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(Manifestoes for a Theatre of Matter)

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for a degree of Masters in Design
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By Sam Trubridge

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Abstract

This thesis revisits the manifestos of Twentieth Century theatre makers in order to establish a manifesto for performance design in the Twenty-First Century. It proposes that a material theatre is necessary in order to re-sensitise its audience and counter the 'de-realisation' that has infected and desensitised popular notions of war and global trauma. At the beginning of this new century there are new crises to mirror those that Antonin Artaud, Tadeusz Kantor, Peter Brook, and Jerzy Grotowski responded to in their own theatre and writings. With reference to the work of these artists this manifesto will construct an argument and rationale for 'The Theatre of Matter': a visual and spatial language for performance that affirms and implicates the material bodies of audience, performer, and space. By this design performance can become a complicit setting: the place of cruelty, ritual, realisation, and restoration that Helene Cixous calls "the place of crime and place of pardon" (Drain, 1995, p.340). Research through two realised productions of 'The Restaurant of Many Orders', reflection upon these productions, and conceptual drawings will make it possible to challenge and review the manifesto; thus setting it into motion within a practical framework.

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INTRODUCTION
A Theatre That Matters



There is an escalation of the true, of the lived experience; a resurrection of the figurative where object and substance have disappeared.

Jean Baudrillard (1983) *Simulations*, p.12.

Matter comes from Latin *materia*: “substance from which something is made” (Barnhart, 1988, p.642). Something that ‘matters’ has relevance, and is “an object of consideration and practical concern” (Brown, 1993, p.1717), or it can be something that secretes or discharges substance. This Theatre of Matter is a theatre of both substance and importance. It uses materiality, materials, and important matters to confront what Baudrillard calls “the precession of the simulacra” (ibid, p.2).

In his description of the ‘simulacra’ Baudrillard asserts that object and substance have disappeared, producing a world of simulation, synthetics, and false images. He refers to Borges’ tale of a map so large that it covers the entire territory of the empire that it charts¹. As time passes, the map decays and becomes ruined: only remaining in the remote deserts and corners of the empire. Baudrillard suggests that today the opposite is now happening: the map (the simulacrum) predominates, and material reality is

¹Jorge Luis Borges & Adolfo Bioy Casares (1970), *Extraordinary Tales, a collection of short narratives from a variety of sources*.

Fig. 1: *Tajima Town, Fukushima Prefecture* (Detail). Toishi Shibata (1990). (Crary & Kwinter, 1992, p.326).

subsiding from common perception. "It is the real, and not the map, whose vestiges subsist here and there in the deserts which are no longer of the Empire, but our own. *The desert of the real itself*" (ibid).

Images proliferate. Journalism, entertainment, and advertising saturate our lives. These media communicate to us in images, creating a synthetic, hyper-real world modeled by the ability to technically produce or alter any image to suit an agenda. Thus advertising presents the picture perfect lives that patrons of the product may enjoy; entertainment provides escapist fantasy; and journalism offers a sanitized view of the world. These media influence us with their increasing artificiality, as Helene Cixous says "we take newspaper columns for our thoughts. We are printed daily" (Drain, 1995, p.341). Not only is what we see more synthetic, but seeing is becoming more synthetic as well. In *The Vision Machine* Paul Virilio describes this as "the automation of the perception" (1994, p.59). Now objects perceive us: with computer surveillance, remote control video, spy drones, and camera cell-phones documenting our every movement and adding to the amount of images in our lives. Despite the abundance of these un-human, unbiased, 'object-eyes', we live in a time when the image is subjective, and often stands in for material truth. This editorial 'iris' of advertising, entertainment, and journalism continues to channel and focus our perception of the world. Yet the world has never seemed so infinite. Images and simulacra proliferate in this digital age of computer technology, where the eye is the privileged organ.

It is within this context of a hyper-real environment that theatrical performance must find its place to operate today. Like most art forms, theatre works with both the virtual and actual realms of perception. But unlike many art forms it consists of living substance, movement, and communication on a 'one-to-one' scale, in real time and space. In this way it is the only media to include a physical audience that can touch, smell, taste, and sense the performance as well as see and hear it, affecting it as a sensate, collective body. The virtual environments of performance transform this 'actuality' of the theatre space, where audiences agree to 'suspend disbelief' and accept imagined and constructed worlds as a reality. The effect is often distancing and alienating, especially where performers, designers, theatre makers, and audiences refer to film (the simulacrum) as a model for presenting theatre. Thus traditional theatre opens up the 'fourth wall' of the stage, allowing the audience to look into the 'proscenium arch' to see the performance in the same way that cinema audiences look into the 'window' of the cinema screen. When the space within this 'window' of theatre opens to its audience or invites them in, the Cartesian preoccupation with psychology, text, and the 'art' of performance often remains. Despite the opening up of the stage in thrust, traverse, 'in the round' theatre, or even in site specific performance the frame still persists; foreclosing a more visceral, substantial experience. This occurs through deference to the centrality of the performer and the use of 'effects' in the way that popular film often does. But theatre can be more than a place of 'effects'; it can also be a place that 'affects' its embodied audience. In order for theatre to do so, it must attain a greater materiality. In order for it to matter, the

'virtual world' of performance must come closer to the 'actual' world of the audience. This necessitates a more material approach to theatre, which is where design is so important.

Design is the manipulation or creation of materials for the body. Performance design includes the design of space, garment, object, light, sound, and image as other practices of design do, but also introduces another aspect. It orchestrates embodiment, designing the body for the body (of the audience) through action, movement, stance, and expression. Thus performance becomes design, through the manipulation of the evolving relationships between the embodied materials of space, object, light, performer, and audience. In *What is Performance?* (1996) Marvin Carlson establishes many definitions for the term 'performance', associating it with the show of skill, performed action, social role-playing, as well as the theatrical, describing it as a "double consciousness" or "the sense of an action carried out *for* someone" (Bial, 2004, p.71). Since this definition includes the performance of everyday activities or actions as well as the theatrical, then it is possible that the everyday (the actual) and the fictive (the virtual) can co-exist within 'the performative'. Design can play between these two states of actual and virtual performance, designing more than the theatrical performance of actor and dancer, but also designing performance as a less self-conscious or presented action. Thus design and direction merge, in the use of the bodies of performer and audience, as well as space, light, sound, and object, allowing the designing *of* performance rather than designing *for* performance.



Fig. 2: *Untitled Osaka Diptych 1999-2000*. Naoya Hatakeyama (2002).

Re-sensitisation, and this material experience, is necessary. The ‘precession of the simulacra’ has symptoms that demand reaction from an embodied media such as performance design. One symptom is introduced in John Taylor’s *Body Horror: Photojournalism, Catastrophe, and War* (1998), where the term ‘de-realisation’ is used to describe the sanitisation of war by contemporary journalism. With Virilio’s ‘automation of perception’ it has become increasingly possible to kill from great distances, as Antonin Artaud described in his portentous 1947 radio-play *To Have Done With the Judgement of God*: “I have seen machines fighting a lot but only infinitely far behind them have I seen the men who directed them” (Sontag, 1971, p.3). War has become this object-ified arena; performed by machines and objects upon machines and objects, or so it would seem. We hear of attacks upon these ‘objects’ and attacks upon enemy ‘units’ and we hear of them being ‘neutralised’; but we seldom hear of the trauma, the bloodshed, and the civilian casualty. If we do, then it is referred to as ‘collateral damage’: a term popularised in the recent invasion of Iraq that refers to civilian casualty resulting from strikes upon enemy forces. In his chapter of *Body Horror* entitled *The Body Vanishes from the Gulf War*, Taylor describes how the ‘de-realisation’ of war journalism has removed these controversial bodies of the maimed and dead.

Where is this injured body? – This object? Where is its blood, the substances leaking from its wounds and degradation? Where is the vulnerable, mortal body? The concept of clean warfare has hidden the mutilated, injured and dead body from the media. It

has become disowned and sanitized. The significance of this effect is illuminated by Elaine Scarry's statement in *The Body in Pain* (1985) where "the perpetuation of war would be impossible without the disowning of injuring" (p.64). This theatre of war exists at the grace of a de-realised world where images have, as Baudrillard describes it, a "murderous capacity", becoming "murderers of the real" (1983, p.10). Language and image have failed the victims of 'collateral damage', and performance must react to create a live interchange between the audience and this disowned injury. Thus performance design can become the material, "spatial language" that Artaud describes in *The Theatre and Its Double* (1938, p.69) and oppose 'de-realisation' with a 'realisation' of theatre and the dramatic (virtual) landscapes that it creates. A bridge must be formed. The insulated Western audience and the distant immaterial threat of contemporary crises must become embodied within the same space: they must materialise. To do so, a statement must be constructed. A manifesto is needed.

The word 'manifesto' comes from Latin forms *manus* (hand) and *festus* (seizable) that has roots in Greek *thersos* (courage). Historical examples affirm the manifesto's etymological roots in this word (thersos), with the publication of many brave voices, declaring courageous action. As hands do, these voices have shaped the history of the Twentieth Century through the avant-garde. The exaltation of technology in Futurist Manifestoes, Andre Breton's *Manifestos of Surrealism*, and Dada's rejection of meaning all announce extravagant reactions to urgent political, social, and creative issues. Now, at the beginning of the Twenty-First Century, action is needed that is

physical, involved, and provocative. As one of the few media that involves and implicates a live, embodied viewer, Performance Design can address this crisis with a material consideration of the theatre and its audience.

In the last century, theatre manifestoes were used to respond to a new world of technology, the dated theatrical conventions of previous centuries and then the traumas of war, violence and holocaust. It was the industrial revolution and the spectacle of technological warfare that inspired many manifestoes, including those of the Italian Futurists, who celebrated the new world of electricity, speed, noise, machines, and cities. Today a similar optimism embraces the futuristic worlds of genetics, cyberspace, computer technology, and soft matter physics. Contemporary manifestoes such as the Cyberpunk Project's *Cyber-Dada Manifesto* (Cyber Dadaists, 2002) has the same assured hopefulness as Filippo Marinetti's *Founding and Manifesto of Futurism*, written in 1909. In this manifesto Marinetti describes the joy and wild abandon he experiences crashing his car after a night of lively discussion, which compares with the Cyber Dadaists euphoric call on readers to "forget the meat of your bodies". One hundred years apart, these two groups share the feeling that technology has made it possible to transcend physical and material limitations. "Time and space died yesterday" says Marinetti (Huxley & Witts, 2002, p.291). "We can now venture to the limits of the cosmos because we are not bound by earthly

Fig. 3: Crary & Kwinter (1992), p.25 (detail).



dimensions”, say the Cyber Dadaists (2002). Both express a fascination with the unification of man and machine. Marinetti even identifies his car as an extension of his own body: “I stopped short and to my disgust rolled over into a ditch with my wheels in the air” (Huxley & Witts, 2002, p.290). Equally, the Cyber Dadaists urge their readers to interface, digitize, jack into neuro-circuits, and have cybernetic implants: thus advocating a combination of man and machine – the cyborg. However, the Futurist’s ‘brave new world’ of technology brought with it horrific inventions such as the machine gun, mustard gas, and the H-bomb. Marinetti’s sentiment of war as “the world’s only hygiene” (ibid, p.291) was reflected in the fascist regimes of Hitler and Mussolini. Such quests for a utopian society has been the justification for many Twentieth Century atrocities in countries like Israel, Germany, China, Kampuchea, Rwanda, and Yugoslavia. Thus The Theatre of Matter must seek to critique technology as much as celebrate it, beginning with the technological predominance of the simulacrum.

Many artists of the Twentieth Century sought to deal with what had been witnessed in the horrors of the war through their work and manifestoes: abandoning naturalism, language, and meaning in response to how shocking reality had become. In this way World War One provoked the manifestoes of Dadaism and Surrealism. The Dadaists rejected reality in response to what they had witnessed, and “ridiculed all existing values in art” (Huyghe, 1961, p.274), composing manifestoes in nonsensical verse and performing them in cabaret-like settings. The Surrealists also responded to the horrors

of modern technological warfare, escaping pictorial reality into images from dreams and the unconscious. In the Surrealist film *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali express this crisis of perception in the sequence where a naked eyeball is sliced open. In this violent act, the Surrealist express the trauma of witnessing World War One, and summarily rejects the power of vision by literally attacking the object of vision itself.

Marinetti's exultant automotive catastrophe can be likened to the mythical fall of Icarus, as can the ultimate fate of the Futurist cause. At the heart of the Icarus myth is the parable of failed technology, the path of science and industry thwarted by its own hopefulness, and its own excess. What better image for the fall of Twentieth Century aspirations of multi-nationalism and global 'freedom' than the fall of the World Trade Centre on September 11, 2001? The aspirations of the Twentieth Century have failed, and in the Twenty-First Century we need to be re-associated with the materiality of events. This contrasts with Paul Virilio's description of the horrors of the First World War that 'deregulated perception' and became "the moment of panic when the mass of Americans and Europeans masses could no longer believe their eyes" (1994, p.13). Now there is a new crisis of perception. The eye does not believe, because what it sees is not 'real' enough. Instead of the overbearing reality that the Surrealists experienced in World Wars One and Two, we are given an image of the world that is less than real, it is *sous-real* (beneath-reality, rather than sur-real, above reality). This 'sous-reality' is Taylor's 'de-realisation', where "killing is done at a distance, and if

the victims are optically separated from their killers the insulation of combatants and viewers from the action is likely to be enhanced" (1998, p.155). Scarry's earlier suggestion about the disowning of injury perpetuating war indicates just how critical this effect is. Slavoj Zizek also writes about 'de-realisation' in his essay *Welcome to the Desert of the Real* (Zizek, 2001), addressing the perception of reality in First World countries before and after September 11, 2001. He compares the event with the sinking of the Titanic in 1912: "a symbol of the might of the twentieth century industrial civilization" (Zizek, 2001). On September 11, 2001 the immaterial fantasies of Hollywood disaster movies materialized and for a moment destroyed the illusion of the "capitalist consumerist paradise" (Zizek, 2001). Since these events that Zizek and Taylor both discuss, subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq have propagated further crises of 'de-realisation' through media manipulation. The common perception of our world needs to be questioned and complicated because of the sanitized, controlled, censored, and often confused image we have of these events.

Artaud's manifestoes for 'A Theatre of Cruelty', and the later manifestoes of Polish director-designer Tadeusz Kantor (such as the 1963 *Embellage Manifesto*) demonstrate how Twentieth Century theatre reacted to crises with a material, visceral approach to performance and its design. The writings of Peter Brook (such as *The Empty Space*, 1968), and Jerzy Grotowski's *Towards A Poor Theatre* (1968) also read as manifestoes that address the materiality of performance. These examples provide valuable reference and models for constructing a manifesto for a 'Theatre of Matter'.

Originally a surrealist, Artaud wrote his manifestoes between the World Wars, during the rise of Fascism. He perceived his 'Theatre of Cruelty' as an activation of the spiritual and sensual faculties in response to what he believed were "anguished, catastrophic times" (1938, p.64). In *No More Masterpieces* he says, "I do not believe we have succeeded in reanimating the world we live in" (ibid, p.63), and thus sets out to create a theatre that awakens the senses and "return[s] the mind to the origins of its inner struggles" (ibid, p.20). His proposed remedy involved rediscovering a sense of danger and of total physical commitment in art and life, a rigorous 'cruelty' that united both audience and actor.

Where object and substance have disappeared, design can respond and make theatre a dangerous and sensory experience, thereby reanimating theatre and resensitising the viewer. In this way Kantor's productions realised what Artaud's writings often suggested, bringing the audience into the material world of the stage and often making the audience themselves into a material. This was his "concept of anti-art which, because of its basis in reality, could match up with the naked threat contained in the real world" (Kantor, 1993, p.36). There is much to be done with this naked threat: the danger of being involved as an audience member. Kantor's designs were physically threatening, but they also sensitised the viewer to realities that resonating with immaterial meaning and danger. In *Lovelies and Dowdies* (1973) his performers relinquished the audience of personal items, gave them identification numbers, and made them submit to being segregated into distinct groups to watch the show.



Through design strategies such as this Kantor challenged and interrogated reality in its many guises, seeking sense where there was no sense: in the atrocities of the Second World War. Thus his audience in *Lovelies and Dowdies* become like the prisoners of the Holocaust. This introduces the concept of ‘embodiment’, where an object, body or space can resonate with, or ‘embody’ referents outside its normal state, that Jonathon Crary and Sanford Kwinter in their preface to *Incorporations* (1992) define as “those strategies through which human life combines with, and assimilates, the minute, shifting, often invisible patterns and rhythms of the concrete historical milieu within which it unfolds” (p.12).

The notion of embodiment is consistent through all of Kantor’s manifestoes; where materiality and the wrapping of meaning (embellage) around objects, spaces, and people creates the design. After his experiences in Poland during World War Two, Kantor had himself become sensitized to the dramatic emotional impact imbued in material object and space, and worked with the same language of images that made the bunk-beds, piles of shoes, and the proposition of ‘taking a shower’ resonate with human tragedy. Thus Kantor’s ‘naked threat’ is also the tension that exists in moments or images where trauma is remembered. Through these images, and the *embodied* audience, theatre can become what Artaud compared with the plague and called ‘The Theatre of Cruelty’ where “a colossal abscess, ethical as much as social, is

Fig. 4: Daytime Moon (*Scene II: Artificial Forest, Tokyo*) a Butoh dance by Min Tanaka with Mai Juku (1986) (Hoffman & Holborn, 1987, p.62).

drained by the plague. And like the plague, theatre is made to drain abscesses” (1937, p.22). To have this cathartic effect performance design must reawaken the unique danger, the ‘threat’ there is in being a sensitized, embodied audience member. In doing so theatre will become material, and will begin to matter. Thus, by drawing on manifestoes of the Twentieth Century, this thesis will establish a manifesto for the Twenty-First Century that focuses on a material experience of theatre, created by the design; looking for a way to make sense of atrocity and it’s ‘de-realisation’ in our lives.

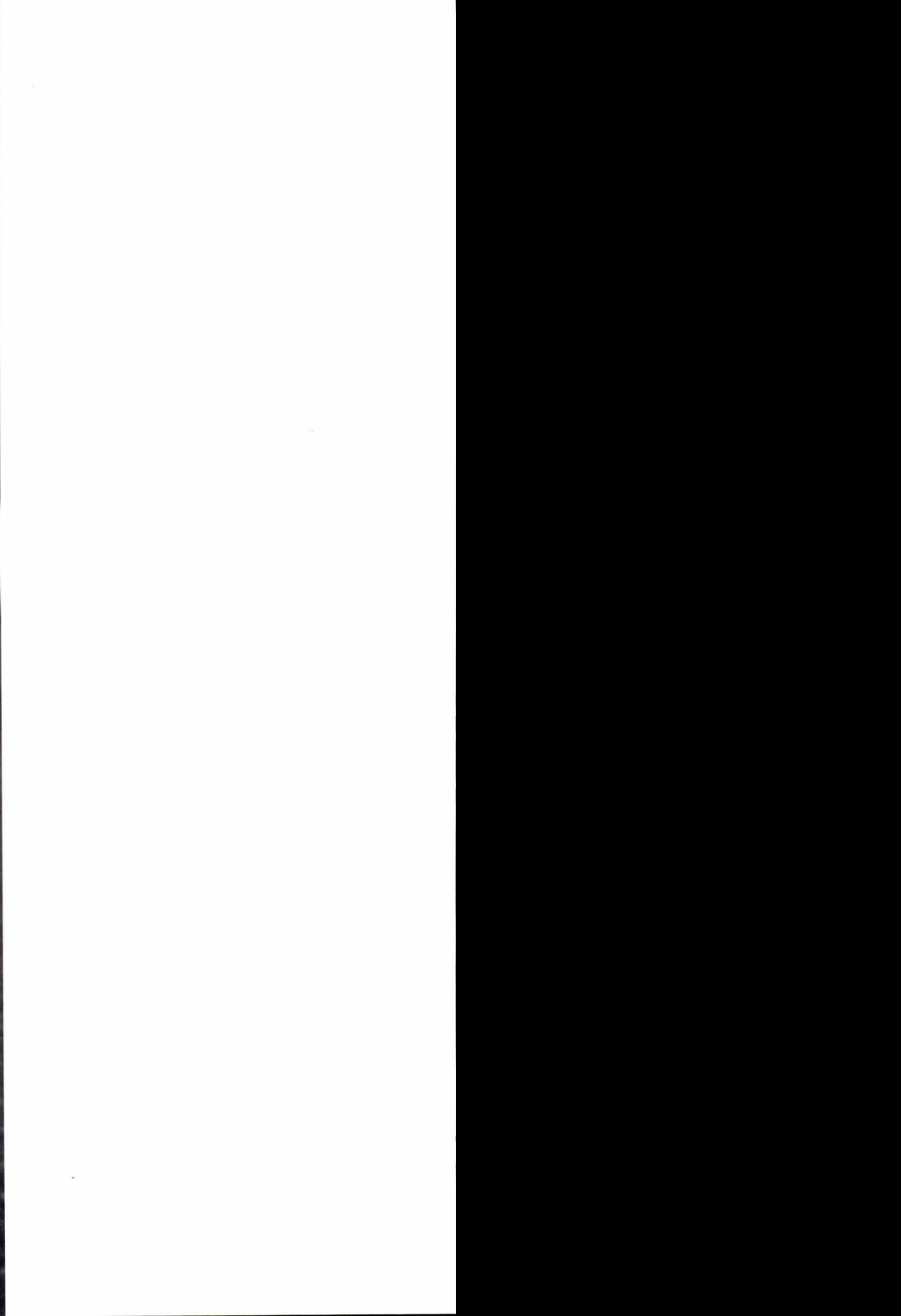
This manifesto consists of two actions that have been taken, within two titles or ‘Acts’. Act One declares the need for A Theatre of Matter and the strategy which may be realised, whilst Act Two reviews the application of these ideas in two actual productions: using text, drawing, and photos to document and observe the process. The word ‘act’ originates from Latin *actus* meaning, “doing, playing a part, dramatic action, act of a play” (Barnhardt, 1988, p.21). Hence these ‘Acts’ are actions that play a part in and interact with the subject, and do more than just describe it.

In a temporal medium such as theatre text becomes important, not only in terms of documenting and re-presenting performance, but also in articulating and announcing, (making manifest) a strategy and an ongoing practice. In this way the manifesto becomes the ‘perlocutionary act’ that John Langshaw Austin describes in *How To Do Things With Words* (1980) where statements such as ‘I do’ or ‘I promise’ have a

performative importance due to the act that they represent. The manifesto, as a declaration, is the process of making manifest; and is thus another ‘act’ of perlocutionary or performative importance.

‘Act One: Material Manifestations’ proposes a strategy for a theatre that reconciles the senses with a material world. It addresses six of the materials in theatre, manifesting strategies for the manipulation of narrative, light, body, object, and space in order to define their particular relevance to, and role within theatre.² Often the boundaries between these ‘materials’ are indistinct or artificial, with the argument necessarily exploring the relationships between each. Thus objects perform (as puppets or resonant objects), the body becomes object (as puppet, or meat), space is created within the object (chairs, beds), the performer manipulates and interacts with light, and the body (of audience) creates and shapes space. The topic of the body is divided into two parts: the body of audience member, and performer. Their titling (*The Material Body*, and *The Collective Body* respectively) acknowledges that these are essentially the same material, with attributes that may be manipulated by design: performers spectate, the audience interacts with performance, performers may direct the audience, and the audience may even direct the performer. Thus it becomes

² The list of materials may seem to exclude sound as a topic of discussion. However, the material topics include discussion of sound, or the creation of sound as a residual effect. Thus a damaged light bulb will buzz and fizzle, projected video includes audio material, the performer vocalises, the audience laughs or applauds, and the object makes sound when it is struck, moved, or activated. What this leaves is music, or atmospheric sound, which although a part of the ‘design’ of performance will not be covered in what is already a broad study on the materials of theatre.



necessary to consider their embodiment as well as focusing on their particular roles, the conscious orchestration of which becomes the design.

