry. DISC 2 of this set includes video footage from an initial on-site interview with Pearson and I, and a series of rehearsal and production stills which further detail aspects of the physical environment and performance of the work.

Please open the *Phase Four: Coriolanus* documentation disc set, and view the DVD video document contained on DISC 1, before continuing to read the text of this section. The beginning of each individual scene of the work has been chapter marked within this DVD.

In 2011, following our located production of Aeschylus' *The Persians* (2010) in a Ministry of Defence (MoD) training village deep within the landscape of the Brecon Beacons,⁴⁰ Mike Pearson and I were commissioned by National Theatre Wales (NTW) and the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) to direct a site-specific production of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, to be performed in South Wales as part of the *World*

³⁹ A phrase that I used to describe the scale and nature of the site that I had imagined for our staging of *Coriolanus*, in an early interview filmed by Pete Telfer of Culture Colony, and which I later repeated in my programme notes for the production. Extracts from the original interview footage are included with this submission's supporting documentation [see *Coriolanus*, DISC 2, file: 01-interview.mp4].

⁴⁰ *The Persians* (2010) was commissioned and produced by National Theatre Wales, as part of the company's inaugural season of 2010. The work delivered a specifically commissioned new English translation (by Kaite O'Reilly) of Aeschylus' text staged within the replica village of the FIBUA (Fighting In Built Up Areas) training site of the MoD SENTA range at Sennybridge in Wales. The work incorporated live performance, live camera feeds, live mediations of the spoken text, additional prerecorded performers made present via video playback and a musical underscore, with aspects of the site and its surrounding landscape.

Shakespeare Festival during *London 2012*. The resulting large-scale promenade theatre work was realised within a fifty-metre by ninety-metre decommissioned WW2 aircraft hangar on the airfields of RAF St Athan in South Wales in August 2012. My programme notes for the production included the following statement:

In our imaginings, from the inception of this work, *Coriolan/us* was always going to unfold amongst a crowd, as it moved and flowed around the open public space of this event. Act following act, as one thing leads to another, the rolling consequences of our choices and reactions accumulating as they ripple on through the body and structure of a social forum constituted by all those present. And it was always going to happen at scale. A large open place where that crowd was free to gather and move as it needed to. Where scenes and incidents could be placed, constructed, and walked to – finding and revealing themselves within a ‘field’ of activity, where ideas and individuals might meet and locate themselves in actuality. A genuinely public space, large enough, and open enough, for the things that happen here amongst us to be seen and read against those happening over there. All viewed within the specific ‘landscape’ of a work that takes shape around us (Brookes, 2012).

The staging that ultimately resulted from these imaginings shaped a landscape of both open public areas and enclosed interior spaces within the environment of the hangar – which the performers would inhabit, walk between or drive to. The small number of interior private spaces called for within the narrative of the text were provided by caravans, informally dispersed across the open space contained under the hangar’s vast single-span cast cement ceiling [see, for example, images 44-49 included within *Coriolan/us*, DISC 2, folder: *02-images*]. In their delivery of the text the performers were free to move amongst the gathered crowds of audience, meet and talk within their cars and retreat into the caravans as necessary [see images 19-22 and 29-34 within *Coriolan/us*, DISC 2, folder: *02-images*]. They were also directed to initiate each new scene immediately on completion of the last, regardless of their physical distance from the audience or each other, to sustain a continual flow of filmic ‘cuts’ from scene to scene, as well as between their spatial activation of one physical area of the hangar and another. Yet, unsupported, within the physical conditions naturally provided by the

hangar, these performative behaviours would not only have been largely inaccessible to the audience, but would also have been practically impossible to perform. Not only were the distances vast and the interiors isolated, but the acoustic resonance of the architecture and cement surfaces of the hangar made any controlled broadcast of acoustic or amplified sound into the space itself impractical.

Within the physical and environmental realities of the hangar, these desired modes of performative and spatial behaviour – on which our intentions for *Coriolan/us* (2012) ultimately relied – were realised within a parallel intermedial infrastructure that not only facilitated the intended forms of encounter with the performed work by its audience, but also facilitated the performance of the work itself. My development of that infrastructure, and of the architectures and behaviours of mediation that shaped it, drew directly on my explorations of both the dramaturgical composition of performed material and the formal structuring of the public event of that performance through purpose-built procedures of mediation, as I had developed them across the full arc of the enquiry detailed in this submission.



