



Live Art UK

WEATHERING THE STORM

Live Art UK Associates Gathering 2015

Thursday 12 February 2015 11.00-17.00

Live Art UK welcomes you to its third Annual Associates Gathering, an opportunity to network and share information about activities, issues and models of best practice regarding experiential and experimental practices with presenters and producers from across the UK, and with key representatives from Higher Education, Arts Council England and other funders.

The first Associates Gathering took place at BAC, London in 2012 and looked at the idea of Live Art in 'unfamiliar places' by reflecting on the extraordinarily diverse range of contexts in which Live Art is now thriving in the UK. The second Gathering in 2013 at MAC in Birmingham was called *LIVE ART IN 2113* and was about Live Art and the future.

2015's Associates Gathering, ***WEATHERING THE STORM***, is a collaboration between Live Art UK and In Between Time and is a day of presentations and provocations on the critical, economic, environmental, social and cultural challenges we are facing and the possibilities of Live Art as a catalyst for change.

Live Art UK

Live Art UK is a national network of 24 venues, festivals and facilitators who collectively represent a range of practices and are concerned with all aspects of the development of the Live Art sector across the UK. The network works together to create new models and partnerships for the promotion of Live Art; explores new ways to increase the national and international visibility of Live Art; initiates strategies for a more sustainable future for Live Art practitioners and promoters; and aims to provide a representative voice for the Live Art Sector in the UK.

Live Art UK Members

The Arches, Arnolfini, Artsadmin, BAC, The Basement, the Bluecoat, Cambridge Junction, Chapter Arts Centre, Chelsea Theatre, Colchester Arts Centre, Contact, Compass Live Art, Fierce Festival, Forest Fringe, Hatch, hÅb, home live art, In Between Time, LIFT (London International Festival of Theatre), Live Art Development Agency, Live at LICA,]performance s p a c e [, SPILL Festival of Performance and Wunderbar. The Live Art UK network is coordinated by the Live Art Development Agency (LADA) and supported through its NPO grant from Arts Council England.

Activities

Live Art UK members work collectively and individually on a range of projects and initiatives. Between 2006 and 2008, activities included a touring programme and publication on Chinese performance, *China Live* (2006); strategic touring commissions by Joshua Sofaer and Susannah Hewlett (2006); a professional development programme for new writers or writers new to Live Art, *Writing From Live Art*.

Since 2008, Live Art UK has produced a free publication of Live Art case studies, *In Time* (2010); the groundbreaking symposium and free online publication *Getting It Out There*, in collaboration with Live at LICA (2012); a free online publication, *I See A Fake Moon Rising*, on Live Art in the public realm, in collaboration with In Between Time (2013); the free publication *Paper Stages*, in collaboration with Forest Fringe (2013); and Pacitti Company's *Think Tank Workbook* (2014).

Live Art UK Associates

Complementing the core members of Live Art UK, are over 250 invited Associates, representing a wider cross section of key presenters and producers from across the UK. The concept of the Associates is central to Live Art UK's aspiration to deepen the connections across and beyond the Live Art sector. Associates are invited to the Annual Live Art UK Associates Gathering, receive regular updates from the network and are encouraged to collaborate with Live Art UK members on specific initiatives and issues. We are delighted that so many Associates are able to join us for today's Gathering.

***WEATHERING THE STORM:* SCHEDULE**

11.00: Introductions and Welcomes

11.15: Opening Provocation

Helen Cole, Director, IBT15, Bristol International Festival

11:30: Disquiet: Artists' Panel

How are artists voicing disquiet and creating a space for today's urgent issues?

Kelli McCluskey & Steve Bull, PVI Collective (Australia)

Ria Hartley (UK)

Jordan McKenzie (UK)

Facilitated by Matt Fenton (Live Art UK member & Director of Contact Theatre)

1-2pm: Lunch

2-3.30pm: Storm: Producers' Panel

How are producers of public events working as catalysts for change?

Veronica Kaup-Hasler, Steirischer Herbst (Austria)

Skinder Hundal, New Art Exchange (UK)

Satu Herrala, Baltic Circle & Make Arts Policy (Finland)

Facilitated by Judith Knight (Live Art UK member and Director of Artsadmin)

3.30- 5pm: Aftermath: Keynote Speakers, Discussions and Closing Remarks

With special guests Guillermo Gómez-Peña (on film) and Lois Weaver.