Act Two is called 'A Theatre of Matter'. It tests the manifesto by applying the strategies and ideas in Act One to two theatrical productions, directed and designed by myself. *The Restaurant of Many Orders* was first of all staged at the Lilian Baylis Theatre, Sadler's Wells, (London UK) in June 2004, then at the SEED Space, Te Whaea National Centre for Dance and Drama (Wellington, NZ) in April 2005. While these shows are the outward manifestations of the Theatre of Matter, they are also research tools: making it possible to apply the manifesto in practice and make further discoveries and insights into the topic. The productions are documented and analysed as materialisations of the manifesto as a process of researching and forming 'The Theatre of Matter', concluding with a review of the manifesto and how the method has been explored in the practice of performance.

Thus in the two Acts, the manifesto presents and addresses several stages of the performance design process: that of critical inquiry and declaration (manifestation), drawing (speculation), and the theatrical production (realisation): all posited as forms of research. This manifesto thereby becomes a research project as much as a call to action, seeking to find methods for performance design to reconcile the senses in a

Fig. 5: Rehearsal of *The Restaurant of Many Orders* at Sadler's Wells, London, UK, 2004 (Photograph by Lydia Poulzer).

world that is simultaneously material and immaterial. In an age where object and substance have seemingly disappeared there is a need for materiality and 'matter', both as "physical substance [...and] an object of consideration or practical concern" (Brown, 1993, p.1717). An approach will be described that confronts 'de-realisation' by immersing the senses in visceral, material experiences. Thus theatre can 'affect' its audience in a way that no other media can: becoming physically and sensorially affective. As much as it consists of matter and raw material, theatre must also matter. The materiality this theatre deals with thus aims to create an understanding and a 'realisation' of Twenty First Century issues and crises. Design is crucial to this process, and there is a central role for the performance designer as a creator of resonant images, environments, and relationships in the performance space. This is a manifesto for a theatre of matter, and a theatre that matters.

ACT 1
Material Manifestations

The Material Narrative

The most urgent thing seems to me [is] to decide what this physical language is composed of, this solid material language by which theatre can be distinguished from words. It is composed of everything filling the stage, everything that can be shown and materially expressed on stage, intended first of all to appeal to the senses, instead of being addressed primarily to the mind, like spoken language.

Antonin Artaud (1938), *The Theatre and Its Double*, p. 27

Design is performance. The manipulation of space, object, light, performer, and audience has often been attributed to the director, or prior to that to the producers and actor-managers of pre-modern European theatre. But design has progressed from the 'décor' that Artaud loathed, producing forms of greater significance in the theatre. Now it does more than decorate or shape the stage, it is the choice of the stage itself. It can create roles, manipulate them, and orchestrate the moving bodies of performer and audience. Understood as the material experience of theatre, design is becoming the performance itself.

This assimilation of performance suggests either the synthesis of design with direction into the role of the 'director-designer', or alternatively, a collaborative relationship

between the director and designer in creating performance. Working with, or as a director, the designer can provide a new approach to storytelling and narrative that is visual and material. Well known director-designers like Julie Taymor, Robert Wilson, Robert Lepage, and Tadeusz Kantor each have very different approaches to theatre, yet each considers all the material aspects of theatre in the conception and realization of the production. Wilson designs his own sets and lighting, often collaborating on his scripts or choosing simple or incomplete scripts (such as Georg Buchner's *Woyzek*) that are neither prescriptive nor specific. In this way there is more freedom for the design to shape performance. Robert Lepage often writes or devises the plays he directs and designs, saying in the 2003 programme for production of *The Far Side of the Moon* at The Barbican in London, that: "writing is very much perceived as something distinct from performance. I don't see it like that. The real writing of a piece comes only when you are performing it" (Lepage, 2003, p.9). Thus a narrative that exceeds text emerges through the collaboration of the script with direction, design, and performance.

The narrative – "An account of a series of events" (Brown, 1993, p.1884) – in theatre traditionally favors oral, linguistic forms over other forms of communication. Narration is the voice of the observer that recounts, and thereby reshapes an event, becoming diction as 'dictation'. However, the director-designer relationship brings to this tendency a 'material narrative' of form, action, and event that is temporal and fleeting. The audience can interpret the performance themselves in the way that lived

experiences contain no articulate voice of narrative to rationalise them. Dialogue and language only constitute a portion of what happens in our lives as we move between the mundane and the extraordinary. Text must thus be treated as a raw material: as formless and as malleable as all other matter is.

What Artaud referred to as ‘the exclusive dictatorship of words’ (1938, p.29) in theatre can become something more democratic, and fluid. As a material the text can be shaped, re-interpreted, or left open to suggestion. Thus the design of performance can include the design of the text itself, requiring a ‘concept’ that includes a consideration of script. In the fashion of Wagner’s ‘gesamkunstwerk’, this may produce a ‘script’ created by a design, a visual concept, or through a collaboration of elements: such as in Robert Lepage’s *The Far Side of the Moon* (2000), or choreographer William Forsythe’s *Kammer/Kammer* (2000). In the latter Forsythe created a ‘choreographic text’ for Ballet Frankfurt using dancers, music, live and pre-recorded video, and dense verbose monologues written by Anne Carson³ and Douglas A. Martin⁴. These scripts were used more in choreographic terms, with the rapidly spoken words and turns of phrase become textural and expressive, perceived more as a choreography, a pattern, or a design.

Where performance was once defined by vocalization and gesture, through design it

³ (2000) *Irony is not enough: Essay on my life as Catherine Deneuve* (2nd Draft).

⁴ (2000) *Outline of my lover*.

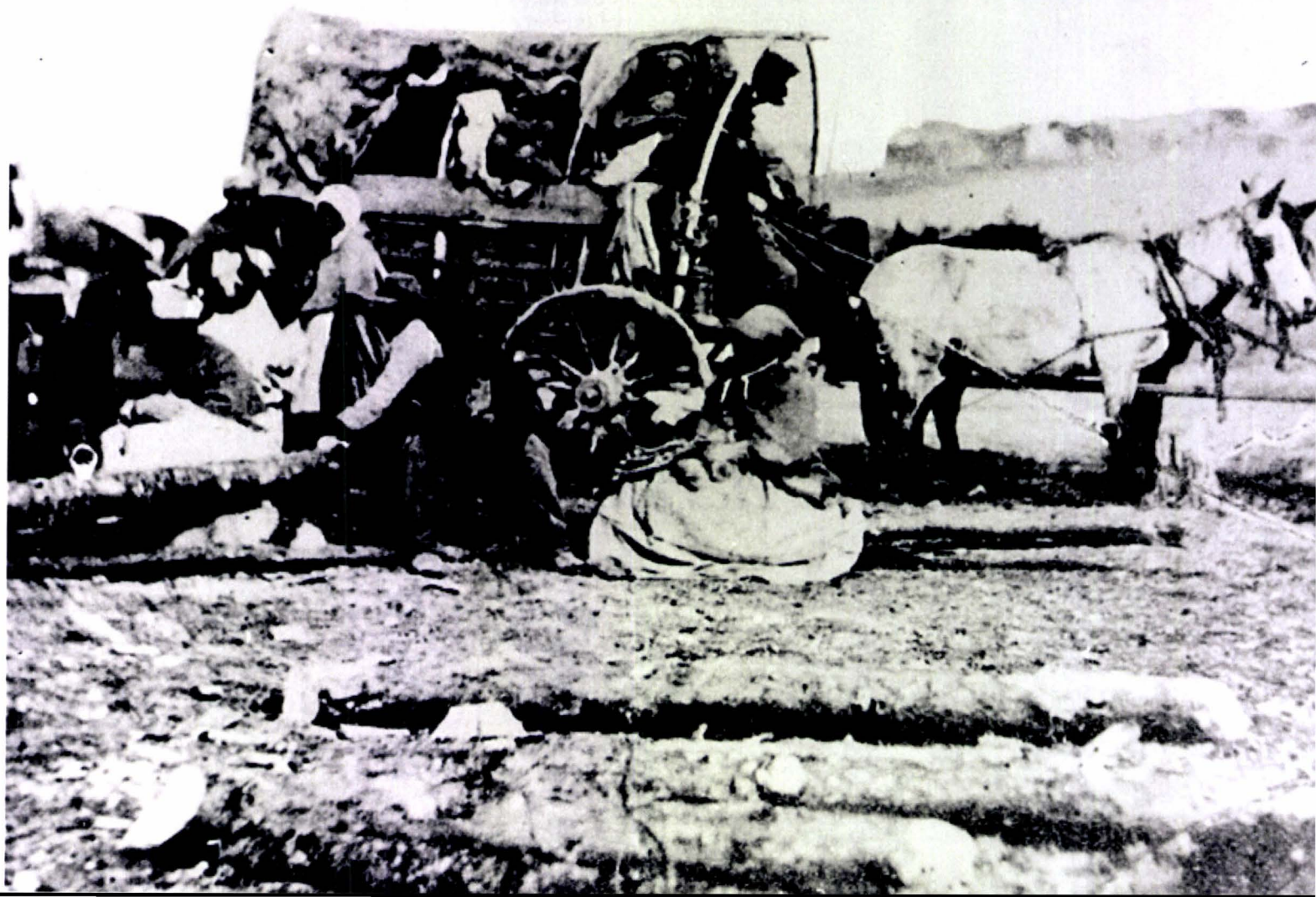
can be perceived as a collaborative interaction between various elements: the performer's body, object, space, light, sound, and audience. These are the materials of a designed performance: the malleable 'matter' that the director-designer considers, manipulates, and works with. This 'shaping' of materials is more than just 'direction', and it is more than just 'designing for theatre': it is the designing of theatre, and the shaping of a material narrative that cannot be preserved or represented in words alone, as Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks observe in *Theatre Archaeology* (2001): "[p]erformance survives as a cluster of narratives [...] The same event is experienced, remembered, and characterized in a multitude of different ways, none of which appropriates singular authority" (p.57).

Events can exceed text. Word and language covers the territory of the banal, the everyday, in our lives. How often do the expressions 'I'm lost for words', 'I don't know what to say', and 'Words couldn't describe' account for a moment so heightened that it exceeds language? At the scene of horror the hand covers the mouth – is this to stifle the inexpressible feelings within, to hold back those shapes and feelings that no word can express, and so must surely spring from the lips in some horrifying shape? Here, where words fail; images and actions can speak for themselves. Image is the silent voice of performance; the whispering subtext that endures beyond other memories. This lasting power of the theatrical image is evident when Peter Brook writes of his most memorable theatrical experiences in *The Empty Space* (1990, p.152): "two tramps under a tree, an old woman dragging a cart, a

sergeant dancing, three people on a sofa in hell". The significance of design is obvious in this list, where image, object, action, and certain ideographic characters (tramps, a sergeant, and an old woman) are remembered. Having both private and universal resonance, these images are wrapped in meaning. The woman pulling her cart is Mother Courage from Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1941): an old woman who profits from, and eventually loses her children to war. Seen by Brook after the Second World War, it would have invoked memories of recent European traumas, as well as depicting Germany's earlier 'Thirty Years War' that the play was set in. Thus the figure of Mother Courage with her cart stands for the profiteer in any situation of conflict: making her a symbol that is multi-vocal and multivalent. Layers of meaning take her image beyond a single physical or pictorial moment, and give it a complexity in the mind of the beholder. The image becomes an echo, reverberating off the viewer's own experiences. For the definition of image includes more than physical and sensory experience, it is also "a mental picture or impression, an idea, conception" (Barnhardt, 1998, p.508). Thus the image is both material (a physical arrangement) and immaterial (an impression).

Traditionally, storytelling and theatre used the human mind where there was little resource to recreate events literally. Imagination, that "mental faculty which forms images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses" (Brown, 1993,

Fig. 6: *Black Family Entering Union Lines with a Loaded Cart*, Images of the American Civil War. Missouri eCommunities (www.civi-war.net). Retrieved 17.7.05.



p.1312) was used to construct scenarios in the audience's mind. Hence 'reported action is used in Greek theatre, with a chorus of performers describing action that could not be portrayed on stage:

Oedipus stabbing out his eyes.

The victory of Thebes against the army of Polynices.

Medea slaughtering her children.

Later in Elizabethan theatre narration is used to similar effect: enlisting the imaginary powers of the audience as Shakespeare does in *Henry the Fifth*: "Think when we talk of horses, that you see them / Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth" (Act I/I, 26-27). Shakespearian characters relayed their experiences through the language of visual imagery and metaphor to an active, imagining audience. This was the theatre of imagination, of image through word, where image by other means was minimal.

Today the visual image predominates. Technology creates images that earlier audiences imagined. We do not have to reconstruct images in our minds of events from history, fantasy, or the present; these events exist in photographs and video. The imagination is no longer needed in order to understand the story. Yet the audience's imagination is still active: applying to the image different meanings, experiences,

Fig. 7: Weinstein Mortuary, the Ghetto of Warsaw (1941) (Schwarberg, 2001, p.97)



possibilities, and interpretations. Mother Courage's cart need no longer be the cart we expect it to be: it can be the tea-lady's trolley, a spaceship, a decommissioned tank, or an old Volkswagen van painted with 1970's peace slogans and psychedelic patterns. Already this last image begins to suggest things about Mother Courage in a new context: is she a cynical peace activist, now turned war profiteer? In other situations, loading the cart with her dead children, she may become one of the Jewish prisoners ordered by Nazi soldiers to take the bodies from the gas chambers to the crematorium ovens. Perhaps she resumes her trade, selling the clothes off the corpses, or selling pieces of their bodies the way third world immigrants sell their organs. Perhaps this image can begin to communicate with and embody the common image of immigrant street hawkers, or market vendors.

In this way the design can create stage images that produce 'multi-vocal' layers of reference in performance, where Mother Courage becomes interchangeable with any profiteer or survivor trading for her life. Victor Turner describes this 'multi-vocality' in *The Forest of Symbols* (1967, p.50) where "a single symbol may stand for many things". Similarly in theatre the stage image, as a symbol, begins to have a number references, as ritual symbols and objects do in Turner's study. Through the design of space, object, body, and light these many images are created and embodied. Performance becomes the physical, material narrative that Antonin Artaud called "spatial poetry" (1938, p.54) and what director Eugenio Barba refers to as "performance text" in *The Paper Canoe* (1995, p.152). Thus in a material narrative

the 'text' becomes a manipulation of the base materials of theatre, producing a sequence of images, references, and evolving relationships that the audience perceives and interprets. Image becomes the 'poetry' in a narrative formed by the interacting materials of body, space, light, sound and object.

In an environment laden with pictures and their meanings, performance design leads the storytelling, using as matter the images around it, both material and immaterial. Photography has created a prolific amount of symbolic, iconic tableaux: iconic images for each year, and each decade; iconic images of people, events, objects, places; iconic images of sport, music, film, theatre, religion, television, politics, space travel, and war. We use these images to define events. Even when all else is forgotten, they remain. We remember in images, and in images we are remembered. The British playwright Mark Ravenhill writes about the murder of two-year-old James Bulger by boys only several years older in 1993, and the difficulty of remembering much about the event except his memory of:

...two older boys reaching down to a younger one to lead him away. In my memory they are somewhere in the North – and Jamie has blue eyes and floppy blond hair. Or maybe I'm making up the blue eyes and blond hair to make him All Good and them All Bad. But that image is all I have (Ravenhill, 2004, p.307-308).

He writes further about how he created the character of Gary in his play *Shopping and Fucking* (1996), subconsciously combining aspects of James Bulger together with Tim, his lover who had recently died from HIV related illnesses. In Ravenhill's memory of the event, his own imagination and experiences had infected the original image, making it iconic, symbolic, and immaterial. We have many such images that mark important events and traumas; images so important they belong to a collective knowledge, and a collective conscience. As such they are material images and images immaterial. As the designer's materials, they must become substantial, physical, and events for all of the senses. They must become matter. These images matter.

A Vietnamese girl running, her clothes burnt off by napalm.

A student halting a line of tanks in Tiananmen Square.

A jumbo jet flying into a skyscraper.

A diminutive female soldier pulling a naked Iraqi on a leash.

They do more than report an action of what is happening, they are haunting, infectious, and horrifying. When we see these images in the media, we are merely immaterial witnesses. As a broadcast, a memory, as pixelised imagery, or as a visual reference they are equally immaterial in our own lives.

It is the 'actual' experience of theatre that enables us to engage with this 'de-realised' imagery in a physical context of substance and sensation. We may smell Mother

Courage's sweat, hear her breathing as she tries to shift the heavy cart, the groaning of the wheel, the creaking of her joints, and maybe even begin to empathise in a physical way with her strenuous task and its affect upon her body. Such re-animation of alienated and de-realised events will allow the audience to encounter them in an unmedia/ed, visceral way; returning to what Artaud called "the physical knowledge of images" (1938, p.61). Thus as a manipulator of these images, and as a manipulator of the audience's relationship with them; the role of performance design has never been so important. The performance designer can fold into the material experience of theatre images from the audience's awareness of history and the media to create, as Artaud hoped to; "a material language by which theatre can be distinguished from words" (ibid, p.27). This stage image must become an event in which the embodied audience becomes complicit. Thus in the narrative of material action and active materials these 'virtual' images become 'actual', we can fully sense them, make sense of them, and begin to understand the part we play in them.

What follows in 'Material Light', 'The Object', 'The Material Space', 'The Material Body' and 'The Collective Body' is an investigation of the materials (light, object, space, and body), that design can activate using this materialised image and material narrative.

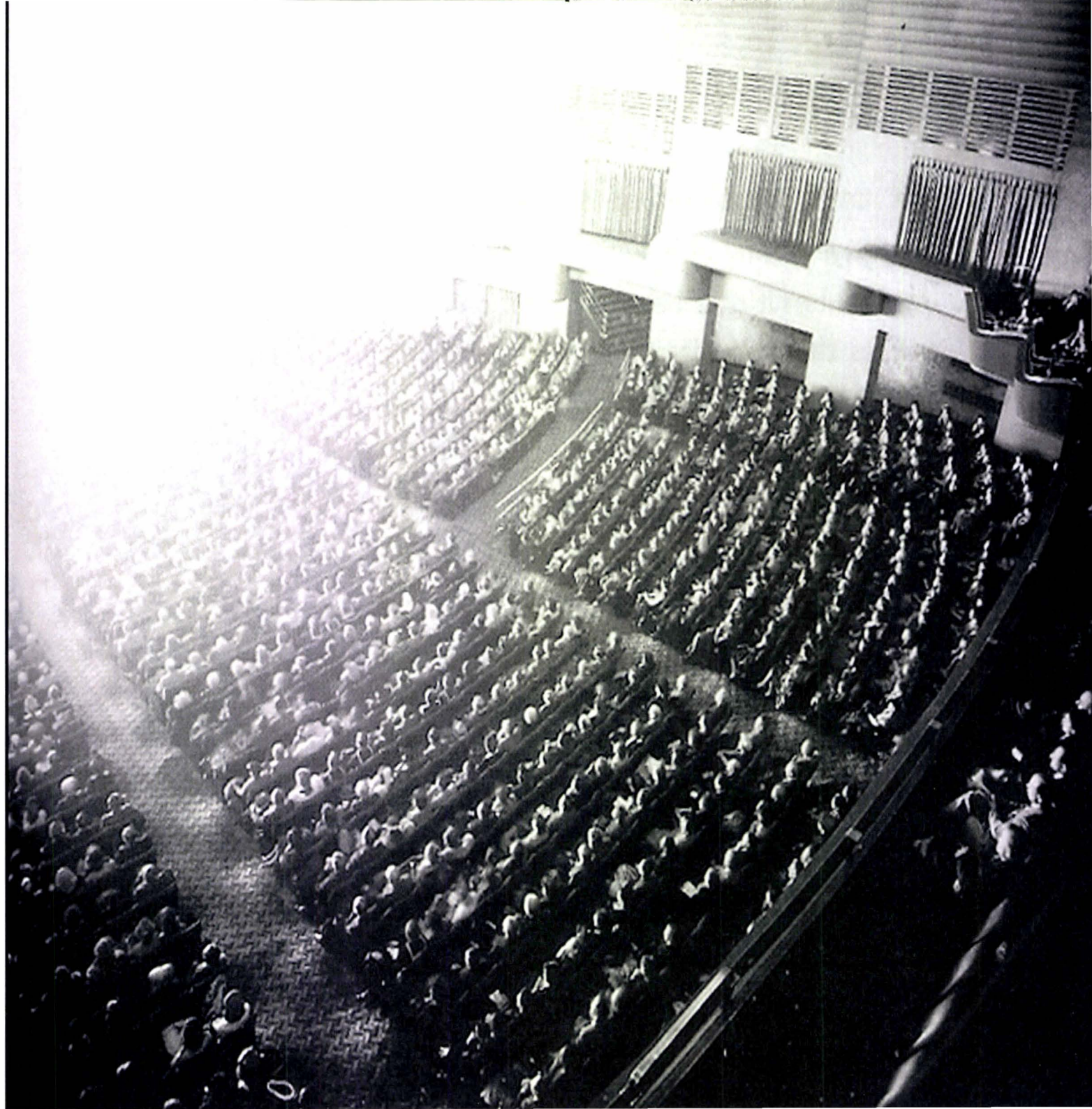
Material Light

Light is the most prolific performer of all: around the world millions of people gather in cinemas to watch projected light performing stories, and in homes to watch the performing light of television screens. In these places of light and shadow, Plato's simile of the Cave becomes literal, wherein he equated our experience of seeing the world as a shadow-play:

...human beings are condemned to sit facing the rear wall of the cave, manacled with their heads locked in place so they can only see shadows cast by a fire behind them onto this wall. They cannot see their neighbors in this darkened auditorium, but think they see them in the shadows opposite. Other shadows are created by people behind them carrying effigies of animals, people, and objects' (Wiles, 2003, p.209).

A light show is cast upon the wall of the cave, and the captive viewers believe it to be reality. Today Plato's Cave has become a household appliance, where we are enthralled by the dancing of electric shadows upon the interiors of our homes,

Fig. 8: Revelers at the Metropolitan Resort facing a synthetic sunset. "In Radio City Music Hall the fun never sets (advertisement)". (Koolhaas, R. 1994, *Delirious New York: a retroactive manifesto*, Monacelli Press, New York, p.209) "The twenty-four hour cycle of day and night is repeated several times during a single performance [...] Day and night are drastically reduced, time accelerated, experience intensified, life – potentially – double, tripled..." (ibid.p210).



apartment blocks, and cinemas. Light has been used in this way to make us believe fictional worlds and images. As in Plato's Cave, we seldom notice our neighbors in this darkened auditorium: whether in the cinema, in front of television, in life itself, or in theatre. As Kafka observes of cinema: "their flickering images blind people to reality" (Weiss, 1989, p.141).

Ever since theatres and opera houses of the 1800's began to turn lights down in the auditorium during their performances, lighting has worked at alienating its audiences, and hiding their faces from one another. In 1931 the following notice was included in publicity for a production of *Twelfth Night* at Sadler's Wells:

The audience will greatly assist the atmosphere of the play if they will kindly remain silent after the lowering of the lights and refrain from striking matches during the progress of scenes.

Just this year (in 2005) an audience member in this same theatre was reprimanded for lighting matches in the auditorium so he could read the program notes. Today illumination is the strict domain of the production, and specifically the lighting operator. The striking of matches, flash photography, or torches is not allowed. Thus illumination, "[1] the provision of light to make something visible or bright, or [2] the process of clarifying or explaining something" (*Encarta*, 1999) cannot be provided by the audience; it belongs to the lighting operator alone. Light illuminates,

and makes form apparent. Light materialises form, but by darkening the auditorium lighting has had the opposite effect, concealing the body of the spectator, and masking them from each other the way that Plato's Cave does. Thus light in the theatre becomes both 'disembodied' and 'disembodying'.