Still from the twin live camera feeds generated within Act 1 Scene 9 of *Coriolan/us* (2012)

The staging structures of *Coriolan/us* (2012) offer a culmination of my considerations of how such procedures of mediation might be constituted as both a mode and medium for performance itself, while simultaneously also providing the mechanism through and within which that performance is then encountered. To facilitate my structuring of these procedures, and the intermedial infrastructure within which they would operate, I provided each performer with a discrete radio microphone that would

capture even the most intimate qualities of their voices and feed them into the audio mix of the work as a whole. And importantly, I also provided them each with live in-ear monitoring, of the entire ensemble's spoken text, which allowed them to converse directly and intimately with each other irrespective of their physical proximity. Their mediated voices were then mixed with any additional necessary sound effects and composed elements of underscoring. This precisely controlled stereo audio mix was then delivered directly to each spectator individually via high-quality personal wireless headphones, providing spectators with uncompromised access to the work's audio in its entirety, regardless of their position within the hangar or their proximity to the action.



Still from the twin live camera feeds generated within Act 2 Scene 3 of *Coriolanus* (2012)

In parallel to this I conceived and integrated a visual surveillance structure of eleven live cameras: including two informal handheld cameras operated by crews embedded in the action of the performance, two suspended remote controlled cameras that moved above the action and audience on cable tracks installed within the roof, and seven fixed CCTV cameras that monitored physically inaccessible areas such as the interiors of the caravans. These camera feeds were mixed live into two continuous and complementary large black and white video feeds that were then projected on to a pair of twin screens hung high in the hangar's ceiling. Again, this provided live visual access to details of the currently active scene of the work from anywhere within the hangar, regardless of how distant or physically inaccessible that scene might be. Significantly, they also provided live visual images that revealed the audience's own presence and implicit role within both the action and its remediation.

This infrastructure, and the operational procedures that I defined for its individual components, combined the work's practical needs and its performative functions within a single mechanism of interconnected tasks and behaviours. Ultimately, the event of *Coriolan/us* (2012) existed exclusively within this mechanism, within which the performers, the performative material of the work and the audience all operated and met. Through its construction and activation the work found both a form and functionality: as a bridge between the fragile reality of our actions and voices within the vast environment of the hangar, and our intentions and aspirations for the audience's encounter and experience of the work. Perhaps most significantly here, for the first time within this enquiry, that form and functionality placed us all – performers, technical and support crew, and audience – on that bridge, as the only position from which all aspects of the event became both possible and accessible.

Conclusion

Over the fifteen-year period of this enquiry I have explored and developed new approaches to, and practices within, located performance making, which I have then applied and presented through the realisation of a substantial body of professional performance works which have been extensively discussed in scholarly writings.⁴¹ The development of this enquiry through the work of Pearson/Brookes, and across the four phases of that work detailed here, has resulted in a sustained exploration of how critical and propositional approaches to mediation can generate new forms of located performance and its audience reception. Through developing these approaches I have reimagined located performance as a field of performative activity across multiple sites simultaneously, and proposed practices through which such performances can be both conceived and constructed as assemblages of mediatised fragments generated at dispersed times and places. The bridging practices I have developed to shape the audience encounters inherent to these located and multisite works have, in turn, facilitated my creation of porous studio environments as sites of interplay between live performance and mediated threads of located performative material being generated elsewhere. The research has ultimately enabled my construction of purpose-built procedures of live remediation that have generated new strategies for the located staging of Shakespeare's text within our production of *Coriolanus* (2012), and opened up exploration of how the bridging mechanisms themselves can provide an active and inclusive site for both performance and its encounter, in which procedures of mediation and assemblage can provide both a mode and medium for live performance itself. My development and application of these approaches has allowed me to structure a series of new and propositional procedures for located performance, through which I have shaped a consistently distinctive contribution to the field. The resulting events have proposed additional and alternative approaches to both the construction and functioning of performance in public space. Approaches that, as distinct from the media enabled devising practices of theatre companies such as The Wooster Group, or the increasingly interactive and technology-led participatory works of contemporaries such as Blast Theory, have allowed me to focus on the creation of discursive live performative

⁴¹ See, for example: Roms (2004; 2008), Rabey (2006), Pearson (2007; 2010; 2011), Wilkie (2008), Bennett and Sanders (2013), Kear (2013), Primavesi (2013) and Turner (2014).

situations, through specifically structured engagements with integrated aspects of their acts and activation in context.