6pm - Late opening night of IBT15, including Fujiko Nakaya's *Fog Bridge* & Nacera Belaza *Le Temps Scelle* at Arnolfini.

Live Art, potential and changing the world **A provocation for Live Art UK Associates Gathering 2015, by Mary Paterson**

At its core, art is about potential. Or, in the philosopher Brian Massumi's words, "the aesthetic has to do with the overfullness with potential of what actually happens, and the renewal that comes of it."¹ Art does not make meaning, it explodes it. Art does not tell you what to think. It inspires you to think again.

If Live Art is a strategy, rather than a medium, then this is its strategy: to think differently. Whether it takes the form of a whispered choreography of books in a library, a pop concert that never reaches its climax, or a walk through the city at night led by a teenager, Live Art intervenes in the day-to-day machinery of life. Precisely because it is 'live' – embodied instead of displayed, experienced instead of reproduced – the approach of Live Art interrupts the micro-performances of culture, and creates alternate worlds.

Often, when Live Art or its strategies are particularly effective, it is not known as Live Art anymore. Jeremy Deller's Turner Prize winning *Battle of Orgreave*, for example, is a film and an archive of the re-enactment of a bloody confrontation during the 1984 Miner's Strike. It is performative, multi-layered, self-critical, interdisciplinary, expansive; and known, simply, as 'art.' The 'bail-in' actions co-ordinated by the #ukuncut movement occupy bailed-out banks and turn them into more community-minded recipients of public funds – schools, libraries, hospitals. These protests playfully imagine an alternate world where people are prized over profit; the protests are known, simply, as 'politics.'

Sometimes, this relative anonymity can give Live Art a spurious sense of marginalisation. In fact, it is proof of the opposite. Live Art is everywhere. Each time one of its ideas is assimilated into the language of the mainstream, it's a sign of Live Art's strategic success. And it's also a spur to Live Artists to dive back into the pools of the in-between and the yet-to-be-defined, in order to invent new pockets of potential.

If there is a threat to this strategic slipperiness, this ability to disrupt meaning by swimming between established ways of thinking, it is the so-called 'experience economy'. The experience economy is capitalism's latest adventure in the conquest to commoditise and, like Live Art, it thrives on the generative potential of ideas and experience – or appears to. But of course, all of capitalism's ideas are the same idea: money. And all of its performances are the production of capital. Artists, luckily, have a wider repertoire.

To return to Massumi: "The question is to experiment with modulating complicity, to learn how to inflect [capitalism] towards other kinds of emergences which, at the limit, might be capable of composing a purely qualitative alter-economy of life-value."² Even when potential is commoditised, then, Live Art has the power to change. This is a powerful position indeed. It means that Live Art can sit in the same warm chair as capitalism (and its trailing robes of influence and control), and still imagine difference.

Like Massumi, I'm interested in a purely qualitative alter-economy of life-value. And I'm interested in any technique that opens up spaces for difference and dissent. But you don't have to share my politics to believe that Live Art can change the world; you don't even have to like any of the changes that Live Artists have made, so far. The radical potential of this loose affiliation of practices we call Live Art is simply their desire to entice you and everyone you meet into the act of thinking.

What will change? It's yet to be discovered.

^{1,2} 'Movements of Thought' Brian Massumi and Adrian Heathfield, in *No Such Thing as a Rest* Adrian Heathfield and Hugo Glendinning (Live Art Development Agency, 2013)

CONTRIBUTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

Steve Bull is an artist and co-founder of tactical media art group PVI Collective, and is head boy at CIA Studios (Centre for Interdisciplinary Arts) in Perth, Australia. Steve brings a variety of practical and tactical skills across artistic mediums on all projects and initiatives. Steve invests back into the arts sector by producing a range of initiatives, including in-progress platform events like kiss club (a quick and dirty performance club for the brave maker and curious audience), as well as workshops and curated residencies at the CIA Studios. *Steve co-curated this is the time, this is the record of the time*, a national symposium on hybrid performance, and co-curated the *now right now!* Live Art festival at PICA (Perth Institute of Contemporary Art). He has taught and delivered lectures and masterclasses across Australia, including the pvi keynote lecture *allowed out to play: public space as performance space* for the Nextwave Festival, Melbourne, Australia. Steve is based in Perth with PVI Collective who are principal company in residence at CIA Studios. www.pvicollective.com