Disembodied, light comes from an invisible light source and is subject to the control of the invisible lighting operator. If the material aspects of light are to be considered in performance design then it is important to emphasise the physical origins of light: the 'light source'. Objects that produce light for performance are often luminaries specific to the stage, and as such are traditionally concealed behind draped 'legs' of fabric on the sides of the stage or by short curtains in front of the lighting bars. Thus stage lighting is often a 'disembodied' medium: emanating like a recorded voice from offstage. This very concealment of the light source, and the omniscient yet invisible presence of a lighting operator, creates the harmonic changes of atmosphere, and the sensation of 'effects': "the impression produced on a spectator or listener by a work of art, literature, a performance, etc" (Brown, 1993, p.786). This denial of the physical light source, and the darkening of the auditorium make the effects often seem symbolic, un-naturalistic, illogical, and even divine.

The light switch and bulb is mundane by comparison with the magic of stage effect, lighting and projection, but is more physically present. When light actually responds and interacts with performance, then a greater materiality of light occurs. In life light

responds not by 'effects' but through 'affects': for example a domestic scene of abuse would not realistically occur in a red light, or with the atmospheric dimming of light. Instead the aggressor may accidentally knock the hanging light bulb, causing it to swing about and cast violent moving shadows, or the perpetrator may turn off the light so as to hide the sight of the crime in darkness, with only sound to give it away. Thus the material 'affects' and 'object' of light must be revealed in order to achieve immediacy and tangibility in the lighting design. The audience must be able to experience these 'affects' and see the switch, the lamp, the bulb, the shade, the flame, the neon tube and the diode. Design must embody the emanation of light by acknowledging its physical, bodily source in performance.

As it is cast, light is also affected in a material way by the performance: the flame flickers as a body moves past it; the shadow stretches over surfaces, responding to the movement of the light source, the figure, and the surface; neon tubes flicker and bang as they turn on; and light reflected off water casts rippling patterns onto surfaces called 'gibigiane'. These are not mere 'effects', since they respond to a material world of 'affects' in material space. Exposing these origins of light is important because it allows the viewer to see the object of light, that it is a physical thing, and not a disembodied, divine illumination. When the performance creates and manipulates its own lighting in this fashion, then there is a more immediate connection between action and illumination: action can illuminate, and illumination can act. This helps dispel the concept of a ghostly 'otherworld' of stage technology presiding over the

production. Instead the 'effects' belong in a world of more spontaneous, natural, and active phenomena. There is also the sense that the control of the lighting 'effect' is no longer a godlike attribute of the design; instead it operates within the audience's realm of physical and haptic experience. An audience that is embodied within the space sees their own shadows, and their own reflection; they may even flick the light switch themselves, wield a torch, or have some similar influence upon illumination. Thus lighting moves from 'effects' into the 'affects' caused by performer and audience together. This move is the key aspect of Material Light. Adolphe Appia, A performance designer of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, proposed that light could unify three-dimensional forms of theatre: the performer, the floor, and vertical scenery. Now the body of the audience is added to this formula.

The use of projection and screen image in performance can complexify and challenge the sense of theatre as a live and physical experience. The moving image of television and film media is quite literally the simulacrum of life that Baudrillard describes, where "object and substance have disappeared" (1983, p.12). Online gaming, internet, Playstation, Xbox, cinemas, phone and video texting, DVD, video, television, and virtual reality - these aspects of our technologised environment all rely upon the play of light upon (or within) a screen. This flat interface between our world and the world of the fiction is not so far from the flat painted screens of conventional proscenium scenery, that slide in from the 'fly tower' to 'transport' the performance to the various virtual environments of the play.

What role does this 'screen light' have in a material theatre? For performance to be relevant to its material environment and its contemporary setting, then the prolific presence of this technology in our everyday lives must also be explored on stage. As oil runs out and the price of travel increases around the world; we shall rely more and more upon the immaterial (Borgesian) map of the Internet and screen image, and not the physical world, to maintain a sense of global culture and internationalism. Therefore it is vital that the Theatre of Matter comments upon, explores, and makes use of the virtual worlds of screen light. As a material that the modern audience is very familiar with, the screen must be engaged with in a physical, embodied way. The audience and performance can have a haptic relationship with the screen, where they can touch, and affect the world within: thus making the immaterial aspects of screen light more interactive, more material.

'Live' use of 'screen light' becomes important in order to make the screen perform, and do more than broadcast its images. This not only maintains the liveness in performances that use audio-visual media, but also empowers the performance, the audience, and theatre in general within the virtual, immaterial environment of the screen. Like the light bulb that the performer may turn on and off, the screen needs to be responsive to the physicality of performing and spectating bodies. It needs to become an embodied object in performance, performing the way that the Wooster Group made it perform in *Brace Up!* (1991) where characters are played upon the television monitors. This object can also be physically and conceptually penetrated as

in Wim Vandekeybus' dance theatre production of *Blush* (2002) where the dancers jumped through a louvered projection screen, appearing to 'enter' the image through their stage exit into the screen, as the exit simultaneously coincides with the 'entry' of their figure into the projection.

To emphasise the performing or object screen performers may converse with on screen characters, they may converse with *themselves* as on screen characters, live footage can bring the performer and audience together in the same image; and exteriors of the site, venue, or theatre can be explored to 'bring in' exterior aspects of the space, or to 'bring in' an exterior performance. In these ways the 'de-realised' surface of the screen image begins to animate, and interacts with performance, audience, space, and body. It is longer a godlike, disembodied surface. 'Effect' has become 'affect'. Just as the performer can interact with the bulb, so too can we affect the screen, and physically interface with the virtual world that it embodies.



The Object

There is an anonymous, uncredited cast that needs identification and welcome in a theatre that is still dominated by the performer and the performer's dreams. The theatre of objects must be recognized, for as Jiri Veltrusky concludes in his essay *Man and Object in Theatre* “[t]his is precisely where the theatre can show new ways of perceiving and understanding the world” (Garvin, 1964, p.91).

The object is “a thing placed before the eyes or presented to one of the senses” (Brown, p.1964). This dictionary definition emphasises ‘the act’ in relation to identifying the object: the act of ‘placing’ (before the eyes) and ‘presenting’ makes something an object. In this way everything in theatre is an object; objectified by the eyes and senses within the frame of performance. Nevertheless theatre has further objectified a host of objects known variously as ‘props’ (from ‘properties’ of the performance or performer) which include “furnishings, set dressing, and all items large and small, which cannot be classified as scenery, electrics or wardrobe” (Primrose, 2005). Recognised more for what they are not, props are the miscellany of performance design. Beyond the stage the ‘prop’ has other meanings. The prop is a support, “one not an integral part of the thing supported” (Brown, 1993, p.2377) and often auxiliary to the main body, the body of the performer. Also from its theatre term ‘property’ it is described as a thing belonging, in ownership. But objects can perform,

Fig. 9: Kitchen trolley from a catering supplies catalogue, 2004.

and must revolt against this serfdom: objects must object. To do so it will not be 'the act' or performance that defines them, but their own acts that define them.

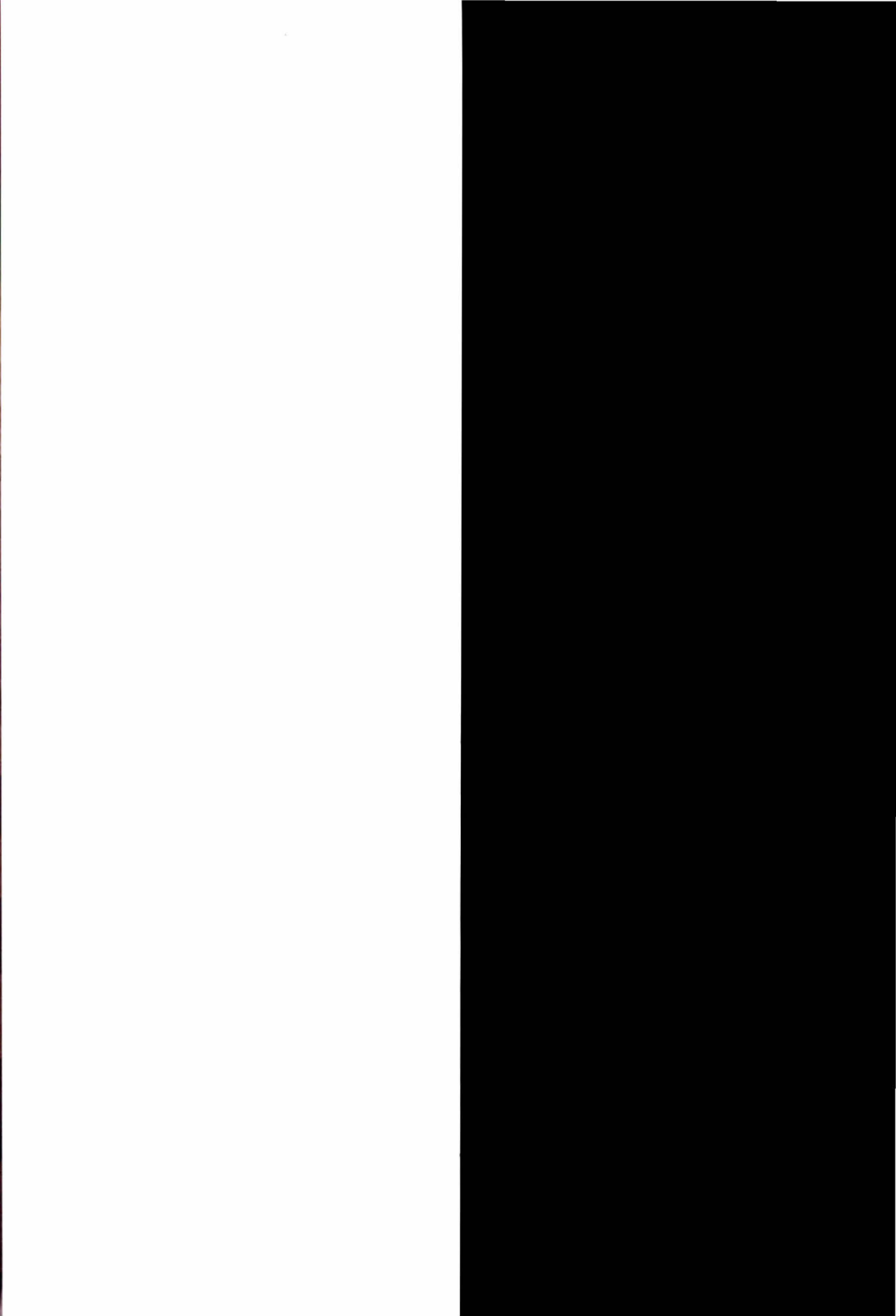
In everyday life, objects are more than performers; they are often our masters. We are possessed by the macabre dances of material needs and immaterial, un-necessary desires. Telephones, televisions, envelopes, computers, guns, a new fridge, a faster car, and a Rolex watch: these objects have power over us in our lives. Paul Virilio cites the artist Paul Klee, who over one hundred years ago wrote "[n]ow objects perceive me" (Virilio, 1994, p.59). For Virilio and all of us "[t]his rather startling assertion has become objective fact, the truth" (ibid). Klee may have written his words in response to the advent of the camera, or any number of the crazy objects that typified his era of eccentric invention⁵, but today his statement has more relevance than ever. In this new millennium the world of objects watches us even closer: through remote video, CCTV, and satellite photography. Pilotless planes drop bombs from the sky. Guided missiles destroy cities. Objects are waging war, and yet in theatre we still call them 'props'.

Where human agency and casualty is concealed in war through focus upon objects and machines, warfare assumes the likeness of a puppet show. Objects are seen to wage war on each other where "reports turned the attention of their readers away from

⁵ Typified in Leonard De Vries' book *Victorian Inventions* (1971): electroplating the dead, a photographic rifle, or publicity by velocipede.

wage war on each other where “reports turned the attention of their readers away from injury done to the bodies of soldiers and towards the mechanistic, distant war fought by machines against other machines” (Taylor, 1998, p.170). Yet objects are left behind, or pulled from the wreckage of bombed buildings and vehicles, that seem familiar. The human body; injured, dead or dismembered, is this object that censorship deems ‘untasteful’ for primetime broadcast. This overlooked human casualty is disowned by the media and reduced to the object by the term ‘collateral damage’. It is a profound and potent symbol that can be investigated using performers, or the agency of objects that stand in for the body that has gone: the doll left behind by a Kosovan refugee, the piles of shoes in Auschwitz, empty gloves, empty clothing, or a coffin. These objects and the body object must be “raised to the dignity of signs” that Artaud (1938, p.72) describes, where they become symbols of the tragedy that has occurred.

When an object performs, it interacts with events the way it does in life: it perceives us, controls us, and affects our bodies. A performing object tells stories and makes suggestions: so we see in a scene more than what is materially present. We do not look at an object and only see a bottle, a knife, or a shoe. We notice what kind of shoe it is, and what condition it is in to find out more about its owner. We observe how it is placed, and read its relationship to other objects in the space. The forensic eye of the spectator investigates the object for clues of what could possibly be happening, possibly have happened, or possibly be about to happen. A gun, a cellphone, an



envelope, or an unmarked package: these are objects charged with possibility, and potential power. Veltrusky describes this as ‘action force’, where an object “attracts a certain action to it. As soon as a certain prop appears on stage, this force which it has provokes in us the expectation of a certain action” (Garvin, 1964, p.88). Once again ‘the act’ becomes crucial to the perception of the object, this time an act, imagined or conceived, that makes the object perform. As well as suggesting potential acts, objects also have a history, so that they resonate with an event long after the moment it strikes our senses. Thus Macbeth’s dagger becomes what Veltrusky calls a ‘sign’, in this case a sign of murder. Objects are haunted by their histories, and bear with them the burden of events. They object to these events by reminding us, as in Elaine Scarry’s example of how “so much of our awareness of Germany in the 1940s is attached to the words ‘ovens’, ‘showers’, ‘lampshades’, and ‘soap’” (1995, p.41).

Veltrusky proposes that when an object closely linked to an action is used for another purpose it is “perceived as a scenic metonymy” (Garvin, 1964, p.88). Scarry describes a similar method used in torture where everyday objects (refrigerators, bathtubs, chairs) are mis-used by the torturer upon the victim to destroy the victim’s sense of the ordinary world. Domestic objects become “unmade by being made into weapons” (1995, p.41). All that is familiar and comfortable is upended by this abuse. The abused object, the victim, and the victim’s perception of the world are effectively

Fig. 10: Khmer Rouge Torture Chamber (detail), previously a classroom of Tuol Svay Prey High School (Manfred Leiter ,2002, www.tropicalisland.de, retrieved 18.7.05).



changed through another ‘act’. Designers must unmake the world of the object using similar acts in theatre, by forcing objects to perform in many roles, and take on many meanings. An item of play, such as a baseball bat becomes easily ‘unmade’ in torture and theatre by being used as a weapon. Not only is the object itself ‘unmade’ but also the game it stands for, and play itself becomes deconstructed and perverted by the misappropriation. Thus the everyday world can be ‘unmade’ by the invention on stage. Theatrical ‘misuse’ of objects can unmake these objects, challenge reality, and establish new metaphorical realities within the performance, where a doll *is* the abused child, or matchsticks really are the lives of soldiers upon a battlefield.

Under the surface of a chosen moment, object, or space, there remains this conceptual formlessness and ambiguity that the audience interacts with, and tries to make sense of from the moment a performance begins; as described by Bruno Schulz in a letter to Stanislaw Witkiewicz: “[t]here is no such thing as a dead object, a hard-edged object, an object with strict limits. Everything flows beyond its boundaries, as if trying to break free of them at the earliest opportunity” (Miklaszewski, 2002, p.37). This oscillation of meaning allows performance to be ‘multivocal’, a word that Victor Turner uses in his description of how symbols, ritual, and ceremony have “multiple levels of meaning, with referents from cosmology to social relations” (1967, p50).

Fig. 11: *Balkan Baroque*. Marina Abramovic (1997). “Abramovic presented this performance at the XLVI Venice Biennale (1997) as a gesture of mourning and healing for the civil wars in the Balkans [...] Abramovic sat on a huge pile of bones, which she cleaned and scrubbed one by one for six hours every day, over five days” (Warr, 2000, p.112).

Performance design has the potential to use such symbols to mediate between the materiality of its subject and its immaterial legacies. Thus the material world of the performance becomes “a ‘fan’ or ‘spectrum’ of referents [...] enabling it to connect a wide range of significata” (ibid). Worlds (domestic, dramatic, and universal) are included in the moment an actor steps on stage and the audience begin to digest the images they are presented with. Kantor called this variation in meaning the ‘embellage’; using the French word *emballer*, meaning to pack or wrap up. As well as having interest in the physical aspects of wrapping (letters, sacks etc) Kantor also describes how Embellage is a “wrapping over of human affairs” (1993, p83) as in the case of an umbrella “sheltering poetry, uselessness, helplessness, defenselessness, disinterestedness, hope, ridiculousness” (ibid).

Meanings, memories, histories, and associations gather around a performing object. Roland Barthes suggests in his essay on Georges Bataille’s *Story of the Eye* (1928) that the story of an object can be “that of a migration, the cycle of avatars it passes through, far removed from its original being, down the path of a particular imagination that distorts but never drops it” (Bataille, 1928, p.119). So it is in Bataille’s excessive story of sexual obsession and perverted violence that the eyeball becomes associated with and embodies similar objects: eggs, a saucer of milk, and the testicle of a bull. They become unified by the characters’ depraved actions upon them, which challenge the white purity of each object with sex, with pissing, blood, and violence. This world of associations and visual metaphor belongs to theatre as much

as literature; but rather than materialising a moment, the multi-vocal symbol has the potential to open up the world of the imagination and the world of images. The materialisation occurs where associations move from a distanced, alienated images into the physical space of the spectator. The image materialised becomes object: “a thing placed before the eyes or presented to the senses” (Brown, 1993, p.1964). Thus the canteen wagon in *Mother Courage and Her Children* is not only a visual spectacle; the sounds of the cart are there in detail; we may smell the food she carries on it to sell soldiers, smell her sweat or her unwashed condition, we may feel the vibrations as Mother Courage pushes it on stage, and sympathise with her body as (increasingly unaided by her dying or disappearing children) the cart becomes heavier and harder to push. By using the world of image and metaphor, the designer is also able to use the audience’s imagination as another one of the senses. In this way they will not only experience the event that is happening physically in front of them, but can also begin to perceive the awful materiality of other events that are suggested. Mother Courage’s cart, laden with the bodies of her dead children is not just the materiality of here and now: it can also resonate with the materiality of events that happened a long time ago, or that are happening ‘somewhere else’. Mother Courage’s cart can also become the cart laden with Jewish bodies sixty years ago, or the stretcher that bore a dead Iraqi prisoner out of the American controlled Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq last year.

To illustrate the object body Veltrusky used an example of actors playing soldiers;

made to stand outside a door in the set to indicate that the building is a barracks. The object body has a greater role to play than this: it is more than just a 'warm prop'. At its most objectified the human body is a dead body: an empty shell for what went before. On stage the most objectified body is one that is manipulated as if it were dead. Veltrusky suggests that "the sphere of the live human being and that of the lifeless object are interpenetrated, and no exact limit can be drawn between them" (Garvin, 1964, p.86), thus establishing the possibility of object as performer, and performer as object in more than just the category of the puppet. In this material and seemingly lifeless form the performer's body is completely malleable and robotic, thus becoming like the 'uber-marionettes' that Edward Gordon Craig demanded when he said "[t]he actor must go, and in his place comes the inanimate figure" (1911, p.81).

The designer is responsible for manipulating the object of the performer to invoke these figures, and in doing so, object to the cruelties and indignity they suffer in images such as those leaked from Abu Ghraib prison in 2004 of Iraqi detainees being abused by American soldiers. In these images we are reminded of the object qualities of the body. Our own bodies are objects: objectified by abuse and objectified by advertising, fashion, and the media. It is a lump of meat that twists and stretches against its suffering, or twists and stretches for the camera. The piled bodies in the

Fig. 12: Shoes (detail), Stutthof Concentration Camp (Reinartz & Von Krockow, 1995, p.188)





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General Mark Cooley with an Iraqi prisoner in a photograph being used as evidence in his court martial. Three British soldiers have pleaded n
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charges against Kenyon and has re-
served the right to introduce an al-
ternative charge of "failing to report
that soldiers under his command had
forced two unknown naked males,
who were being detained by British
to simulate an act of oral sex".
to show one of the sex acts
an Iraqi with a
neck, but
poral Larkin has accepted that he
committed an unacceptable act," said
William England, his lawyer. "He ac-
cepts that he has brought shame to
himself, his regiment and his family."
Larkin faces an extra charge of hu-
milating prisoners by forcing them
to undress but has pleaded not guilty.
The third defendant, Cooley, is ac-
cused of pretending to punch and to
kick prisoners for a "trophy photo-
graph". He is also charged with "dis-
graceful behaviour of a cruel kind"
behaviour of a cruel kind"
driving the forklift truck
Iraqi was dangled.

mass graves of Auschwitz, Sarajevo, and Rwanda, or a pyramid of living bodies in Abu Ghraib: this is the body as an object to be stacked like fruit in a green-grocers, to be arranged as if it were property or produce. The abuse in Abu Ghraib created a theatre: posing the bodies of prisoners for the cameras, making them perform. Here the ‘virtual’, sanitised ‘theatre’ of the second Iraq war was uncovered to reveal the ugly ‘actuality’ beneath. The object body is exposed from behind the stage curtain of media control, ‘object warfare’, and public relations. These bodies were objects, not performers in this theatre of war: objects to be manipulated, humiliated, and abused with other objects: neon tubes, blindfolds, cables, and the object-bodies of fellow prisoners. Objectified, they are stripped naked. Objectified, hoods or womens’ underpants cover their faces. Objectified, they crawl on all fours, simulate oral sex, or crouch on top of one another. Objectified, they are smeared with shit and their own blood. Their indignity has made them abject, that which is “cast off, rejected” (Brown, 1993, p.5), a bodily representation of the unclean, and improper atrocities performed upon them.

The abject is the human body as object: our existence brought so low that it objects to our senses, it objects to the cleanliness that conceals it, excludes it, and reviles it. In *The Powers of Horror* (1941) Julia Kristeva talks of the abject as that which “prevents

Fig. 13: Image of a British Lance Corporal abusing an Iraqi detainee at Camp Bread Basket, in Basra, 2003 (from ‘The Brutish Army’, a *Times* article printed by *The Dominion Post*, Thursday January 20, 2005).

images from crystallising as images of desire and/or nightmare and causes them to break out into sensation (suffering) and denial (horror)" (p.154). Thus the 'virtual' sensation (of the fantasy dream or fetishistic nightmare) is challenged by actual (material) sensations of suffering and repulsion. The abject body is not only a material body that exudes the filth, injury, and suffering or anything "that belong[s] to the borders of the body" (ibid, p.71). It also challenges the vision of an ideal, cosmetic body that "must bear no trace of its debt to nature [and] be clean and proper in order to be fully symbolic" (ibid.p.102). Thus the abject world is the material world, and the abject body on stage returns performance to a materiality, and a 'matterative' physicality, where the body of the performer is not divine, or transcendent: but earthly, mortal, and human.

The object and abject: these are the properties of a material theatre. They require design to bring them on stage and materialise the events on the world stage: so that we never distance ourselves from these events, do not sanitise them from our view of propriety, and never stop taking responsibility. The return to materiality that occurs through the abject and visceral body can create an embodied experience. Laden with her dead children, the cart of Mother Courage must not be easy to push. We as an audience must feel impelled to stand up from our seats to help this frail old woman when we see the muscles straining in her frame, feel the muscles straining in our own frames, and feel the slippery mud beneath our feet.