The focus that I and Mike Pearson have sustained on the location and functioning of these works within the cultural and social landscape of South Wales has allowed this enquiry to develop an increasingly detailed understanding of how such works might operate within the specifics of that context. The significance of this has been recognised by the newly formed National Theatre Wales (NTW) who commissioned *The Persians* (2010) for its inaugural season and *Coriolan/us* (2012) two years later. The influence of our work is further apparent in the company's wider stated aspirations. In the article 'Rapid Response', published in the *New Welsh Review* in 2009, NTW's artistic director John E. McGrath outlined his plans for an inaugural year of site-specific projects across which he hoped to 'explore the land through theatre, and the theatre through the land', stating that 'each piece will be developed out of, and in response to, its location' (McGrath, 2009). This statement offers a clear recognition of the achievements and potential of the approaches to site-specific performance rooted in Wales, and of the contribution afforded by this research to NTW's commitment to located and site-specific theatre production. It also articulates the company's desire to incorporate and apply the understandings of located theatre practice that I have evolved here within the development of new large-scale located mainstream theatre production practices in Wales. Indeed, our realisation of *The Persians* (2010) and our subsequent development and realisation of *Coriolan/us* (2012), have helped to establish and consolidate NTW's commitment to and exploration of located theatre practices – demonstrating both the potential and feasibility of site-specific work within NTW's portfolio of presentational practices, as a means to address diverse and dispersed audiences with challenging, innovative and participatory forms of theatre.

The continued development of my research within the on-going collaboration with NTW is now being planned across a new large-scale durational production of poet Christopher Logue's account of *The Iliad*, to be conceived and directed by Pearson and myself for presentation within the NTW programme of 2015. The research detailed within this submission has also directly informed my parallel and ongoing exploration of action-based live art intervention work, undertaken in collaboration with Spanish artist

Rosa Casado,⁴² and the approaches detailed here continue to shape my contribution and collaborations within the work of other performance companies including Earthfall, Quarantine and Untitled Projects.⁴³ Future development of my research-led live art and performance practice are now being planned for 2016, in which I will explore new and additional applications of my approaches through research into the formal and procedural possibilities provided by developments in digital broadcast and internet streaming technologies. These enquiries will further question the limits and functioning of the bridging practices I have developed across the arc of this research, and further consider the extent to which the modes of access and encounter facilitated by these practices might themselves become 'place-making'. They will explore ways in which the structures of open access and interconnection provided by these technologies, across increasing distances and scales, might themselves be constituted as sites of intervention, reflection and encounter.

⁴² My current collaboration with Rosa Casado was initiated in 2004, since when we have focused on the production of context-specific actions, gallery works and interventions into public space, under the umbrella title *Some things happen all at once, some things happen more slowly*. Our collaborative projects to date include: *Paradise 2* (2005-10), *Some things happen all at once* (2008-10), *Something happening / snapshot* (2008-present), *Something happening nearby* (2008-present), *One thing leads to another* (2009-present), *The perfect human (and the thing we do)* (2009-present), *Just a little bit of history repeating* (2010-present) and *What if everything we know is wrong?* (2011-present).

⁴³ I have collaborated periodically with the Cardiff-based dance company Earthfall since 1994, providing stage designs and mediated visual elements for many of their subsequent touring productions. I have been an associate artist and design collaborator to the Manchester-based theatre research company Quarantine since 2004, collaborating on most of the company's subsequent performance projects. I have also collaborated with director Stewart Laing, and his Glasgow-based company Untitled Projects, since 2009 – most recently contributing to the award-winning design of their theatre and installation work *Paul Bright's Confessions of a Justified Sinner* in 2013, and to their performance of Pamela Carter's play text *Slope* to live camera for both participating spectators and live web stream in 2014.

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