Matt Fenton is Artistic Director/Chief Executive at Contact, a leading national arts venue based in Manchester that places young people's leadership at the heart of the organisation. Contact presents a diverse public programme of contemporary theatre, live art, dance, spoken word, music and cabaret, alongside a wealth of young people's creative and leadership activity. In 2013/14, Contact won the UK Theatre Award for Promotion of Diversity, the Co-Op Respect Award for Inclusive Venue of the Year, and the Lever Prize for business and the arts. Matt is a theatre director and dramaturg. Posts held include Head of Theatre and Dance at Bath Institute for Contemporary Interdisciplinary Arts (ICIA), Director of Nuffield Theatre Lancaster and Live at LICA, and Artistic Director/Chief Executive at Contact (since 2013). As a theatre director, Matt worked most recently with *Imitating the Dog*, composer Neil Hannon, and performers Leentje Van de Cruys and the Ligeti Quartet on the chamber opera 'In May'. contactmcr.com

Guillermo Gómez-Peña is a performance artist, writer, activist, radical pedagogue and director of the performance troupe La Pocha Nostra. Born in Mexico City, he moved to the US in 1978. His performance work and 10 books have contributed to the debates on cultural diversity, border culture and US-Mexico relations. His art work has been presented at over eight hundred venues across the US, Canada, Latin America, Europe, Russia, South Africa and Australia. A MacArthur Fellow, Bessie and American Book Award winner, he is a regular contributor for newspapers and magazines in the US, Mexico and Europe, and a contributing editor to *The Drama Review* (NYU-MIT). Gómez-Peña is a Senior Fellow in the Hemispheric Institute of performance and Politics, a Patron for the London-based Live Art Development Agency and in 2012 he was named Samuel Hoi Fellow by USA Artists. www.pochanostra.com

Ria Hartley is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher based in Bristol, UK. Her work has taken form as devised theatre, site-specific and durational performance, live art, installation, video, photography, one-to-one performance and socio-political art. Hartley's practice pays close attention to memory, identity, human relationships and shared narratives, and often invites participation and exchange between herself and her audiences, seeking to blur the relationship between performer and audience, space and situation in order to open new spaces of thought and exchange. Hartley has taught as an associate lecturer in BA Theatre at Falmouth University (2010-2013) and was a visiting artist lecturer for BA Theatre: Performance at Plymouth University (2012). Recent projects include *RECALL* (SPILL National Platform 2014), *SPIT KIT* (Steakhouse Live, InIVA 2014), *Matilda and Me* (UK Tour 2014) and *The Self-Marriage of Ria Hartley* (2013). Ria is a member of Residence Collective C.I.C (Bristol) and Co-director of the Solo Contemporary Performance Forum (UK).

www.riahartley.com

Satu Herrala works as a choreographer and curator, and since the beginning of 2015, as the artistic director of Baltic Circle international festival of contemporary theatre in Helsinki. Her curatorial works include DO TANK programs at Spielart festival in Munich in 2011 and at Baltic Circle in 2012, Make Arts Policy event in collaboration with Public Movement in 2014 and a series of Sauna Lectures at various festivals.

balticcircle.fi.

Skinder Hundal has been CEO of New Art Exchange since its launch in September 2008, commissioning and producing high quality art, and bringing culturally diverse art of an international standard to inner city Nottingham in Hyson Green, the UK as a whole, and globally. He is passionate about supporting new talent, rethinking and improving how the arts and cultural ecology works. He has successfully delivered and negotiated many complex, large-scale projects, including the flagship NESTA Digital Arts R&D project *Culture Cloud*, British Art Show 7 Nottingham, TED Global and the Google Cultural Institute. Skinder specialises in creative production, curation and programming frameworks; arts consultancy projects; business planning and strategic development; capital development; marketing and communications; audience and product development. Skinder is also Chair of Darbar, Europe's largest Indian classical music festival, and is a member of Arts Council England's newly formed Midland's Area Board.

www.nae.org.uk

Veronica Kaup-Hasler is the director of the contemporary arts festival Steirischer Herbst in Graz, Austria, which she has been running since 2006. In addition, she is a member of the council of the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and of a selection of juries. Previous positions include dramaturge at Basle Theatre (1993-95), and festival dramaturge for the Wiener Festwochen (1995-2001), from 1998 on as artistic collaborator of theatre director Luc Bondy. Other work included giving lectures in Professor Erich Wonder's masterclasses at the Academy of Fine Arts (1998-2001) and the artistic directorship of the Theaterformen festival in Hanover and Brunswick (2001-2004).