With care these objects must be presented and allowed to perform their privations, “killing in the name of life” (ibid, p.15) as Kristeva describes, thus moving performer and object from their respective status of ‘subject’ and ‘property’ to that of animated objects that perform and present their indignities. Together in the ‘act’ of performance they will assume the urgency of the ‘actual’, and achieve a materiality and a physical significance beyond optical disbelief. This theatre of material objects will cause the objection of the eye to be joined by the objections of the other senses.

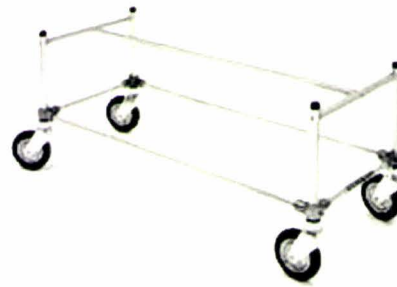


Fig. 14: Mortuary cart (www.med-worldwide.com). Retrieved 18.7.05.

The Material Space

Why a finite stage
that can impose
limited order
to the vision of man?
Arena, apron, proscenium
are terminals
that reduce the spatial world
to numbered formulae.
So man
in free space
moving only in time,
can create
his own order at will,
as actor within
spatial infinity,
where boundaries are drawn
by light and visual angle
to define.

Paterson, J.L. (1970) *A Definition of Theatre* (Wiles, 2003, p.248)

Significant movements in theatre architecture of the Twentieth Century were characterized by the concept of creating the theatre as a neutral space for performance. This space that made minimal visual impact upon the performance was preferred over the decorative proscenium arch of previous centuries. At its acme, this preoccupation produced the black box theatre: a space ostensibly made boundless by featureless black walls and minimal décor. The progenitor of the Black-box was Edward Gordon Craig's notion of the theatre as "one vast square of empty space" (Roose-Evans, 1970, p.40). His exultant declaration of this new space for performance is expressed like it was an act of conception: "in a few minutes I shall have given birth to that which has for a long while been preparing far back before I was born" (ibid, p.33). In her essay *(IM)MATER(IALITY) and the Black-box Theatre as an 'Empty Space' of Reproduction* (2003), performance designer and theatre architect Dorita Hannah describes this space as a womb or matrix in which any imagined performance could materialise, while also suggesting that the black-box needs revision; that "[i]t need not be Plato's 'eternal and indestructible' no-place and every place, but rather a place of substance. A space that breathes, swells, sweats, bleeds and breaks" (p.32). Hannah's assertion of what is essentially an abject space suggests ways that the architecture of the theatre itself can become a part of the performance, and communicate with the performance.

While Craig's 'Empty-Space' is specific to theatre architecture, Peter Brook applied a similar concept to the methodology of the director, with his statement "I can take an

empty space and call it a bare stage” (1968, p.9) He applies this belief in various productions like *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1970), set in what is essentially a white box; *Mahabharata* (1985) staged in a quarry in Avignon; his 1972 tour of the Sahara using only a Persian rug as a performance platform; and the residency of his company in the ‘Bouffes du Nord’ theatre since 1974. Yet none of these spaces are empty. The ‘Bouffes du Nord’ is an old dilapidated 19th Century theatre with the décor of that period affected by “wrinkles, pock-marks, and signs of having passed through life” (Wiles, 2003, p.263), while in the Sahara performances would have been affected by the environment of each town, in the audience’s involvement and how they chose to gather around the rug. The white box of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* may also in theory be an empty space, but even in this example, one can do little to erase the features of the theatre and the audience that existed outside its sterilized white frame.

A sense of propriety and sterility prevails, but there is no such thing as an empty space. Even the nondescript theatre space painted completely white or completely black has features and character. If the theatre that Craig described as ‘The Theatre of the Future’ had succeeded in having “only walls, floor and ceiling” (ibid, p.246); then he would have had to consider the doors for the audience to enter, seating, doors backstage, the lighting rig, and operating booth. These are all necessary aspects of the theatre space, and an unspoken feature of Craig’s ‘empty space’. He also expects the audience will not see these things. When he says, “no sound is heard – no movement

seen” (Roose-Evans, 1970, p.40), he even expects the audience will not see or hear each other. He denies his audience. And what materials is the roof, the floor, and the wall made from? What colours? How big? Who is the audience? There is no such thing as an empty space – for every theatre has its own idiosyncratic structure, aspects, materials, and (hopefully) an audience.



Fig. 15: *Dialogues '99/II*, (1999) a performance by Sasha Waltz & Guests in the uninhabited Jewish Museum in Berlin, constructed by Daniel Libeskind (www.jemand.de). Retrieved 18.7.05.

Theatre in the hypothetical void of the black box or 'empty space' does not accept the abject, material quality of its environment, and what that can do to enhance a production. When theatre works with what is part of the material environment, then there is less division between the performance and the world of the audience. Like Craig, the Theatre of Matter seeks to create an infinite space. But rather than completely isolating the performance from reality it will do so by reducing the membrane that divides theatre from everyday life, seeking the infinity in the world outside the frame. Theatre's division from everyday life has two aspects: one material, the other immaterial. Materially, it is the physical boundary that theatre constructs for performance: the platform, the proscenium window, and the line drawn between audience and performer in acts as simple as Peter Brook putting a carpet down. This frame separates the world of theatre from everyday life and makes the theatrical act distinct and elevated. However, the more the spectators see themselves within this frame, the more the performance can interact with and infect their lives beyond the theatrical interlude, bringing the worlds together.

The immaterial division between theatre and the everyday persists wherever there is the decision to attend performance, the very name 'performance', and the rules of performance: such as the audience's compact to accept the fictional events on stage that is the 'suspension of disbelief', or what Carlson calls in *The Haunted Stage* (2001) "the agreement that this action will be "framed" as theatre" (p.132). Before proceeding with a description of the techniques that reduce these divisions, it is

important to acknowledge that ‘the frame’ cannot be completely removed from theatre; especially where an audience consciously chooses to spend an evening at a performance. The mere decision and act of attending a performance puts a frame around it, and separates it from the acts of everyday life. The spectator’s time in a performance will always feel like an interlude as long as they are aware that a performance is occurring.

Theatrical performance plays upon the boundaries between the ‘virtual’ and the ‘actual’ where the lived world intersects with the fictive. Therefore what a Material Space can aim for are intrusions into ‘reality’ that extend the performance space beyond its immediate location. In this way a production staged on the roof of an office block may allow the spectator to see out across the city during the performance, thus including in the theatrical frame an environment that is kilometers in diameter. For those who live and work in this city the performance will enclose their everyday environment and lives within the theatrical act. The theatrical frame is thus delimited and expanded, becoming a transparent layer that exists alongside material reality (the city), including the domestic, and everyday environments inhabited by the audience within the performance. The production thus acknowledges the actual space of the theatre venue or site that the audience inhabits, simultaneously within the virtual spaces of the performance.

The production on the roof of an office block is a simplistic example, and many

productions cannot use this kind of scenic device to include a wider environment, especially in interior spaces. Nevertheless, every space has a range of features: the idiosyncracies mentioned earlier, that give it form, character, and identity. Most theatre audiences have been trained not to notice many of these features, with the existing environment denied (or bracketed out) for the duration of the performance by the suspension of disbelief. Thus the inconsistencies between the theatre space and the setting of the play go un-noticed, or are tolerated. A re-staging of Athol Fugard's *The Island* (1973) in 2001 at London's Old Vic Theatre put a play set in the bleak conditions of Robben Island Prison (where Nelson Mandela, Steven Biko and both the play's performers were confined) into a theatre with an ornately decorated auditorium. The minimalism of the performance, and its impoverished use of a few simple props contrasted with the opulence of a theatre that was not out of place in this performance, considering the colonial apartheid presence in the story.

Had this synergy been acknowledged in the performance or the design, an interesting communication between the material space of the auditorium (as the place of the audience) and the virtual place of the play (and the prison) would have been discovered. An intrusion into the auditorium could have been one way of illuminating these 'worlds apart' between the audience and the topic of crime against humanity. This was done by director-designer Robert Wilson in his recent production of *The Black Rider* at London's Barbican Theatre in 2004. Just before interval, he punctuated the final scene with the sequential opening of the Barbican's numerous side entry

doors in time to lighting changes and dramatic pauses in the music. At this instance the performance had intruded into the space of the spectator. Wilson had demonstrated his control of not only what occurs on stage, but had physically enveloped his audience in the world of the play, by bringing the play into the world of the audience.

Within these two examples it is clear that there are two dimensions to consider in the material space: the physical aspects of the space, but also its social, historical and associative aspects. Physically, design can subvert space so that it not only performs its own functions, but begins to serve the functions of the play as well. In this way Wilson claims the doors of the Barbican Theatre: bringing these aspects of the space into *The Black Rider* and infecting the world of the auditorium and the audience with the performance. This method becomes a lot more involved in examples of 'site-specific' performance, such as in *Bernadetje* by Alain Platel and Anne Sierens (1996), where the culture and physical space and structure of a bumper-car fair ride is utilised to perform a loose adaptation of 'Bernadette of Lourdes': a medieval play about rites of passage, saints, and miracles. The site provokes interactions between the original script (used as a material) and the frenetic world of the modern adolescent: MTV, street slang, techno music, and dodgem cars. As with the material object, space too can become wrapped in layers of meaning, suggestions, and metaphor as it was in this production where "[i]t was not so very far from the sweaty, dangerous, posturing glamour of the fairground to the cool, shadowy cathedral where moon-faced

choirboys looked slyly from under their long lashes as they sang like angels” (Gardner, October 19, 1997).

Design can subvert space, using physical and cultural characteristics to impose other ‘theatrical landscapes’ upon the physical space; the ‘spatial embellage’ that Kantor also used in class-rooms, cloak-rooms, and hen-houses to conjure up memories of the poverty, the paranoia, and the control of fascism. Thus the site can begin to ‘morph’ as certain aspects are manipulated and embodied: a battlefield can become a playground when the tank is used as a jungle-gym, the trenches become the site for a game of ball-tag, the fairground becomes a church, a church becomes a fairground; or the class-room in Kantor’s *Dead Class* becomes a place of cruelty where adults and old men are reduced to children by the “irresistible urge to score a victory over his classmates” (Miklaszewski, 2002, p.44). These moments of transformation, and morphing between states are never complete; instead there is an oscillation that challenges the audience to consider where they are, as the environment resonates with different social and historical references.

In addition to the two features of a space (its physical characteristics, and its particular social and historical functions) the audience brings a third dimension to this environment: their experiences, memories, and specific social and cultural identity. In

Fig. 16: Magnum Photography, from Manchester, W. (1989) *In Our Time: the world as seen by Magnum photographers*. American Federation of the Arts in association with Norton. New York.



The Production of Space (1976) Henri Lefebvre describes how space is “experienced by means of a body which walks, smells, tastes, feels, and in short: lives a space” (Wiles, 2003, p.10). Brook asserts in *There Are No Secrets* (1993) that theatre space should be “the same space for everyone who is present” (p.6), whilst The Theatre of Matter proposes a space where each seat is a different viewpoint, offering a different experience, where each pair of eyes chooses to focus on a different piece of the action. This is the democracy of the live performance: where each viewer within the collective body of the audience chooses how they see the play: as if they were their own cameraman and editor. And each brings a different history and culture that will also affect their experience. Thus the play materialises in a myriad different ways. There is no finite, monadic space in performance. Instead it attains the ‘infinity’ that Craig sought by containing references to other experiences, and other ‘landscapes’ within the performance’s wider environment: current events, politics, history, and culture, as Henri LeFebvre states:

...space is neither a mere ‘frame’, after the fashion of a frame of a painting, nor a form or container of a virtually neutral kind, designed to simply receive whatever is poured into it. Space is social morphology. It is to lived experience what form is to the living organism (Wiles, 2003, p.10).

Brook and Craig are both guilty of betraying this organism, and the bodies of the audience. Brook’s holistic space is dictatorial, enforcing one viewpoint. Meanwhile

Craig does not acknowledge the presence of the audience as a material part of that space. Thus his 'empty space' – if conceived – would be a lifeless room full of phantoms. The Theatre of Matter takes Brook's philosophy of being able to take any space, and with the actor and viewer create theatre. But what differs is in the focus upon the relationship between performer and viewer. Brook was interested in the spectator, but only so far as their perception of the performance is concerned; hence his description of an empty space requiring 'another to watch' in order for a moment of theatre to be engaged. Brook's main focus is upon the performer. His audience is not physically engaged; as Carlson asserts in *The Haunted Stage* (2001) "Brook's use of the term *empty* suggests a phenomenological ground-zero that is also not accurate" (p.133). Carlson goes on to describe how the characteristics of the site "bleed through" into the performance in a process he calls "ghosting". Thus the theatre of matter acknowledges that no space can be an 'empty space', since every performance has its own unique environment created by the audience and the architecture of the venue or site.

The audience is an environment, and a material space. This physical gathering of many bodies creates physical mass and matter, that flows to fill spaces, affects space, and creates or contains spaces of its own. The social gathering of so many people also creates a material of culture, memory, emotion, and sensation. These aspects of a material space formed by the body of the audience will be addressed in the final chapter 'The Collective Body'.

By drawing upon the culture, current events, memories, experiences, and physical characteristics that belong to both the audience and site, the space becomes a saturated and full space, a 'plenum': (1) "a space completely filled with matter" and (2) "a full assembly" (Brown, 1993, p.2250). As Hannah suggests, it may also be likened to a 'matrix' in the way that the matter within it is manipulated by the design. The matrix is the "uterus, the womb, a place or medium in which something is bred, produced, or developed; a setting or environment in which a particular activity or process occurs or develops" (Brown, 1993, p.1716). While not hermetically sealed from the outside world as Craig's 'Empty Space' was, it is a space in which all the active ingredients (the materials) of performance can interact and begin a process of 'materialisation'. Materialised images and sensations make this plenic space into a 'sensorium', which Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks define in *Theatre/Archaeology* (2001, p.10) as "a culturally located array of the senses". They describe the "complex manifold of simultaneous impressions" (ibid, p.54) that make "any account embodied, subjective, and poetic" (ibid). These 'impressions' of space emerge from our individual experiences as 'landscapes' of the performance environment: the battlefield, the prison, the playground, the field, or the concentration camp. Belonging to and contributing to this space, the fully embodied audience find themselves a physical part of the landscapes that take form on stage: within Helene Cixous' "country of others" (Drain, 1995, p.340) that is both familiar and strange, and where "if by chance one sheds tears, then perhaps on the earth a woman will be saved, a prisoner will be liberated" (ibid, p.344).

Thus material space puts the audience at the scene of the crime. As a part of the space, the audience is exposed to the importance of their materiality; they are exposed to the secretions of the space, its realisations, and its affects. This is a space that matters, it is abject and 'matterative': 'of the nature of containing pus' (Brown, 1993, p.1717). By employ of the everyday 'outside' world into the play, it is a space that cannot be escaped by return to the outside: the theatre spills over into everyday life, the audience leaves with their world both affected, and infected by the messages and images it has invoked.

The Material Body

The ballet: there in the spotlights. Here in the shadows of the auditorium: our applause. The noise, the delicate bow. Look back now, into this grand recess – a great palate that savors the delicacies served in the window beyond: the proscenium serverry.

Turn around. Look into the darkness, there we are. Row upon row of primate faces leaning forward to see the orchestra bow: hundreds of apes filling the shadows with our din. Look how beautiful we are! The pirouettes, the twirls, aren't we grand! And what makes this sound we congratulate ourselves with? Our hands. Our hands that separate us from the world of eating food from the ground, our hands that lift us from the wriggings in the dust, pawing at the soil, and the eat shit run sleep of the animal kingdom.

That's us on stage. The gods we once worshipped are the gods we dance now, the gods that we have become. Let us all clap, and fill the theatre with this sound made by our defining mark on the world – let the handprint sound in this hall of worship, for the handprint has conquered the world, and when we are gone the handprint will remain to tell all that we were here.

Fig. 17: Wayne McGregor's PreSentient (2003) for Ballet Rambert (photo by Ravi Decpres).



The more separated the body of the performer becomes from the material world of the audience, the more godlike, transcendent, and immaterial it becomes. The audience will not identify their own body with the experiences of this body, but instead they will deal with it on the abstracted plane that one perceives the fairytale life of a god or hero. Thus the 'abject' becomes important in order to transform this abstract, sanitised body of the performer into a body that is material, and a body that matters.

By contrast with the abject, the performer's body is traditionally presented as the fulcrum of the theatrical stage. In *A Short History of Western Performance Space* (2003) David Wiles describes how this Cartesian environment has separated the performer and audience, and where the action shown on stage "has the distant quality of a dream [...] the only certainty being the cogitating ego of the dreamer, secure in its darkened seat in the stalls within the skull" (p.7). Thus the body of the performer has become immaterial and elevated: a vessel for the text and voice, and a medium for psychological and spiritual concerns. Even experimental and avant-garde theatre forms have betrayed this over-weening reverence for the performing body: elevating it to a cerebral level of importance that exceeds its physical surroundings. Peter Brook focused specifically on the actor, often reducing the theatre to a bare stage in order to isolate and examine the power of performance: "A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged" (1968, p. 11). This approach belies a preoccupation as exclusive as opposing statements made by Craig in *The Actor and the Uber Marionette* (1907)

where he announces that “the actor must go” (Huxley & Witts, 2002, p.159).

The distinction of the body of the individual (the performer) from the collective body (the audience) attracts great reverence in modern culture: creating ‘stars’ or ‘idols’. Performers in Craig’s era were often just as celebrated: popular West End actors and actresses even had their portraits printed onto cigarette boxes as collectors items, and they attracted as much attention as their modern counterparts do today. This divinity also attracted the iconoclasm of individuals like the Futurist Enrico Prampolini who, like Craig, asserted that “actors will no longer be tolerated” (Kirby, 1969, p.98). Today more than ever divinity is a strong feature of the modern performer, in a time where religious values and icons hold less value than they have before. “This is my church, this is where I heal my hurt” sang the pop star ‘Maxi Jazz’ from *Faithless*, as he bounced up and down with his arms out like a crucifix, performing at Wellington’s Town Hall last year. The performer is the contemporary icon, immortalized in a thousand such image memories, images, biographies, TV documentaries, films, fanzines, and websites.

The Theatre of Matter can return this revered body to its most basic composition: that of the object, or meat. This is the body seen as a raw material: like wood, fabric, food, or light. As a plastic material, manipulated by the design, it is no longer the sole, or central conduit between performance and audience. This ‘materialising’ affect upon the performer’s body will counter the ‘de-realising’ effects that media and ‘celebrity’

has upon the body. This is an age of cosmetics, where cosmetic media, and cosmetic, sanitized bodies conceal the ugly, damaged, disfigured, or abject body. In words that may also pertain to the advertising of any number of products Taylor describes how “war is contained and made fit for public consumption” (1998, p.11) by effects such as those described in Paul Rogers’ essay upon journalism of the 1990 Gulf War, *The Myth of the Clean War*: “[t]he media was given plentiful access to video footage showing deserted bridges and bunkers being destroyed with great accuracy. Any footage showing people being killed was carefully withheld from view” (Crary & Kwinter, 1992, p.622) The performer’s body must not be a cosmetic, exalted figure; instead the body of the performer must become the site for (or sight of) the ‘unwholesome’ and ‘unsanitary’ aspects of humanity that are denied through the media. It must become comparable with what Julia Kristeva calls ‘The Corpse-Body’ that is “a decaying body, lifeless, completely turned into dejection, blurred between the inanimate and the inorganic, a transitional, swarming inseparable lining of a human nature whose life is undistinguishable from the symbolic” (1941, p.109), a body that confronts and challenges our perception of a clean and perfect world.



The body as a potent symbol is explored in Kristeva's essay *Holbein's Dead Christ* (Feher, 1989, p.245) where she observes "there isn't the slightest suggestion of transcendency" in Holbein's painting of one of the most holy and transcendental icon of the Western world. Her description of its gaunt frame, the skin pulled back from the bone, the ugliness, the mutilation, and the bruises describes how difficult it is to believe that this is the body of a man who shall rise again, deprived as it is of the beauty and dignity that images of dead Christ normally have. It is nevertheless "a faithful depiction of a man who had undergone unbearable torments. He had been wounded, beaten by the people, stoned, had born the cross, and finally he had suffered the agony of crucifixion, lasting for six hours" (ibid). The physicality, the mortality of the performer must be similarly exposed. The body is its mortality, its bruises, imperfections, and emissions; just as Elaine Scarry says "the body is its pains, a shrill sentience that hurts and is hugely alarmed by its hurts [...] alive tissue is also the thing that allows [...] anyone, to one day be dead" (1985, p.31). Holbein's *Dead Christ* is an image of such a body. Kristeva goes on to discuss the mention of this painting in Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot*, where the character of Ippolit looks on the painting and remarks "How could they [Christ's Disciples] possibly have believed as they looked at the corpse, that that martyr would rise again?" (Feher, 1989, p.245) Another character, Prince Myshkin, comments further: "That picture... that picture! Why some people may lose their faith looking at that picture!" (Ibid, p.244) The material body of the performer must challenge the faith of the viewer in a similar

Fig. 18: *Dead Christ*, Hans Holbein Jnr. (1521), Oil on wood, Offenlitche Kunstsammlung, Basel.

way: by exposing the body as an inarticulate, weak, dirty, vulnerable thing. This de(com)posed icon is the unclean, excised aspect of humanity: the abject, human object.

This material body is neither an icon of stage realism nor the anti-icon of Craig's 'uber-marionette'. Instead it is an embodied, physical, and vulnerable figure that the audience can identify with through their empathy and disgust. We cannot help but project ourselves upon the body that dangerously tries to walk a tightrope, as much as when we see the body wounded or covered in matter we cannot help but imagine ourselves in that state. In sacrifice, this body has both attributes in its role of ritualistic atonement (catharsis), where it serves as the 'conductor' for the sins of the masses that anthropologist Rene Girard describes in *Violence and the Sacred* (1979). So too does the abject body serve a social purpose of restoration upon or within the stage. It reconnects the audience with a live and living sense of mortality and suffering. Performance that pushes the boundaries of human endurance, dexterity, strength, and skill will heighten the sense of danger and mortality. As in the circus, the tightrope artist walks the fragile line of existence. Here Girard's sacrificial crisis/catharsis exists in the acrobat's dance with death: the vicarious experience of someone else's peril. As in the circus act, theatre is one of "the last group means we still possess of directly affecting the anatomy, and in neurotic, basely sensual periods like the one we are immersed, of attacking that base sensuality through physical means it cannot withstand" (Artaud, 1938, p.61). Artaud often wrote of the visceral effect of theatre,

withstand” (Artaud, 1938, p.61). Artaud often wrote of the visceral effect of theatre, where performance was “aimed at the whole anatomy” (ibid, p.66). Thus the embodied spectator sympathises with the exertions and privations of the performer’s body and equates their own body with the performer’s experiences.

A crucial aspect to the body (both performing and collective) is that of embodiment: “[a] material or actual thing or person in which an abstract principle, concept, etc., is realised or concretely expressed” (Brown, 1995, p.804). Here the physicality of the body is manipulated to realise (and embody) the ‘de-realised’ images that we witness in the media, as the Butoh dancer and choreographer Tatsumi Hijikata described it; “to make gestures of the dead, to die again, to make the dead re-enact once more their deaths in their entirety” (Hoffman & Holborn, 1987, p.127). Butoh (‘dance of darkness’) created potent slow-moving tableaux that replayed the traumatic images of the nuclear holocaust, with the dancers’ faces often fixed in an agonised rictus, and hands clawing at the air. The material bodies of these dancers exceed their physical surroundings through their application to ‘multivocal’ images. These symbols, or the ‘hieroglyphs’ that Artaud describes oscillate between interpretations: the crumpled body in the doorway (collateral damage, or a tramp?), the naked shaven body (prisoner or recruit?), the carcass on a hook (a lynching, a butchered animal, or bungee-jumper?), or the stacked body (Auschwitz, Abu Ghraib, or a pyramid of acrobats?). Performance can use these shifting, liminal ‘signs’ to deceive the audience. What begins as the familiar figure of a cleaning lady, or ‘putzfrau’ in



Kantor's *The Dead Class* (1975) develops into a figure of death; her broom the scythe that sweeps other characters away. Thus Kantor makes the performing body domestic, everyday, and comfortable before unfolding that image with more threatening symbols. Perhaps today Kantor's 'putzfrau' could evoke the widow of Palestine: sweeping shrapnel, bullet shells and broken masonry from her living room floor, and sending her children to fight and become terrorists.

As figures from history or current events materialize out of familiar situations, out of the physical environment, out of comedy, and theatre 'as entertainment', then these images begin to have relevance in the physical, lived world that theatre inhabits. The 'de-realising' effect of the media upon images can be confronted by their *embodiment* in the body of the performer. Within this kind of performance the role of design becomes more significant and involved with the events on stage. Images must be created using the body that are sited in the physical world of the viewer, requiring it to interact materially with object, light, space, and the audience itself.

By embodying de-realised images in the visceral, material body, performance has the potential to engage with the lived event. This occurs in terms of the critical moments (events) in history that it materializes on stage, but also in terms of the audience's experience, where an event, instead of a performance may occur. Searching for a way

Fig. 19: Al Qurna, 4.15.03, an Iraqi man mimics the pose of a Saddam statue where it once stood. Photographer: Chris Ison/Pool (Saba, 2003).

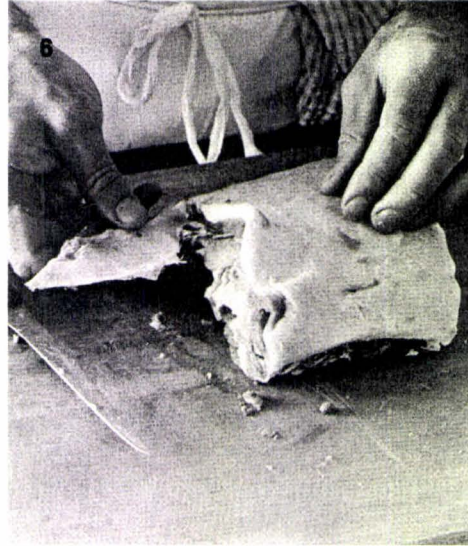
that dance could respond to the tragedy of September 11, 2001. In his essay *Given Moments* (2004) Mark Franko dwells upon the power of the spectacle or event, where:

[t]he singular presence of “what takes place” *takes the place* of the performative, and mocks it, displaces it, and supercedes it. In other terms, the event disarms the performative by effectively removing its capacity to respond. The event leaves the act “speechless” (Lepecki, 2004, p.116).

Rendered speechless: the performative, and the performing body, may engage with the materiality of embodied images using ‘performed’ actions, where the body is able to physically engage with the event. Just as the performer can embody certain referents from history and the media, so can the action take on a ‘performative resonance’. Kantor observes in *Dead Class* how the action of “washing the actors’ bodies put us in mind of last rites for the dead” (Miklaszewski, 2002, p.35), suggesting how a host of other activities can become imbued with a resonance and meaning beyond their domestic functions.

A visit to Somes Island in Wellington harbour (once a quarantine island, POW camp, and a hospital, now a nature reserve), reminds one of the different spaces created by paranoia and the ‘quest’ of purity, especially with the island just off its shores where

Fig. 20: Carving lamb shanks (Ted Bryant, 1980, *The AFFCO Guide to Meat and Carving*, Wilson & Horton, Auckland, p.49).



leper was sent to live in a cave until his death. The ritual act that Department of Conservation staff make all visitors to the island perform also has great resonance in this space. Ushered into a small wooden shack with benches around the wall, we are asked to search our bags for rodents that could decimate the island's bird population. In this simple action, searching through familiar and personal items for such an alien object as a mouse or rat resonates with the inspection of bags at airports for drugs, bombs, or potential weapons. The familiar becomes alienated, and we cannot help being reminded by photographs and text upon the walls of the cabin that earlier travelers coming into this space were fumigated for ten minutes in sulphur smoke; or of the obsession with (political, social, medical, ecological) contamination that this island embodies – as in the concentration camps of Fascist Germany. Here the performed action of searching one's bags assumes a multi-vocal significance. In such a scene it is not the performer's 'interpretation' or 'playing' of the scene that is important here; instead it is an ego-less, simple faith in the resonance of what they are doing, that in *From Ritual to Theatre* Victor Turner calls 'flow':

...a focused concentration in which action and awareness merge and ego disappears, immersed in an activity in which the performer feels in complete control, knows exactly what to do, and is concerned with no goals other than the activity itself (Turner, 1982, p.55).

This final submission of the performance, its 'objectification', allows design to become a process of material and visual direction that is no longer decorative or subservient. Performance becomes an 'empty space' to be transformed by specifics of materiality, action, site, and object, the way that Brook's 'empty space' is transformed into a place of theatre by the performer. It is no longer necessary to perform or present, instead the performance of 'just doing' the action resonates with and embodies powerful imagery. Design becomes the shaping of the 'stage business' of the material body. By making the body a raw material the body becomes a part of the design. The orchestration of all materials: body, object, light, and space becomes a design. Design is performance, performance is design.



The Collective Body

“Hell is other people” (Jean Paul Sartre, 1944, *Huis Clos*,).

‘The sofa in hell’ that Peter Brook describes as one of his most memorable theatrical experiences is the single setting in Jean Paul Sartre’s *Huis Clos*; where three damned souls realise that hell is not the “torture chambers, fire, and brimstone” that we all imagine; instead it is the company that they will have to keep with one other for the rest of eternity. As a philosopher, playwright, and novelist, Sartre had the choice to work in whatever media suited his message. So what better medium than theatre for this story about the torment that people cause each other by their proximity? The solitary acts of reading novels or philosophy would not be suited to the social realization that occurs in this play; whereas in theatre, surrounded by other people, it becomes apparent to us (the audience) that ‘hell is other people’. How in unpacking this line can we begin to understand the company that we keep as a theatre audience? Sartre’s ghostly trio realise that eternal agony is not what they had expected: instead it is what they as individuals have brought into this Second Empire drawing room that they will share forever. Similarly in theatre, the senses, images, culture, memories, and experiences that the body brings into the performance must become an important tool in the hands of the designer. In *Theatre@risk* Michael Kustow (2000) investigates the role theatre may have in an age of tele-entertainment, mass-audience

Fig. 21: Audience at Sadler’s Wells, Dance Umbrella 2001.

sports, and the Internet. He comes up with the difference that makes theatre different, it is the place “where individuals can become an audience, that brief paradigm of living together” (p.202).

It is the ‘living together’ that Kustow suggests and Sartres makes so bleak that can become the design of the audience: individual and corporate. In *Lovelies and Dowdies* (1973) Tadeusz Kantor invited us into a space that every theatre audience has experienced and lived before: the cloakroom. The Cloakroom Attendants bark orders, move people into queues, taking their overcoats, cases, bags, nylon macs, and umbrellas. Unlike in regular cloakrooms, the body is subordinated to these items: individuals are picked out one at a time, made to wear metal numbers around their necks, and filed into a particular sector of the auditorium. The body of the viewer is made into an object, and arranged into the space with a bullying authority that Miklaszewski describes as “terrorist activities” (2002, p.16). Yet having this task to perform makes Kantor’s audience feel their actions have significance in the performance, and are empowered by this disempowerment. The involvement in the task (or work) of handing in coats, wearing placards etc, gives them a purpose in the space and a sense of ‘freedom’. This subtle play between control and freedom allows Kantor to *design the audience*, embodying them with haunting and resonant figures.

Fig.22: Camp gate (detail). Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, (Reinhartz & Von Krockow, 1995, p.57) “The first thing we see is the double iron gateway emblazoned with the claim *Arbeit macht frei* (Work makes free)” (ibid. p.17).

ARBEIT

MACHT FREI



Despite the sinister undertones in *Lovelies and Dowdies*, Kantor gives his audience a role to play in the performance space that is as automatic and as comfortable as the performed action in Turner's description of 'flow'. The audience "knows exactly what to do" (Turner, 1982, p.55), and because of this can still feel in control despite the yelled orders from the cloakroom attendants: "depositing all your clothes in the cloakroom is the first and most important duty of the spectator" (Miklaszewski, 2002, p.16). We move, we touch, and are touched. In this theatre the audience can materialise with 'material eyes'. The iris of the camera is no substitute for the naked iris of a material viewer that chooses what they see and focus upon. The jelly of the cornea is not just another screen or monitor; it is a vulnerable surface that opens itself to the melee of stage action and the materialised image. This orbit in the skull is a plenic space like the material space of theatre, it is full of sensation and emotion, and it is joined by the other senses to create a material experience of the event.

Thus we are more than an audience, and more than spectators. To 'spectate' is to watch. The word 'audience' comes from old English usage as "an opportunity to be heard. later a group of listeners" (Barnhardt, 1988, p.64). It implies a privilege of the audible above other senses. Yet, filled with people, the auditorium becomes a 'plenum' as full of matter as the stage itself. Those who attend live performance have more than just ears, and have more than eyes; they are fully embodied participants, each providing cultural, experiential, and haptic 'matter' to the space. Neither merely eyes nor ears Kantor's public is a gathering of bodies, with all the senses active.

Neither 'audience' nor 'spectator', this individual to whom the performance is presented must adapt a 'sentience': "the condition or quality of being sentient; consciousness, susceptibility to sensation" (Brown, 1993, p.2778).

A Russian director of the 1930's, Nikolai Okhlopkov, describes his approach as making the audience 'active' within performance asserting that "[b]y 'active' we don't mean necessarily that the audience should physically participate in the play" (Schneider & Cody, 2002, p.56). Theatre audiences have the potential to be like those that crowd into nightclubs, rock concerts, protests, and football matches; where the crowd's physicality can become part of the spectacle. Instead we sit in chairs and watch from the dark. We may also be like diners at restaurants, patients in a hospital, or visitors to a mass. Like the patrons in Kantor's cloakroom, a pattern of action and behaviour can allow us to interact with the structure of the event or performance. We may even be like radio audiences where we are not expected to keep still, but can perform individual functions and actions whilst also attending the performance. Instead of these things, everyday life is blocked out of the theatre and nothing else is permitted to exist but the performance. The domestic and everyday as well as the physical existence of the audience can be folded back into performance, or rather performance can occur simultaneously with the domestic and 'lived'. Performance can come back to life.

Performance will always be separated from everyday life by the initial decision a

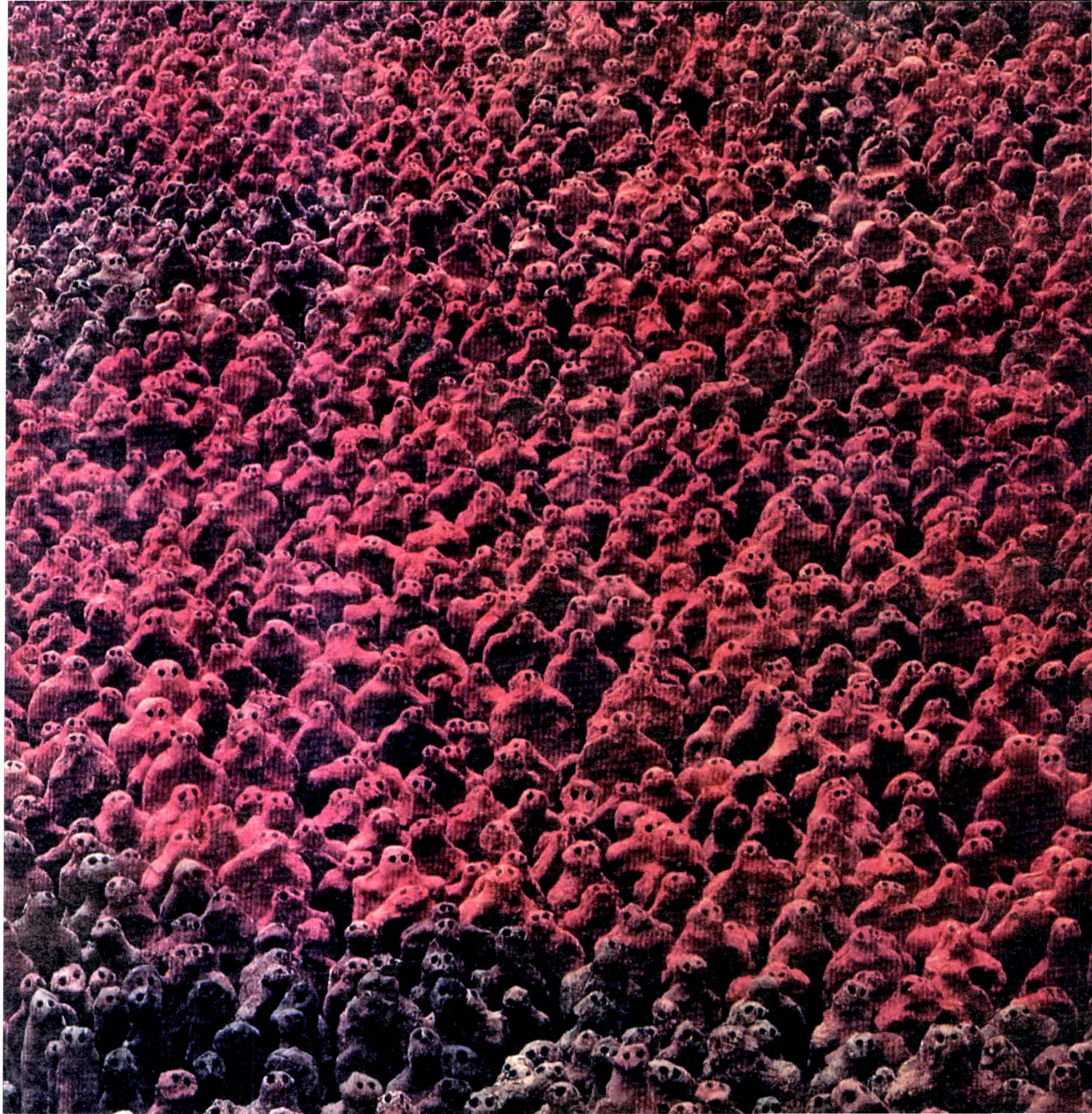
viewer makes to attend. The spontaneous and unadvertised 'Happenings' organised by Allan Kaprow in the 1950's and 60's may be said to have removed this decision, and hence the frame that separates performance from life. However, this tactic only highlights the decision of the performer to distinguish their statement from daily spectacle. The theatrical event cannot be denied. No matter how close to material reality it may seem, the very nature of performance as "a presentation of an artistic work to an audience for example, a play or piece of music" (Brown, 1993, p.2160) will separate it from life. Unfortunately, what is often denied, in order to make a performance more pronounced, is often the audience.

The shadowy forms
That seem'd things dead and dead again, drew in
At their deep-delved orbs rare wonder of me,
Perceiving I had life.

Dante Alighieri, *Purgatory to Paradise*, Canto XXIV, lines 4-7

Since the Renaissance, a model for theatre has taken precedent that separates the performers on stage from society in ways which preceding modes of market theatre, church pageantry, and ritualized performance did not. In *Purgatory to Paradise* Dante

Fig. 23: *Field*. Anthony Gormley, 1994.



encounters a host of spirits awaiting transcendence - a premonition of the modern proscenium stage? His description of these 'shadowy forms' taking in 'rare wonder' of him is a fitting image for the (im)material states of spectator and performer that has mainly persisted in theatre since that age. The performer, looking into the auditorium/spectatorium sees only faces looking back: eyes only considered by removing the fourth wall from the playing space, ears only acknowledged by the projected voices, and bodies only there to bring these privileged organs into the space. Not exclusive to the proscenium, this effect is just as likely to happen in a thrust stage, in the round, traverse, or in site-specific performance. To embody the audience and affirm their physicality, it is not enough to remove walls to look into, and it must no longer be enough to simply construct an environment for performance to occur in, no matter how stereoscopic it is. Just like the fourth wall of the proscenium arch, the denied audience is ghostly and disembodied in these spaces; in the way that Jean-Paul Sartre's dead characters in *Huis Clos* look upon everyday life from another world, and euphemistically refer themselves as not dead, but 'absent'. Performance design can reanimate the audience. To do so it must do more than stimulate the senses, it must address the whole 'sentience' of its viewers. becoming the consideration of behavioral structures, actions, responses, and rituals within the space it creates, allowing the audience to play a social role in the space by creating a social environment. This activation of the audience makes the 'auditorium' into a 'sensorium': "a culturally located array of the senses" (Pearson & Shanks, 2001, p.10).

In *Kordian* (1962) Jerzy Grotowski's design gives his embodied viewer a distinct role in the space of the performance where "[t]he whole room is built up to suggest the interior of a mental hospital and the spectators are incorporated into the structure as patients" (1968, p.130). He presents his audience with a space they are immediately familiar with and have a role in. He moves performers onto the tops of bunk beds, directly above audience members sitting on the beds below. The experience of these particular audience members is unique. They may not always see, but they are so close to action that they may feel the bed moving, and see the bare springs press against the body of the performer. Grotowski creates more than just a stage image: he incorporates the viewer. He may even have given this material experience a name when in *Towards a Poor Theatre* he says, "at the core of theatre is an encounter" (1968, p.56). He elaborates upon this later, focusing upon the performer creating:

...an encounter with the spectator [...] in direct confrontation with him, and somehow 'instead' of him. The actor's act – discarding half measures, revealing, opening up, emerging from himself as opposed to closing up – is an invitation to the spectator" (ibid, p.212).

If we consider these same words in terms of a practice for design in performance, then a clear strategy emerges; especially with the idea of 'an invitation'. What is Grotowski's 'invitation' when it comes to theatrical performance? How do we invite a viewer into a material environment, and make it inviting? Performance design can

refer to plenitude of design practices that already rely on creating spaces that invite inhabitation and interaction: interior design, architecture, design for public space, transport, and restaurants are a few examples. These are spaces designed for inhabitation that contain work, life, interaction, and society. The space for theatre can also be this space of inhabitation, living, performed action, and interaction.

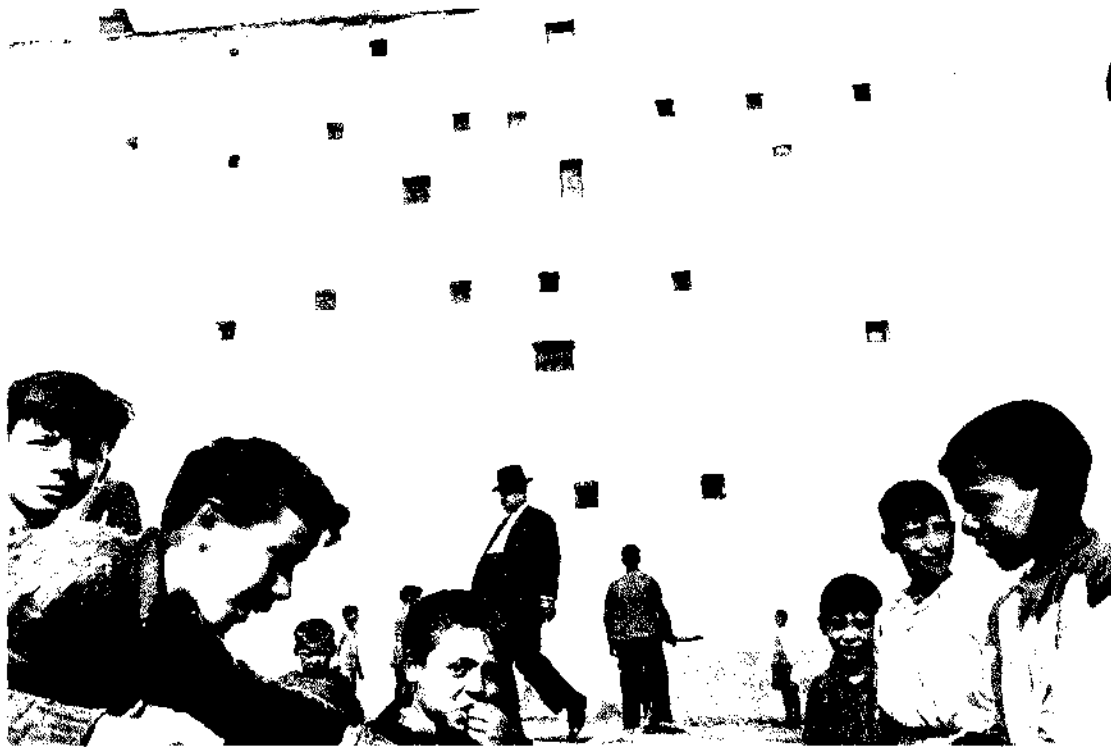


Fig.24: Madrid, Henri Cartier-Bresson (1933) Magnum photographers.

Okhlopkov says of the audience that walks into his (1936) production of *The Iron Flood* that “he walks into life” (Roose-Evans, 1968, p.80). The passage into the space of performance must be just that: a reaffirmation of self and a reaffirmation of physicality and life. Here the individual finds a place for themselves, and an encounter with performance; such as Andre Van Geysseghem recounts in his experience of *The Iron Flood*:

...the doors are opened and we flood through them into – what? Babel. A theatre more full of sound than was the crowded foyer. Women shrilling across at one another – babies crying – men shouting orders – lovers quarrelling – a group of men singing to a harmonica. The savory smell of cooking assails our nostrils as we stagger dazedly into this hubbub, looking for our seats. Seats, did I say? We can’t see any seats – anyway, they’re looking the wrong way, surely? – pardon, madam, was that your child I stepped on? There are some seats – but a rocky promontory has first to be navigated; we dodge under the muzzle of a gun that is being cleaned by a young man singing lustily as he polishes, only to find our heads entangled, as we come up, with a mass of washing hanging out to dry (ibid).

Okhlopkov’s ‘invitation’ acknowledges that the audience can have significance in the play itself. Van Geysseghem is effectively a ‘guest’ of the performance in the sense

that everything is carefully prepared for his experience, and he encounters the performance without any of his physical or sensorial faculties denied. He and other audience members experience the production at the same level of sentience as the 'host', the performer. This union is clearly apparent in Van Geyseghem's account of the last actions in the performance when the performers (as a band of partisans) are waiting to join the main body of revolutionaries.

The excitement mounts as the news spreads, the whole company pour onto the rocky steps, shading their eyes, peering into the distance. Yes! – it is our friends the comrades ñ and crying and laughing they rush forward to greet – US! We, the audience represent their comrades, and the actors flood into the theatre, the iron flood breaks over us, our hands are clasped by the gnarled hands of bearded peasants, woman greets woman in warm embrace and the children dart in amongst the seats, throwing themselves at us with cries of delight. Actors and audience are still one – and we applaud each other (ibid, p.80-81).

The entry into Kantor's *The Dead Class* (1975) set a similar stage, but expressed a dystopian image of socialism that was to follow Okhlopkov's euphoric celebration of comradeship. The audience are also made to wait outside before being let into the space, but here the action has a different significance, as Miklaszewski observes: "no-one who was not in Eastern Europe in the Communist period can know the excitement

of waiting in a restless queue for some scarce commodity” (2002, p.46). Upon finally being permitted into the hallowed space of the performance the audience becomes transfixed by a (similarly transfixed) tableau of frozen figures staring watching them as they come in.

Instead of quickly taking up the seats they had fought so fiercely for, the fortunate individuals who had thrust themselves to the head of the queue simply stand rooted to the spot. The chatter of the large crowd, magnified by the vaulted ceiling of the Krzysztofory Gallery, dies down. In the dim light of the cellar, in a space between the rows of seats and a collection of benches, is the sort of image you tend to see in nightmares: the image of a man regressing to his schooldays, On those little wooden benches, littered with the debris of dusty school books, sitting frozen to the spot in the strangest attitudes and staring motionlessly at the people coming in, are old women and old men (Miklaszewski, 2002, p.42).