www.steirischerherbst.at

Judith Knight is the co-director and founder of Artsadmin. She worked in theatres in Hull, Glasgow and London before setting up Artsadmin in 1979. Over the last thirty-five years, the organisation has supported and produced the work of contemporary artists and companies working across all disciplines. Artsadmin has developed its base at Toynbee Studios in East London into a centre for the creation and development of new work, with rehearsal spaces, free advisory service, bursary scheme, education programme, residencies, showcases, workshops and performances. Together with Shape, Artsadmin runs Unlimited – a three year programme of commissions of work by disabled artists. Judith has produced numerous projects nationally and internationally, many of which have been site-specific pieces in locations all over the world. She works with the *Imagine 2020* European Network producing artists' projects about climate change, including Artsadmin's *Two Degrees* festival and associated projects including the commissions with LIFT of Michael Pinsky's *Plunge* (2012) and Amy Sharrocks' *Museum of Water* (2014). She is on the board of the arts and environment organisation Tipping Point. She was awarded an MBE in 2007, and in 2009 was made Officier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government.

www.artsadmin.co.uk

Kelli McCluskey is an artist and co-founder of tactical media art group PVI Collective, and is head girl at CIA Studios (Centre for Interdisciplinary Arts) in Perth, Australia. PVI produce interdisciplinary artworks that are intent on the creative disruption of everyday life. Every artwork aims to affect audiences on a personal and political level and is geared towards instigating tiny revolutions. Kelli is a passionate advocate for interdisciplinary artforms in Australia. She is currently on the board of NAVA, the national peak body for the visual and media arts, which helps to secure policy and legislative change to encourage the growth and development of the arts sector. In 2011, Kelli co-founded Proximity Festival, Australia's first one-on-one performance festival, which encourages artists from all disciplines to experiment with new modes of practice in the creation of participatory art. Kelli co-founded artist incubator space CIA Studios with partner-in-crime Steve Bull in 2008. Kelli is based in Perth with PVI Collective who are principal company in residence at CIA Studios.

www.pvicollective.com

Jordan McKenzie is a visual performance artist whose work has been exhibited in numerous national and international galleries including Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2014), Museu Serralves, Portugal (2002), DOLL Space Switzerland (2010), Tate Britain (2012) and the Courtauld Institute of Art (2011). Employing satire and humour as a destabilising politicised tool, McKenzie's work addresses issues of class, gender and identity. For two years he co-curated a performance space, LUPA, from a lock up garage on the council estate where he lives in East London, and continues to make performances and visual art works that address social issues on and around his estate. After successfully being awarded a DIY artists grant by the Live Art Development Agency in 2013, McKenzie held a summit meeting for artists in his flat to talk about art and social practice (*Look At The (E)state We're In*) and he has developed this into a conference of the same name that will be held in Peckham later this year. The conference is supported by Peckham Platform and University of the Arts, London, where McKenzie is a senior lecturer in Fine Art.

www.jordanmckenzie.co.uk

Lois Weaver is a Guggenheim-winning artist, activist, writer, director, and Professor of Contemporary Performance at Queen Mary University of London. Her work centres on feminism, human rights and possibilities for public participation. Artistically active for over four decades, she is the founding member of significant New York theatre companies Spiderwoman (1976), Split Britches (1980) and WOW (Women's One World Cafe) (1980). Weaver came to London to take on the role of artistic director for Gay Sweatshop Theatre Company in the early 1990s and now lives between New York and London. She tours with experiments in public engagement such as *The Long Table* and *What Tammy Needs To Know*, and Split Britches' latest collaborations, *Miss America*, *Retro-Perspective*, and *Lost Lounge*. A monograph on her work, edited by Jen Harvie, and published by the Live Art Development Agency and Intellect Books, is due later this year.

www.sed.qmul.ac.uk/staff/weaverl.html

CREDITS & THANKS

Live Art UK Associates Gathering 2015

Curated and produced by the Live Art Development Agency and In Between Time, for Live Art UK.

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With thanks to all contributing artists and producers; Mary Paterson; Ana Matos; La Pocha Nostra; and Marta Lumbierres Bayo and the team at Watershed.

Live Art UK is supported through the Live Art Development Agency's status as a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**