Both Kantor and Okhlopkov’s audiences had an immediate dilemma regarding their place in the auditorium. There was abundant life in *The Iron Flood*, and in *Dead Class* a complete stillness, and inertia: death. Both life and death created in these spaces a sense of scrutiny, and involvement: forcing the audience to review their role in theatre. Known for his belief that ‘actors must suffer’, contemporary Norwegian director Lars Oyno also makes his audience wait outside his production of *Peer Gynt*,

to make them suffer too, and to experience the state of limbo as Peer Gynt's condition. The more an audience suffers, the more they will question what is happening, and will be further inspired to question events in their own lives. A good example of this is Fugard's *The Island*, where impatience was used to invoke what Peter Brook called a "theatrical epiphany" in *The Silence the Spoke to Peter Brook*, an article by Brian Logan for *The Guardian* newspaper (February 3, 2000).

Not a word spoken, nothing on the stage, for 40 minutes – just two men with imaginary wheelbarrows, in an imaginary space. Gradually the audience went through a whole cycle. First amazement, then the beginnings of irritation – 'We're an audience, we've come for something, what's going on here?' – then impatience. And then suddenly the whole audience was transformed by a deep feeling of shame for having dared to think to themselves 'Come on, get on with it' – because we were not only witnessing actors showing something about people who at that moment were living that life on Robben Island; we were living it ourselves. When one saw the reality of their sweat, the reality of the weight of the imaginary objects they were lifting, the audience dropped any expectation of the play 'starting'. They realized this was the play, and waited, with respect and absolute involvement, for whatever was coming next.

Brook's description (while it assumes everyone had the same experience) evokes an

awakening of consciousness reached through the suffering of the audience. Not only does it strengthen the bond between audience and performance that Okhlopkov calls “the audience’s fraternisation with the image on stage” (Schneider & Cody, 2002, p.58), but it also challenges the audience to review many of their values. This ‘consciousness’ that Fugard provokes is a more active engagement with the activity on stage than mere spectation: it is a responsibility. This ‘consciousness’, the ‘invitation’, the ‘encounter’, and the sense of danger in being physically present is imbued in Antonin Artaud’s concept for a Theatre of Cruelty. Artaud’s ‘cruelty’ gave his audience a role to play in the production: that of rigorous self-examination. If the audience have ‘walked into life’ (as Okhlopkov describes it), then this cruelty is the acknowledgement of life as a dangerous thing for theatre to become – as Jonathon Crary in *Techniques of the Observer* (1999) describes the fully embodied viewer’s body that belongs “to time, to flux, to death” (Hannah, 2003, p.29). This is the consciousness that Anthony Damasio describes in *The Feeling of What Happens* (2000):

...consciousness is, in effect, the key to life examined, for better and for worse, our beginner’s permit to knowing all about hunger, the thirst, the sex, the tears, the laughter, the kicks, the punches, the flow of images we call thought, the feelings, the words, the stories, the belief, the music and the poetry, the happiness and the ecstasy. At its simplest and most basic level consciousness lets us recognize and irresistible urge to stay alive and

develop a concern for self. At its most complex and elaborate level it helps us develop a concern for other selves and improve the art of life (p.5).

So what may be done with this consciousness, that Grotowski calls performance's "challenge to the social being, the spectator"? (1968, p.53) Challenge is not often present in the popular media that caters for attention spans, makes itself desirable, and through censorship appeals to what is considered 'tasteful'. Thus it is the role of theatre to provide the rigor that these media cannot, precisely because of its embodied, physical audience. Kantor's guests in *Lovelies and Dowdies* are given roles: they have a crucial part to play as disempowered yet willing subjects of Kantor's designs. They are involved, complicit, and responsible. In the aggressive sloganing of the Attendants (the twin performers Leslaw and Wacław Janicki) "the cloakroom's always right, the cloakroom's an absolute must" we are reminded of the homogenous ranks of Nazi soldiers, and the unquestioning loyalty they demanded. The audience is also embodied components of the play's imagery. As the Attendants' prisoners they are deprived of their personal items, given numbers to wear around their necks, and are corralled into segregated groups. Thus they re-animate the disempowered masses that worked for their freedom in Nazi concentration camps, identifying themselves with the very people they embody.

Fig. 26: *Serra Pelada gold mine, Brazil*. Sebastiao Salgado (1986). (Crary & Kwinter, 1992, p.302).



Events from World War II may seem distant and abstracted, for that time has passed. Yet media alienates events that are happening now, and makes them also feel distant and abstracted. John Taylor describes how ‘disembodied’ media often allows the audience to perceive that “unspeakable acts always happen somewhere else, and to other people” (1998, p.7). Thus hell is ‘other people’, or perhaps it is the viewer’s body that is disembodied. Like Sartres’ ghosts in *Huis Clos*, they are ‘absent’, the viewer’s body not physically present, but reliant upon another body; the body of reporter, photographer, cameraman, or editor to media/te the experience. Terminology such as ‘live’ reporting, or the advent of ‘embedded reporters’ in the second Iraq war represent how deceptive the media can be. Use of the word ‘embedded’ implies bodily involvement and the penetration of the reporter into the ‘flesh’ of the event. Recent documentaries have shown how ironic this new term is, how the media was controlled by the military to become a superficial, alien, and very distant account of the real war in Iraq. Responsibility is relinquished when we view such media, and we can only experience the event as image, making us into witnesses of the event, or even worse, consumers. In the theatre however, we are all accomplices: an audience to be empowered, embodied, and made culpable. There is no distance, no separation: we are ‘at one’ with the event.

By bringing the audience together with performer Grotowski hoped to create an act “of the most deeply rooted, genuine love between two beings” (1968, p.212) – a moment that he calls as “blaze of light” (ibid), or an “an act of the soul’ (ibid, p.213).

This process of revealing and purifying he describes variously as an “emergence from oneself” (ibid, p.212), “transcending ourselves” (ibid, p.213), and “transcending our stereotyped vision” (ibid, p.213). Ultimately Grotowski’s aim with this relationship is to create a transcendental experience of recognition and realisation. The Theatre of Matter will modify his idea of theatre as “a place of provocation” (ibid, p.212) to engage the audience with material images and moments of horror. For until we address these problems in our material world the transcendence Grotowski describes is impossible. Thus it seeks to “tear away the masks behind which we hide daily” (ibid, p.212), not offer transcendence as a reward, but confront the audience with their own complicity and involvement.

When Helene Cixous refers to the theatre as ‘The Place of Crime, the Place of Pardon’ (Drain, 1995, p.340), she suggests the most primal role of theatre; as well as the role it must play in society today as an embodied, sensorial experience. Ever since the ritual beginnings of theatre in Dionysian sacrifice, theatre has been a place for the cathartic ‘public crime’ and death of tragic heroes offered up to god and man: the agony of Oedipus, Macbeth, or Mother Courage. Here is a stage where we may witness awful things, the crime and the horror, that is “the difficulty, the pain we have being human” (ibid). What Cixous describes as a form of ‘experiential theatre’ that allows us to vicariously live through the experiences on stage is also described by Martin Puchner in *Manifesto=Theatre* (2000) as:

...the kind of drama that aims to give the audience the experience of actually having lived through the actions depicted on stage. Instead of allowing the spectators to sit back and contemplate the play, experiential theatre grabs its audiences and forces them to confront the feelings shown to them (p.450).

Cixous calls theatre 'The Place of Pardon' because it allows her to experience "all the excesses I throw out of my apartment: suicide, murder, the share of mourning there is in every passionately human relationship: thirst, and hunger. Sacrifice, cannibalism" (Drain, 1995, p.342-343). She expresses a hope that perhaps by experiencing this, by feeling something for another physical being: we may become sensitized to events in our own world. A material viewer must go one step further than this, and rather than identifying with a role, they must have a role of their own. At the scene of the crime you must play a part, and you cannot wash your hands with applause at the end. To be there is to realize that you have a role to play no matter how small, and to realise the roles you play without knowing. Performance can help make sense of the important global events that often appear distant and 'unreal' because they are normally seen only on television, or in pictures. The media remains the 'place of crime' because of our inactivity in light of prison abuse, ethnic cleansing, and continuing conflict in Third World countries. As Martin Bell writes in *TV News: How far should we go?*, for *The British Journalism Review* (1997): "[w]e should remind ourselves that [...] crime against humanity requires accomplices – not only the hatred that makes it happen, but

the indifference that lets it happen' (Bell, p.16). Theatre must reanimate our 'experience' of these events: merely watching or listening isn't suffice, an 'audience' is not enough.

You cannot be at the scene of torture, or violence and not be involved – the spectator must become an accomplice to the atrocity, or a supplicant against it. Sartre's characters become the instruments of each other's torture, and so too does the embodied audience become complicit and complicated: implicated. This 'danger' was also Artaud's idea of theatre where "[w]e are not free and the sky can still fall on our heads. And above all else, theatre is made to teach us this" (1938, p.60). Artaud knew that with the embodied experience of theatre comes a responsibility, the potential to affect what happens on stage. The photograph or television report frees us somewhat; it lets us off the hook, because no matter what we do, we cannot change the event that has just been pictured. So the darkened auditorium of the First World looks on at the hell that is 'other people', and other places: places not here. Since in theatre it is design that defines the 'here', it must be design that makes that 'here' inescapable, truthful, and material. Design can distance an audience and protect them from the events on stage; or the design can put us in the room with the rawness, the sweat, and danger of live performance. In this room we are all accomplices: we all conspire and perform. The auditorium must no longer be a purgatory: full of ghosts reli(e)ving their experiences, and their wrongs. It must become the 'sensorium', the "culturally located array of the senses" (Pearson & Shanks, 2001, p.10) that recognizes its physical place

(at-one-ment), and the responsibility it has (atonement). This re-sensitised public will be awakened to the effects they can have on the environment of theatre: an environment that stands for and incorporates the rest of world. Politically, environmentally, culturally, and personally, the audience begins to recognize their own face in the picture, and their own handprint upon the world.



Fig.27: Iraqi soldier, 22.3.03, Steven Hird, Reuters.

ACT 2

A Theatre of Matter

The Restaurant of Many Orders, Cast and Crew

Lilian Baylis Theatre, Sadler's Wells, London, UK: July 9-11, 2005.

Design/direction: Sam Trubridge

Choreography and dance: Dorit Schwarz and Tracy Zanelli

The Hunters: Geraint Rees and Mark Tintner

Lighting design and operation: Kitty Owens

Music: Bevan Smith and Andrew Thomas

Production management: Susie Valerio

Production assistant: Alessio Romani

The SEEyD Space, Te Whaea, Wellington, NZ: April 15-23, 2005.

Design/direction: Sam Trubridge

Choreography and dance: Tania Crow and Tracy Zanelli

The Hunters: Allan Henry and Arthur Meek

Assistant director: Steven Whiting

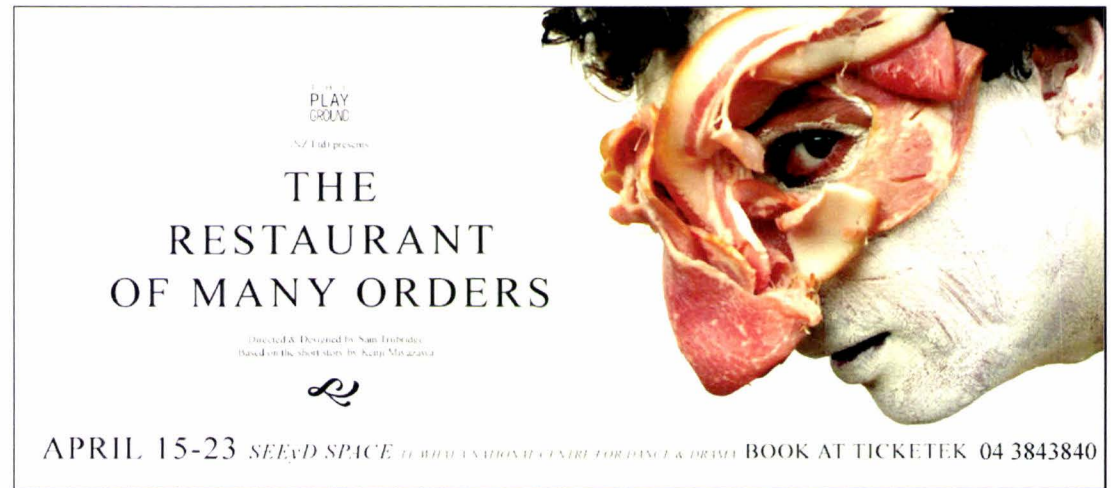
Lighting design: Laurie Dean

Music: Bevan Smith

Costume making: Shay Launder

Production Management: Alessio Romani

Production Assistant: Ying Wang



The Restaurant of Many Orders is originally a short story, written in 1918 by the Japanese fabulist Kenji Miyazawa.⁷ Miyazawa's fairy tale writing often features animistic allegory and strong moral suggestions and, as one of his most popular, *The Restaurant of Many Orders* is often dramatised in Japan by primary schools and academies. It tells the story of two hunters that become lost in the forest when they lose their guide and two dogs. They discover a Restaurant, and being rather hungry, decide to enter. Within they encounter a series of 'orders' that instruct them on how they may prepare themselves for their meal. The orders begin rather innocuously with requests such as 'Please remove your hats, overcoats, and footwear', which the

⁷ An English translation of *The Restaurant of Many Orders* is included in the appendix.

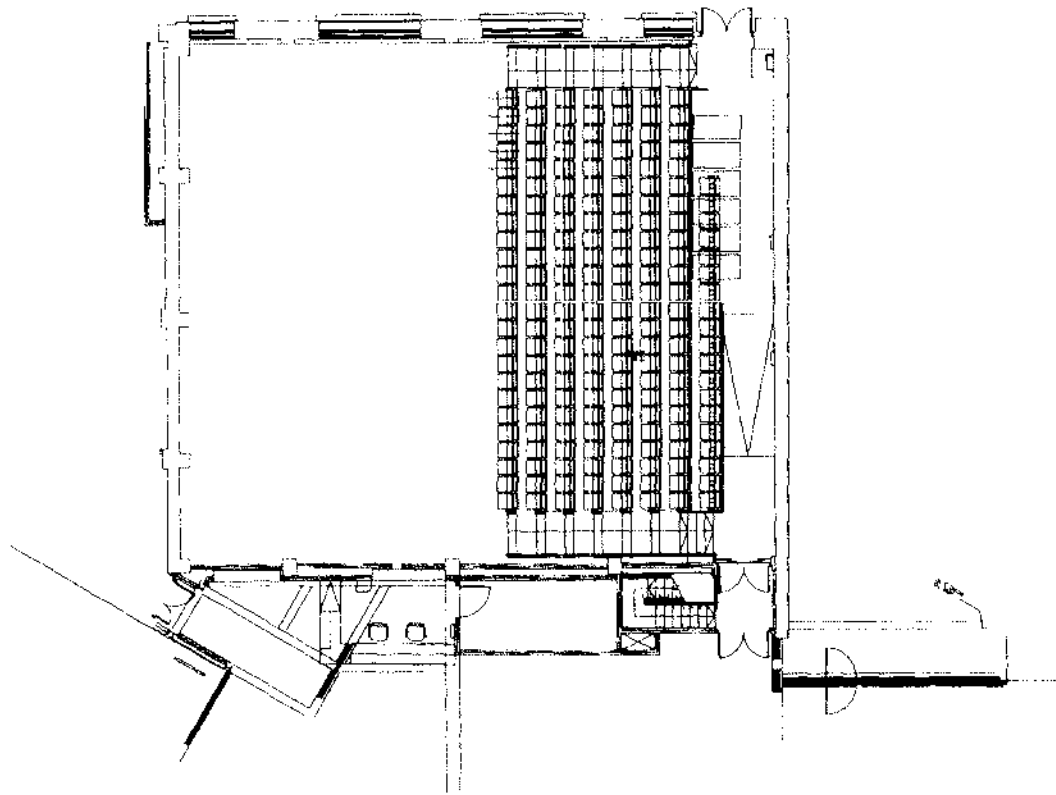
Fig. 28: Flyer design for *The Restaurant of Many Orders* (Wellington 2005), Sam Trubridge.

hunters consider a reasonable request. As the orders become stranger and stranger, their justification in following them gets more tenuous. To the request that they remove their “cuff-links, tie-pins, spectacles, purses, and anything else with metal in it” they say “But of course! Metal objects would be dangerous, especially pointed ones”. It is only after they have been asked to spread cream, vinegar, and salt all over their bodies that they realise they are going to be cooked and eaten. At this point they panic, and the wildcats of the forest (who have set this trap) begin to worry that they may lose their meal. Then the missing dogs arrive with their guide and drive the wildcats away. They return to the city but never feel the same.

What follows is a description of the two productions of *The Restaurant of Many Orders*, preceded first by floor plans of the venues with the designs indicated. This Act does not section the writing into aspects of materiality (object, light, body, and space) as the previous Act did, but instead follows the dramatic action of the play: beginning with the audience’s entrance into the space to conclude and summarise with the final action in the performance. In this way the intentions of the productions are described as they become clear in the performance.



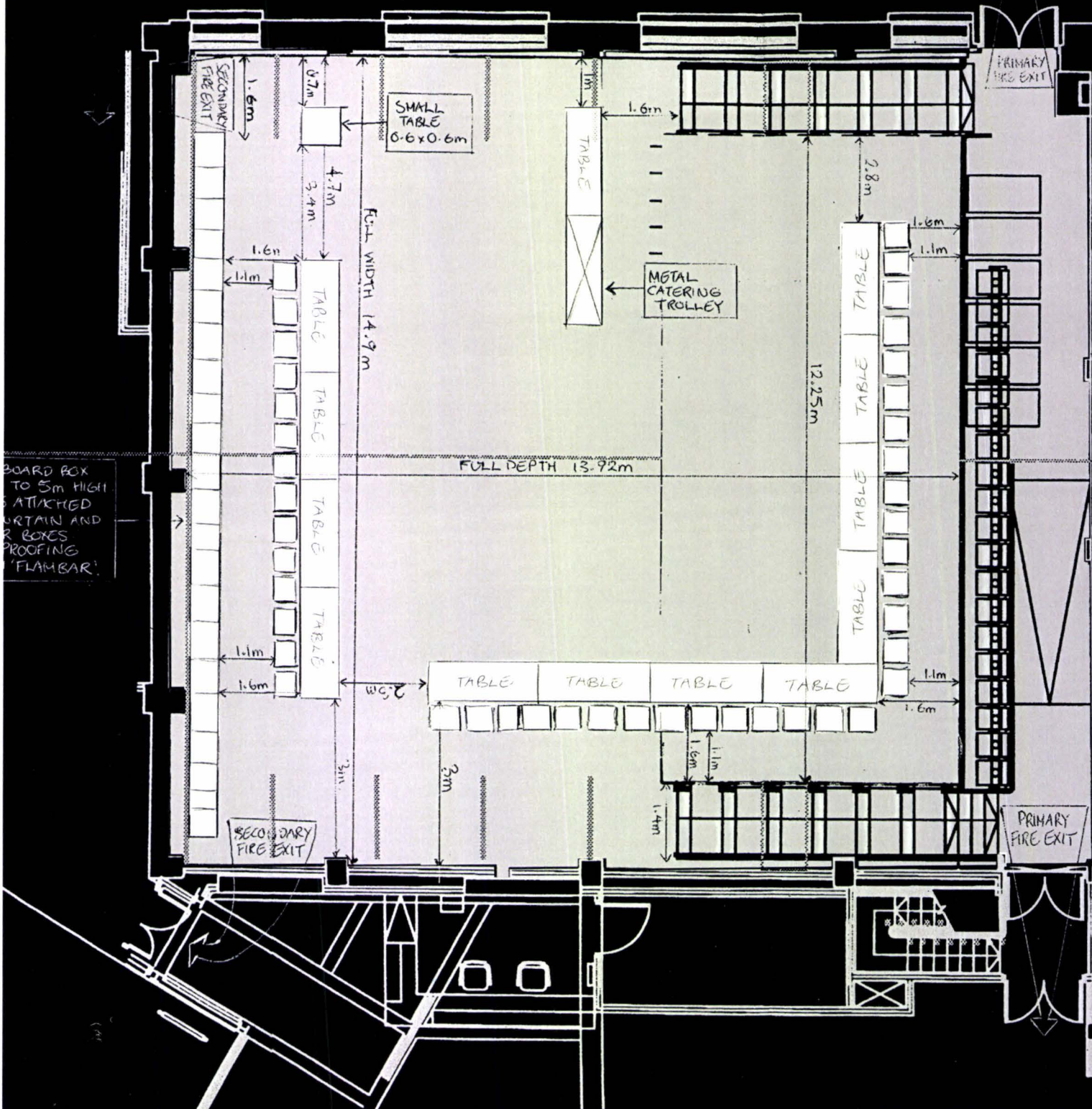
Fig. 29: Table setting, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).



Lilian Baylis Theatre, Sadler's Wells, London, 2004.

Fig. 30: Floor plan of the Lilian Baylis Theatre with auditorium seating extended (scale about 1:220).

Fig. 31: Floor plan of Lilian Baylis Theatre with auditorium seating retracted. Restaurant tables and design features added (scale 1:100).



BOARD BOX
 TO 5m HIGH
 ATTACHED
 CURTAIN AND
 BOXES
 PROOFING
 'FLAMBAR'



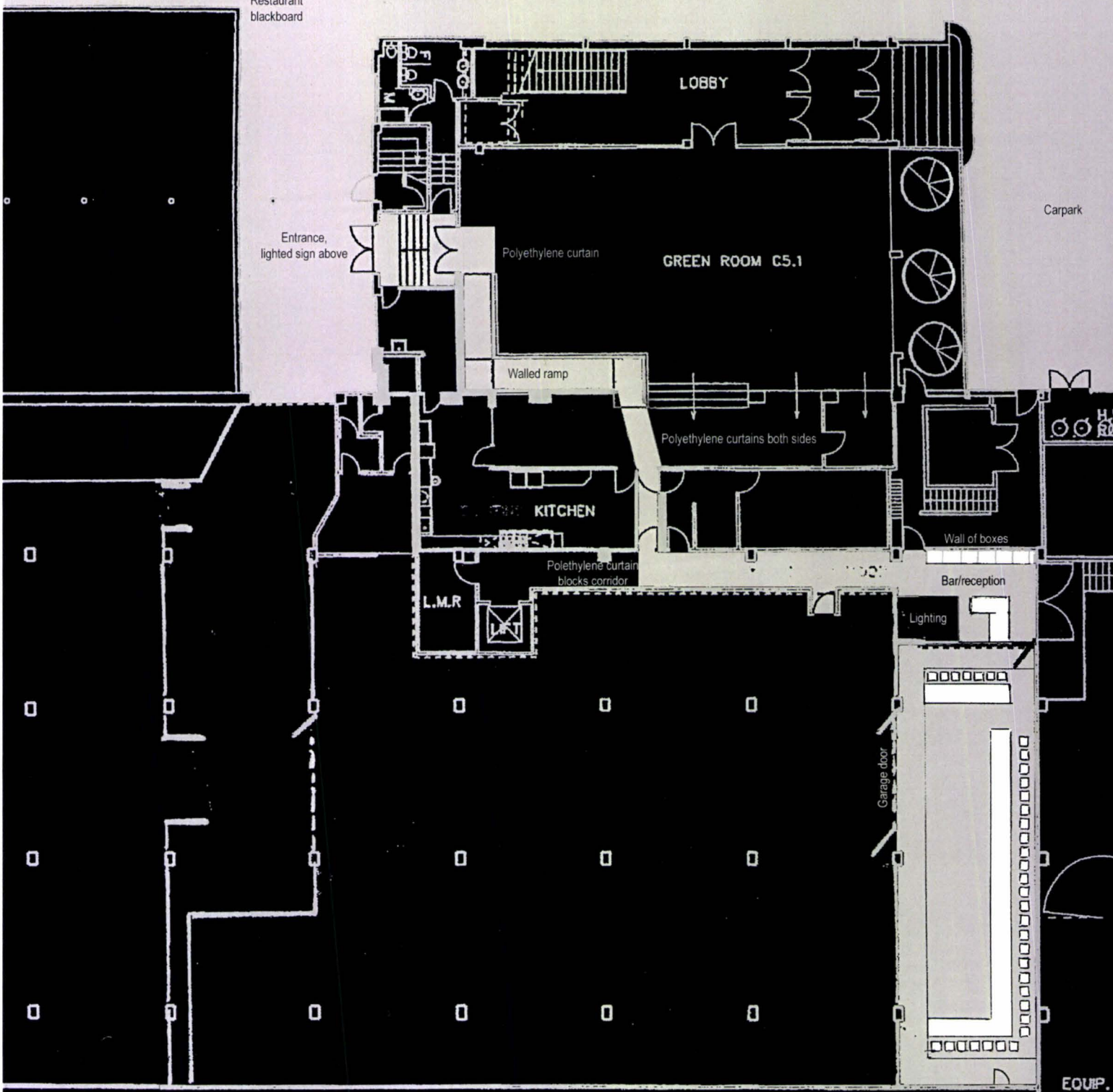
SEEyD Space, Te Whaea National Centre for Dance & Drama, Wellington, 2005

The SEEyD Space is a small, narrow venue that used to be a part of the adjacent garage that stretches underneath Te Whaea. It is reached from the alleyway outside by a twisting corridor that passes through several spaces along its journey. The design blocked alternative passages along this long route into the space using constructed walls and polyethylene curtains; confining the journey that the audience makes to a single path, the way that the oesophagus leads to the stomach.

Fig. 32: Entrance to the SEEyD Space outside Te Whaea (Photo: Ying Wang).

Fig. 33: Floor plan of Te Whaea basement, showing the audience's passage to The SEEyD Space, and the design layout (Scale 1:200).

Restaurant
blackboard



Carpark

Entrance,
lighted sign above

LOBBY

Polyethylene curtain

GREEN ROOM C5.1

Walled ramp

Polyethylene curtains both sides

KITCHEN

Wall of boxes

L.M.R.

Polyethylene curtain
blocks corridor

Bar/reception

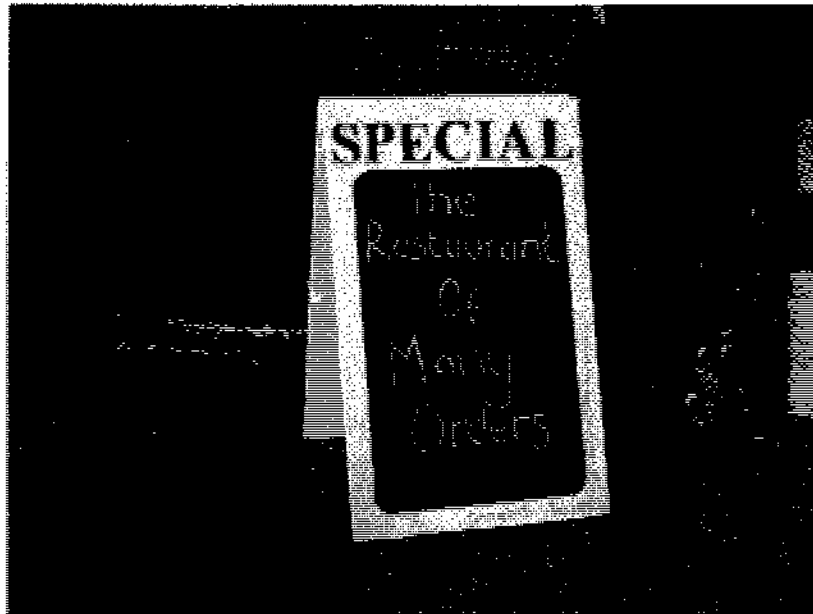
Lighting

Garage door

H.W.
R.D.

EQUIP. L

Door to basement



When we enter a restaurant, as when we enter the theatre, we occupy a space populated with rituals, patterns of behaviour, and an established relationship between the occupants of the space (the waiters) and the visiting public. We enter with knowledge of all of this, and take our place within the 'order' of this known environment. In both productions of *The Restaurant of Many Orders* the audience entered this 'known' space of the restaurant: with soft music playing, low lighting, and the familiar theatre seating replaced with long dining tables and chairs.

Fig. 34: Blackboard outside Te Whaea, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang). The blackboard is brought into the space by the Waitresses as the performance begins.

Fig. 35: One of the waitresses (Tracy Zanelli) serves the audience, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).



Settings at the tables provided objects specifically for each audience member: objects that they could move, touch, play with, or use to eat and drink with. The performance began as the audience were still arriving, with the entrance of two waitresses, who fill the glasses with water. Thus the known relationship between diner and waitress is used to establish an interaction between the material and collective bodies.

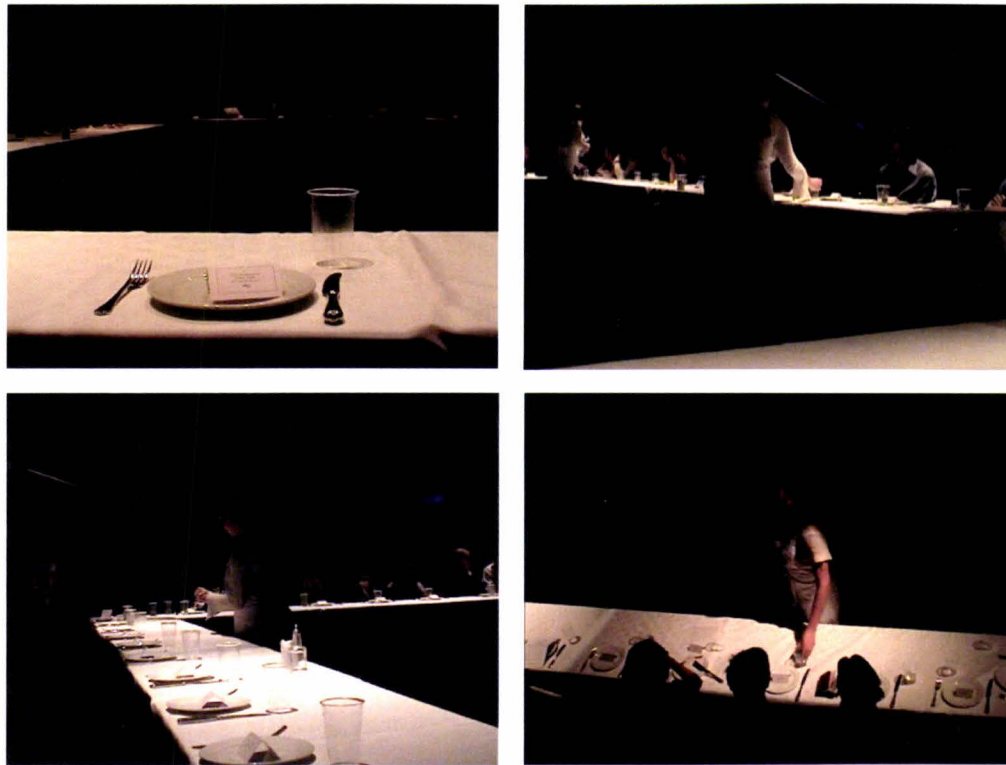


Fig. 36: (above) the waitresses serve the audience, London 2004.

Fig. 37: (opposite page) the hunters wait for their meal, London 2004 (Photo: Luigi Giannella).



The production of this Japanese story at Sadler's Wells necessitated a consideration of the London environment, its people, its culture, and its politics. Miyazawa was interested in writing stories that had a universal relevance, and in *The Restaurant of Many Orders* his nameless characters are archetypal hunters with a pair of dogs, guns, and the desire to shoot anything that moved. There is little that implies a Japanese context, and the specification that they are hunters can be loosely interpreted. Thus their decision to "pick up a few game birds to take home with us" was incorporated into the London slang that refers to women as 'birds'. These 'hunters' are meat-delivery men, in overalls, caps, and work boots. Their 'dogs' are the parcels of meat that they deliver. They swagger, bully each other, and sing loudly. Heard before they are seen, they make their entrance as if they had come off the street, entering through the door that the audience had used just before, yah-yahing ACDC's *TNT* and carrying parcels of meat over their shoulders. They are completely self-involved as they march in, slap the meat down on a table, and speak the first lines of the play:

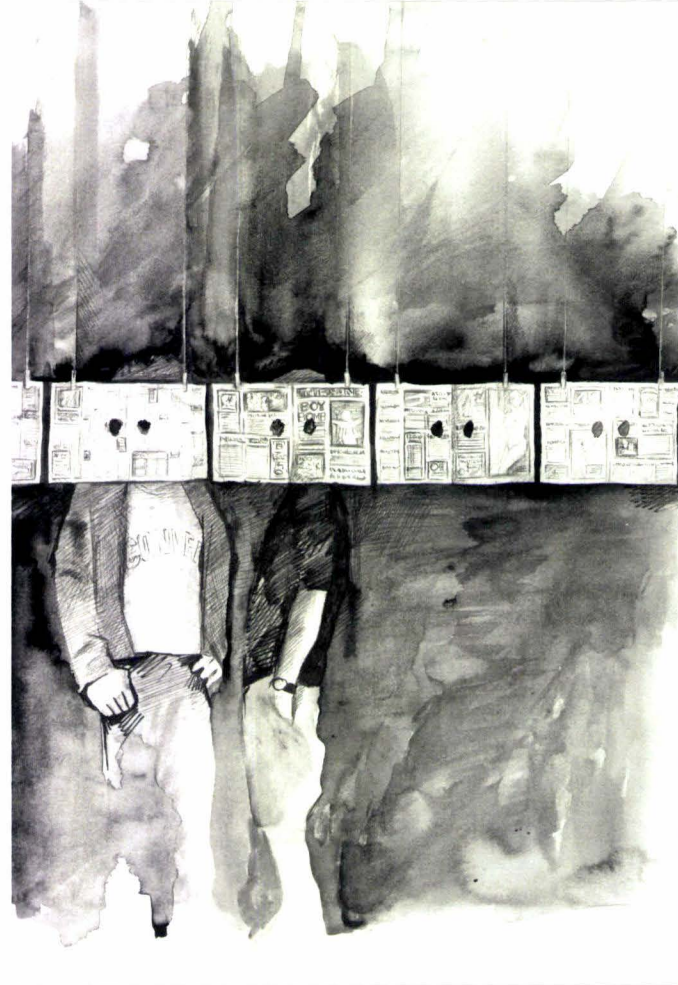
“I must say the country around here is really awful”

This opening statement sets the scene for the production as a critique of its physical, cultural, and political environment. What is wrong with England in 2004? Even though Miyazawa’s story is a popular fairy-tale and a children’s story, it has a significant resonance with historical and current events. Here the familiar ritual of preparing for a meal contains sinister subtexts and relationships with global crimes against humanity, where the human body is prepared for its inevitable slaughter and consumption.

With an audience that was ‘embodied’ as diners in a restaurant, it became important in both productions to explore the complicity people have with the butchery and injury of human flesh. In London there was plenty of material for this inquiry to comment on, with British involvement in the invasion and occupation of Iraq the year before, the continuing occupation, the litigations of the Hutton inquiry, and the discovery of prisoner abuse by American soldiers in Abu Ghraib; who claimed they “were just following orders”. Within these controversial and ‘de-realised’ events the attempt to create ‘freedom’ by bringing ‘order’ to other countries is also resonant in the restaurant environment where (as in Kantor’s cloakroom) the audience is given a role, and is empowered by the ordering of the space as a restaurant. By being sat at

Fig. 38: An early design concept for the production in London, 2004: exploring ways of using newspaper and the media as the beguiling ‘orders’ that the hunters are given.

the table in an 'orderly fashion', and by following orders, they become both empowered and disempowered.





Producing *The Restaurant of Many Orders* in Wellington necessitated the same enquiry that occurred in London. What was wrong with this country? How can this performance ‘matter’ to a New Zealand audience? Once again, the ‘order’ was central, in terms of what deadly ‘orders’ existed in New Zealand, and how they could be compared with the ‘orders’ of the play. It was decided that the ‘Treaty of Waitangi’, as “the most contentious and problematic ingredient in New Zealand’s national life” (King, 2003, p.157) was an ‘order’ that could be referenced in the production. The Maori and English language versions of The Treaty endow very different land rights upon the Maori, thus having the same beguiling affect that the restaurant ‘orders’ have upon the hunters, soliciting their co-operation in the process of their own misfortune and disempowerment.

Thus a contemporary Maori hunter and his colonial British counterpart find

themselves in a dreadful predicament after having following a series of contradictory 'instructions'. They are together in this mess. The Pakeha hunter wears clothing from the mid 1800's, the time of The Treaty. As pieces of his clothing (the coat with tails, waistcoat, top hat, cuff-links, spats, long-johns, and braces) are stripped from him, the Pakeha hunter moves forward in time, becoming less specific, until he is no longer the colonial gentleman, but a more interchangeable figure of man stripped of his culture. The Maori hunter becomes similarly reduced: the shorts he wears referring to recent images from Basra, Iraq, that implicated England in actions similar to those performed by American soldiers in Abu Ghraib the year before.



Fig. 39: (opposite page) the hunters enter The Restaurant, Wellington 2005.

Fig. 40: the hunters realise they are going to be eaten, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).



Fig. 41: (Clockwise from top left): (1) 'Rigor Mortis', Wellington, 2005; (2) body of a prisoner tortured to death during an interrogation at Abu Ghraib, 2004; (3) 'Rigor Mortis', London, 2004; (4) East of Baghdad, 4.7.03, Photo: G. Bassignac (Saba, 2003); (5) Iraqi desert, 3.24.03, Photo: D. Lesson (ibid).

In London we worked in a style influenced by Grotowski's concept of 'a poor theatre'; using what he called "the personal and scenic technique of actor as the core of theatre art" (1968, p.15) in response to limited resources, funding, and time. Here the performing body became the most valuable resource of design, where atmosphere, imagery, and materiality originated from the body's interaction with object, light, and space. Rehearsal often worked with images in the media, images from art history, and other primal 'image memories' from film, literature, and personal experience. Played by dancers in both productions, the characters of the waitresses brought choreography to the performance, thus making it possible to further explore the concept of the body as a scenographic material.

Waitresses are the invisible, yet visible, performers in the restaurant environment. Acknowledged insofar as their job is concerned and expected not to be too intrusive or 'visible' in the customer's world, the waiter moves, serves water, and operates on a separate plane: the 'ghost world' of regular restaurants. On stage these 'ghosts' become the ghosts of the dead: the 'disowned' and invisible casualties that John Taylor writes about in *The Body Vanishes From the Gulf War*. This occurs in the first dance piece, called 'Rigor Mortis', which begins as the hunters march back and forth, waiting for their meal. 'Rigor Mortis' begins very slowly, so that one does not notice the change as the dancers move through various uncomfortable poses on the ground that emulate the rigidity of the dead bodies in images from Iraq. Oblivious to

these silent, and vulnerable bodies that subsist just below their feet, the Hunters in London stamp their boots and come close to standing on the outstretched hand or the extended foot.

As the status of the hunters reduces, the waitresses assume a greater materiality in, and control of the space. Their costumes embody a number of references, stitching mutton-cloth (a fabric used for wrapping meat) together in ragged seams to suggest sewn or sutured flesh, or the shrouds in which Moslems bury their dead. As dead bodies (in 'Rigor Mortis'), or as low status bodies (the waitress), these bodies begin as objects. However as their influence upon the hunters strengthens they begin to embody stronger figures: moving beyond the waitress, the victim, meat, or the dead body, to become the orderly, the soldier, and finally, the butcher. They take form as the performance progresses: taking on forms, confronting the audience with their physicality, and taking control of the hunters' actions. They move from 'object' to 'subject', while the hunters move in the opposite direction.

Bit by bit, the hunters lose the objects of their culture: relinquishing their caps, boots, glasses, guns, jewelry, and clothing to become more object-like themselves, as they follow orders like: "Please place your guns and bullets here", "Please remove your hats, overcoats, and footwear", and "Please remove tie pins, cufflinks, spectacles,

Fig. 42: near the end of the performance, the hunters are captured and the waitresses dance to the whirr of a microwave. Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).



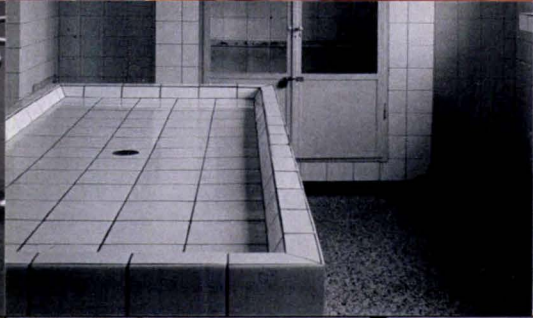
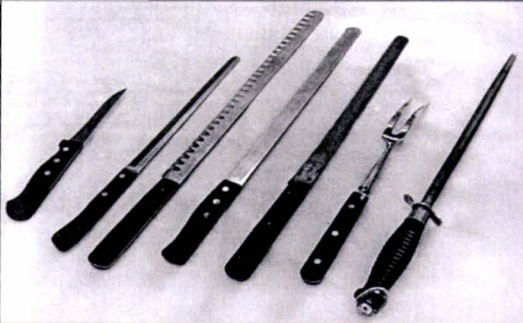
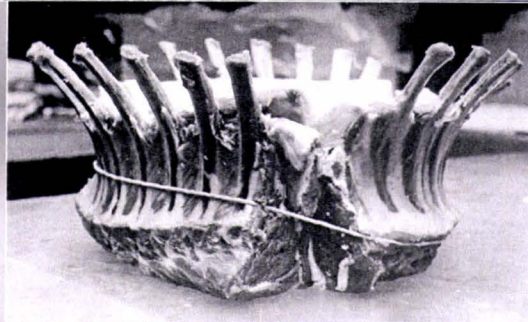
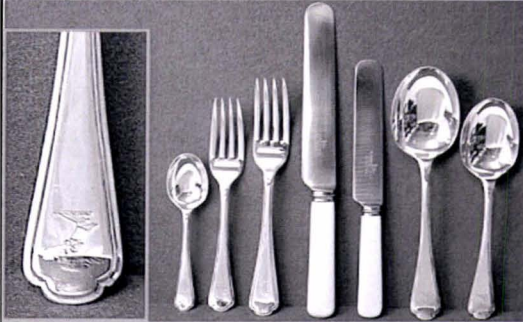
purses, and anything else with metal in it". As they lose these items their identities become stripped and diminished. Their sense of self becomes reduced, where there is no longer the "ego with an 'object' in order to establish both of them" (Kristeva, 1941, p.14). Spread with cream and rolled in flour they are treated by the dancers like pieces of meat, like the parcels they have delivered. The exchange and complexification of the roles of victim and perpetrator explores Scarry's concept on the 'making' and 'un-making' of the respective worlds of the torturer and victim, where "[w]hat by one is experienced as a continual contraction is for the other a continual expansion, for the torturer's growing sense of self is carried outward on the prisoner's swelling pain" (1985, p.56).

The instructions that the hunters follow created an industrious façade: wherein the actions performed had different meanings to the various participants. The hunters believed they were to be fed, while for the waitresses this was merely a front to enlist the hunters in their own demise. These orders create the 'flow' that Victor Turner describes, where "the performer feels in complete control, knows exactly what to do, and is concerned with no goals other than the activity itself" (1982, p.55). This semblance of control was also an intrinsic feature of the Nazi death camps, where the familiar ritual of taking a shower was staged in order to direct victims into the gas chambers. As in *The Restaurant of Many Orders*, it was not enough to merely kill people; it also needed to be done in an orderly, tidy way, with their full co-operation. The victims had to be conscripts: complicit in their own demise. With false

showerheads and nowhere for the water to drain to, the Auschwitz gas chambers were essentially stage sets: where cleanliness and efficiency conspired to create a theatrical killing machine. In *The Restaurant of Many Orders* the audience inhabit a similar mechanism, where the ‘theatrical killing’ involved them taking a participatory role as diners, in proceedings that resonated with physical cruelty and victimisation.

So that many ‘theatrical landscapes’ could emerge in the performance, it was necessary for the materials of body, object, light, and space to have qualities that embodied a wide range of references, through their manipulation on stage. The design of these materials began with researching images that had resonance and multi-vocality, in order that they could bring events from history and the media together within the space of a restaurant or kitchen. Thus the restaurant could ‘morph’ into and suggest other situations and environments during the performance.

This research produced a ‘matrix’ of referents, like on the following two pages, which was used in the design and rehearsal of the productions to create a landscape of suggestions and ‘embodiments’ in the restaurant space. Horizontal ‘rows’ explore material aspects of embodied the environments: the restaurant, butchery, hunting, the Holocaust, and the war in Iraq. The parallels in these ‘landscapes’ are divided vertically; so that by reading down particular ‘columns’ the designer can focus on a particular universal aspect: the tools (or implements) of the trade; the slab (of sacrifice?); the body of the victim; the butcher; the cart; and the space itself.



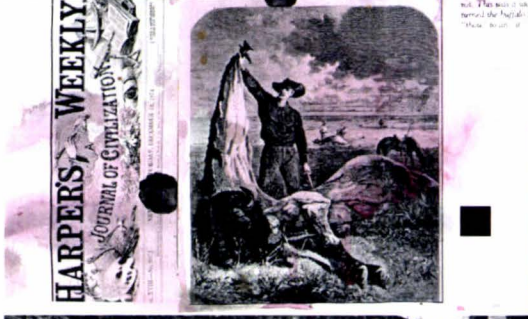
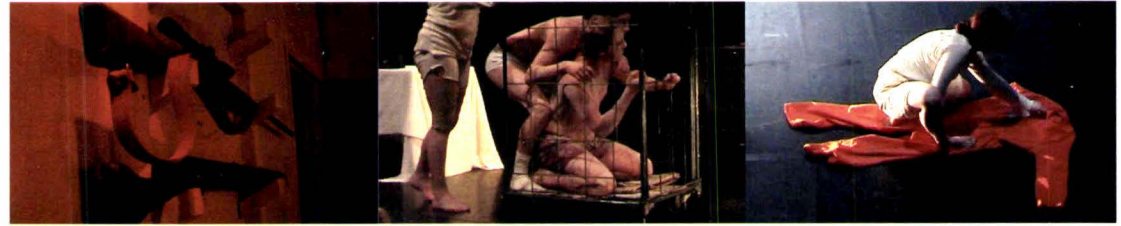


Fig. 43: (previous page) 'Matrix' of theatrical landscapes.

RESTAURANT: (left to right) (1) *Chippendale cutlery*, Bryan Douglas Antique Silverware, www.bryandouglas.co.uk, 17.7.05; (2) *Folding trestle table*, www.unitedeventrentals.com, 19.7.05; (3) *Rack of lamb*, (Bryant, 1980, p.52); (4) *Waitress at the Colonial Café*, www.bunkie.com, 17.7.05; (5) Kitchen trolley from a catering supplies catalogue, 2004; (6) *Restaurant, Japan 2004*. **BUTCHERY:** (left to right) (1) *Carving knives*, (Bryant, 1980, p.10); (2) *Butcher's Block* (detail) www.tastingmenu.com, 17.7.05; (3) *Line haul load of pig carcasses*, www.ltsa.govt.nz, 17.7.05, (4) *New Orleans Market, 1913*, www.access.com, 19.7.05; (5) *Advertisement*, aidesign studio for Honolulu Weekly, photo by Brett Uprichard, www.aidesignstudio.com, 17.7.05; (6) *Slaters Cattle Truck* (model) www.slatersplasticard.com, 18.7.05; (7) *Lean butchery line*, www.cf.ac.uk, 17.7.05. **HUNTING:** (left to right) (1) *Gun at Oak Tree Copse*, www.oxfordfarmhouses.com, 18.7.05; (2) *Handmade Table at Lucky Dog Lodge*, www.bozemancottage.com, 18.7.05; (3) *Deer Trophy*; (4) *Hanging Deer*, www.adexpressguide.com, 18.7.05; (5) *Cover Page from Harper's Weekly December 12, 1874* (Campbell, J. (1988) *The Power of Myth*, Doubleday, New York); (6) *Hunter's trolley cabin*, 19.7.05; (7) *Lodge room, Empire Hunting Lodge*, www.empirelodge.com, 19.7.05. **CONCENTRATION CAMP:** (left to right) (1) *Lobotomy tools*, photo from Glöre Psychiatric Museum, www.library.jhu.edu/, 18.7.05; (2) *Dissection room in a pathology unit, Sachsenhausen* (detail) (Reinartz & Von Krockow, 1995, p.67); (3) *Burial pit in a field opposite the Cemetery in the Jewish Ghetto, Warsaw, 1941* (detail), (Schwarberg, 2001, p.131); (4) *Boy showing the tools he uses for dragging corpses into burial pit* (detail) (ibid. p.130); (5) *Charnel House, Sachsenhausen* (detail) (Reinhartz & Von Krockow, 1995, p.66); (6) *Cell, Theresienstadt* (ibid. p.178). **IRAQ:** (1) *Confiscated RPGs, 04.10.03* (detail), Photo: Desmond Boylan (Saba, 2003); (2) *Execution Room at Abu Ghraib 2003*, Photo: David Guttenfelder/AP; (3) *Stacked prisoners at Abu Ghraib* (detail) www.users.powernet.co.uk, 18.7.05; (4) *PFC Lynndie England with prisoner on a leash, Abu Ghraib*, www.wartimes.org, 19.7.05; (5) *Solitary confinement, Abu Ghraib*, www.cn.cphoto.net, 19.7.05 (6) *Abu Ghraib Prison*, www.cn.cphoto.net, 19.7.05.



In London the Deliverymens' boiler suits were used to enclose a variety of theatrical landscapes and situations within the events on stage. Using the matrix it was possible to see how this costume could traverse different 'realities' and bring them into the performance with a powerful resonance. They suggested the orange uniforms worn by prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib, especially when the 'hunters' were ordered to remove their characteristic caps and work-boots. Barefoot and cap-less, the hunters' figures changed and became more vulnerable. The boiler suits were then peeled from their bodies. Removed, these garments became like the skins of beasts, as the waitresses picked them up and danced with them the way a hunter or shaman may parade the skin of the buffalo. They are also tender with the suits; dancing with their empty forms the way a woman might dance with her dead lover, father, or son. As described in Act 1 on 'The Object', these items stand in for the body that is gone: the boiler suit thus becomes a memento-mori, "a warning or reminder of death" (Brown, 1995, p.1740) for the two hunters, that the waitresses gently flatten the creases from, do up the zippers on, carefully fold, and put away in cardboard boxes.

Fig. 44: (1) the rack upon which the hunters are ordered to hang their guns, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang); (2) in a cage used for moving catering equipment, the hunters realise their fate, London 2004; (3) one of the waitresses (Dorit Schwartz) dances with one of the hunters' uniforms, London 2004.



At Sadler's Wells the boxes formed a wall that stretched behind the audience across the back of the theatre space. In Wellington they were stacked up in the reception area just outside, so one passed them on the way in. It is into these boxes that all the hunters' personal items and clothing were neatly stored. At the end, when the hunters try to get everything back, they empty these boxes onto the floor. Looking for his glasses, one of them empties a box full of spectacle frames onto the floor. In London they also emptied boxes of clothing and shoes in the search for their own belongings. Like the piles of objects left behind by victims of trauma, these objects stand in for the many people who have already been consumed in *The Restaurant of Many Orders*. The opening of the box full of glasses opens up the whole wall of boxes. Now the audience can not only see in them the many bodies that have gone before, but also a suggestion of places like the Nazi death camps; where piles of shoes, spectacles, hair, and clothing is all that remains of the millions dead. The potential in this moment was not fully realized, and can be developed further where items associated with the audience themselves could respectfully used for a similar effect. As in Kantor's *Lovelies and Dowdies*, spectators could be asked to relinquish their coats and hats. In

the same way that they danced with the hunters' boiler suits, the waitresses could also dance with the audience's own articles of clothing, the racks of the audience members' garments could also be the racks that the hunters' own coats are stored on. The settings in front of each audience member could also be used; perhaps with all the cutlery being thrown into boxes with the order "Please remove tie pins, cuff-links, spectacles, purses, or anything else with metal in it". In this way the performance can use objects that 'stand in' for the audience themselves, using them to affect the audience and bind them to the events on stage.



Fig. 45: (opposite) (1) one of the waitresses (Tania Crow) dances with one of the hunters' coats, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang); (2) the waitresses dance with the hunters' coats, London 2004 (3) one of the hunters looks for his clothes in the wall of boxes behind the audience, London 2004.

Fig. 46: (above) (1) Abu Ghraib Prison, October 20, 2002, after Saddam Hussein's amnesty and the hasty departure of the prisoners, (Photo: Nathan Mauger, 2002, www.iraqjournal.org, 16.6.05); (2) 'Canada', Auschwitz, where prisoners' essential belongings were taken away to and sorted, to be sent back to the cities (Photo: Alan Jacobs, 1980, www.remember.org, retrieved 19.7.05); (3) Prisoner's clogs at the Auschwitz Museum Archives (ibid).

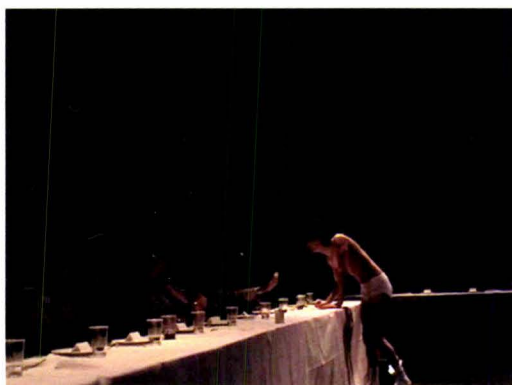


Fig. 47: (top) the dancers use the table in front of the audience for choreography, London 2004 (Photo: Luigi Gianella); (bottom left) one of the hunters (Mark Tintner) asks the audience to read an 'order', London 2005; (bottom right) the hunters are 'ordered' to relinquish their spectacles, "...and anything else with metal in it", Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).

As the story progresses to greater levels of absurdity, it became necessary in both productions to involve the audience in the demise of the hunters, and make them complicit with the cannibalistic intent of the restaurant. The slapstick violence that occurred in both productions created a physical comedy that could relax the audience and engage vocally (through laughter) with the performance. This was less successful in the SEED space, where the proximity of the audience to such vigorous aggression was perhaps a bit intimidating. However, in London the bullying, play-fighting, and nasty little tricks that the delivery-men play out on one another created an ‘amusing’ violence that was to be turned on its head when the resonances with Abu Ghraib became more obvious.

The audience became more complicit with the actions on stage when the hunters had their spectacles taken from them, and could no longer read the orders themselves. They had to ask the audience to help read the orders. The first of which asked them to:

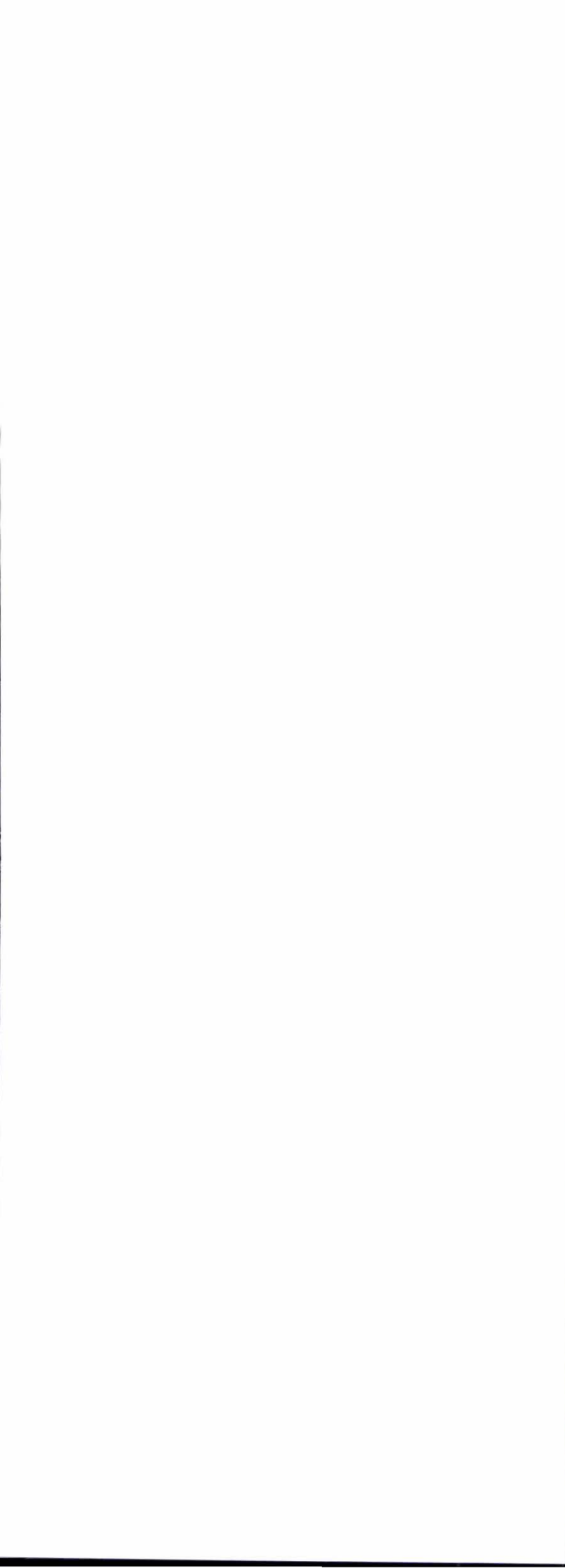
“Please spread cream all over you”.

The hunters pouring cream over their bodies represents the climax of the physical comedy, where the performance became a humorous or titillating spectacle; comparable with the ordeals that contestants perform in reality TV programmes like *Fear Factor* or *Survivor*. Such spectacle is also often the feature of performance art, where performance becomes an act. Austrian artist Otto Muhl’s ‘Actionist’

performances often involved this kind of 'art/act', such as *Gymnastics Class With Food* (1965), where he enlisted his audience to pelt him with food, saying of the performance: "[i]t is now a matter of course that in material action man is not treated as man but as body" (Warr, 2000, p.94). In this performance there was no need for acting or 'characterisation' since it was the spectacle of the act performed upon the body, and the meanings of this action that were crucial, and not the performance per se. In the application of the cream, the 'playing' of the character of the hunter was no longer important: the attraction became the materiality of the body and the act itself.

In the 'act' of putting on the cream, the hunters became objects of laughter and spectacle. This is Kristeva's "comedy of abjection" (1941, p.204), where the comedy mixes horror and ecstasy in "an apocalyptic laughter" (ibid.) that forces us to laugh at the misfortune and the ab-jection of these figures. "Comedy" says Hermann Nitsch, a contemporary of Otto Muhl, "will become a means of finding access to the deepest and holiest symbols through blasphemy and desecration" (Warr, 2000, p.93). Already in the image of the hunters dripping with cream there is a resonance with the images of degraded Iraqi prisoners covered with filth. Cream is bodily discharge, like blood, urine, faeces, sweat, spit, or semen. It runs like some of these materials over their bodies, a nutritious, soft fluid – mother's milk – that is used to degrade them and make victims of them: the 'desecration' that Nitsch describes. Otto Muhl, in his

Fig. 48: the hunters spread cream all over themselves, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).





Materialaktion Manifesto (1964) describes the effect that materials such as cream could have, where “material forces its way into reality and loses its everyday connotations, butter turns into pus, jam into blood, they become symbols for other events” (Warr, 2000, p.217). As the hunters are rolled in flour, the performance moves to invoke the “deepest and holiest symbols” that follows the comedy of the cream. Nitsch often hung himself or lay as on a crucifix for many of his performances. Here a hunter is carefully deposed from his stance and laid upon the ground to be rubbed with flour by the dancers. The care in this ‘act’ and the tenderness with which the dancers move them helped to complexify the trajectory of the hunters’ fate. It brought aspects of humanity to the characters of the waitresses,

Fig. 49: the dancers perform the twelfth order upon the hunters themselves: “ Please sprinkle your entire body with flour”, London 2005. The hunters submit to this manipulation numbly without any response or rationalisation. The short story specifies salt, but flour was chosen instead, because it allowed the choreography to engage with the actions and rhythms of making bread: kneading and massaging the hunter’s flesh, pounding them, and rolling them over to repeat the action.

Fig. 50: (opposite) one of the hunters (Allan Henry) is floured, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).

and the abjection that they enforce upon the hunters. For the outcast and abused body creates repulsion but also becomes an object of desire (the fetish) or love (such as Christ crucified). Kristeva recognised this complex connection that the abject has with (or between) the forces of love and desire, asking:

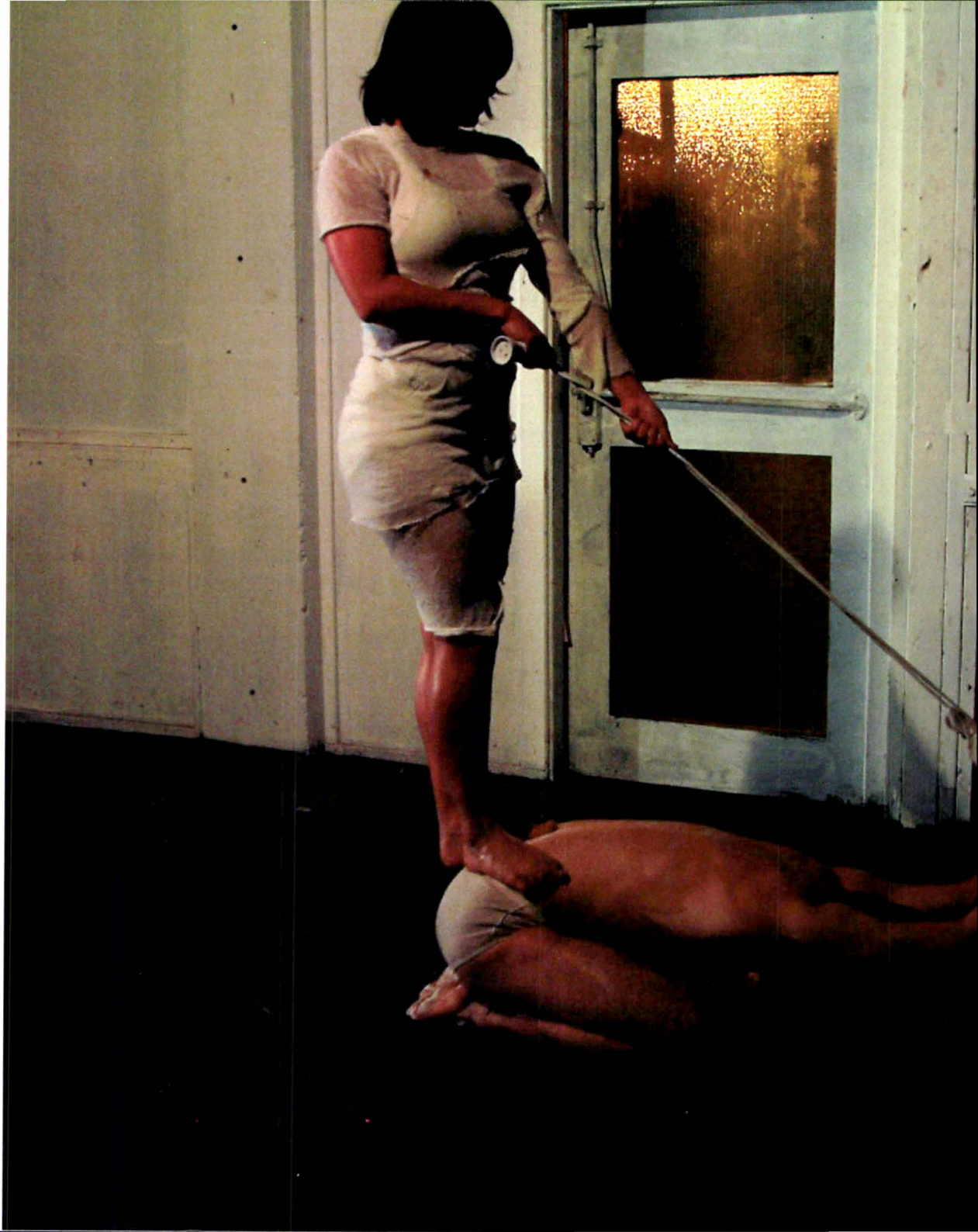
What is to be done with this ab-ject? Allow it to drift towards the libido so as to constitute an object of desire? Or towards symbolicity, to change it into a sign of love, hatred, enthusiasm or damnation? The question might well remain undecided, undecidable. (Kristeva, 1941, p.48).

Kristeva acknowledges that desire and love becomes twisted together in cruelty, horror, and abjection, expressing the dilemma there is in re-presenting images of suffering: that they may become iconic or fetishised. This observation emphasises the importance that the materiality of the body has in this circumstance, so that it does not become abstracted or celebrated.



In *The Restaurant of Many Orders* the intention was to implicate the hunters, then the audience, in a set of 'instructions' that enacted increasingly ridiculous and cruel privations upon the body. As the audience laugh and enjoy this messy spectacle, the hunters begin to realise where they are, and panicking, try to escape. Just as they were stripped of their possessions, their clothing, and their dignity, their voices also began to decrease and dwindle. Their language disappears, until there was only silence, or the rough screams and vocalizations that Artaud called "inflexions" (1938, p.27). Thus, as the hunters became more objectified, dialogue and written script was thus consumed by the material narrative of object, body, and space. This 'shrinking' of the hunters' world is the shrinking world of the torture victim that Elaine Scarry describes where "words, self, and voice are lost or nearly lost through intense pain and torture" (1985, p.35). The hunters look through the boxes in search of their possessions, but are captured by the waitresses and dragged out of the space, slipping and sliding on the cream-splattered floor. With hoods on the hunters' heads the waitresses drag them back into the space and throw them onto the ground, stretching their bodies tight with dog-leashes (London) or electrical extension-cables (Wellington). The waitresses then dance with them as if they were pieces of meat: lifeless and dead. Object and body becomes twisted together. In London the dancers then attached the leashes to the pieces of meat (the 'dogs') that the hunters had brought, using them as they have used the bodies of the hunters: slamming them onto the floor, and swinging them on the

Fig. 51: one of the dancers (Tania Crow) manipulates a hunter, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).



leashes. In Wellington, one dancer opens a door at the back of the room and dances with a mutton carcass that hangs there, while the other dancer brings the hunters to be hooded. The extreme physicality with which the dancers treat the bodies of the hunters in this piece reminds us of the mortality, the materiality of these bodies, and the serious cruelty of what is referenced; thus neither iconising nor fetishising the images from Abu Ghraib.



Fig. 52: (above) the hunters are brought back in wearing hoods, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).
Fig. 53: (opposite) as the hunters spread cream over their body, three legs of meat swing down from the rig and slap into the wall of the theatre, alarming the hunters, London 2004 (Photo: Luigi Giannella).



The space has changed. The lighting has brightened and lifted to expose the material nature of the space that is occupied. In London the removal of the customary black draping, curtains, and 'legs' from the walls of the theatre space made it possible to expose the 'idiosyncracies' and materiality of the space: the cinderblock wall, electrical conduits, plumbing, lighting bars, and steel gantry in the lighting rig. As the soft 'restaurant' lighting lifted to reveal these features, the space became utilitarian, industrial, and harsh; like a kitchen or prison. As the dancers brought the hunters' back in from their capture, they turned on a switch behind the audience, causing neon

work-lights flicker and bang on. This material light source casts a steely grey illumination through the paraphernalia of the lighting rig: creating bars of light and shadow over the near naked bodies of the hunters.



Fig. 54: a hunter (Arthur Meek) is left to stand against the wall as the dancers turn on the microwave and cook dance to the whirring sound of its motor. The smell of the pork mince cooking inside becomes noticeable to those sitting nearby. Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).

In Wellington the hunters' realisation of where they are comes with the pulling back of the polyethylene curtains. The curtains made a ripping, metallic sound as they were pulled along the wire rigging above. This material sound awakens the hunters to their environment, as the softer lining of the space was pulled back to reveal the walls that contained them. They try to escape, but are brought back in wearing hoods to a space where shadows now have sharp edges, and the surfaces do not yield to the impact of the body. By painting the black walls of the SEED Space with a coat of watery white paint it was possible to bring out the irregularities that were previously concealed. The scratches, patched-up holes from previous performances, and different surfaces of wood, gib-board, and concrete became visible under the brush marks and dribbles made by the uneven coat of white paint on top. Now visible to the audience, this rough surface evoked the grim(y) utilitarian aesthetic of prison cells.

For future productions it will be more effective to make this transformation from the comfortable space of the restaurant to the threatening space of the prison more of a surprise. The polyethylene curtains and rubber dance floor in Wellington gave away too much of what was to come, and put the audience on guard from the beginning, when a more alarming theatrical realisation would have been more affective and powerful. The London production was more successful in this regard, since the larger space made it possible to focus the lighting onto just the dining tables; thus hiding the materiality that is exposed later on. In this way the darkness and 'infinity' of the 'black box' theatre was used to create the same sense of 'infinity' produced by the

semi-transparent plastic curtains in Wellington; an 'infinity' that becomes very finite once the lights are lifted, or the curtains are pulled back, to reveal the inescapable reality of the bare walls and machinery of the theatre that was previously concealed.



Fig. 55: (above) the carving of the bacon mask (Arthur Meek), Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).
Fig. 56: (opposite) the carving of the bacon mask (Geraint Rees), London, 2004.



The action that concludes both performances began with the removal of one of the hunter's hoods, to reveal the bacon mask underneath. The waitresses put their aprons back on, and (to the return of the light restaurant music) begin to carve strips of bacon from this mask and serve it to the audience. As with the application of the cream or the flour, it was the performed action, or activity that became more important than 'playing'. Imbued with the previous images of the performance, the simple 'work' of carving the bacon from the face of the hunter was best done with painstaking precision and order. In London the waitresses had to use their hands to pick the meat off, since the action of the knives with carving forks was did not work on the stringy fatty bacon. This looked clumsy and unrefined, so in Wellington tongs were used to grip the meat; and the hunter in the bacon mask shuffled on his feet rather than going on all fours as he had in London: carrying a tray upon which were set the tools of the silver service: tongs, knives, and a bowl of parsley sprigs for garnish.



In this way the audience is one by one presented with a token of their complicity in the event: a scrap of bacon cut from the hunter's face; their own piece of the carcass. A glance shared with an audience member during the application of the cream establishes a contact with that individual at the height of comedy. Now, through the eyes of the bacon mask the same performer's (now vacant) stare re-incorporates that relationship as he looks past that person. In Wellington the other hunter had his hood removed as well, and is fed the mince that had been cooked in the microwave. Only when the whole audience had been served did this hunter look up and realise the meal that he has been fed, and what has become of his colleague. The performance does not end with Miyazawa's anticlimax: the hunters do not wake up to realise 'it was just a dream'; instead we are left with the carving of meat from someone's face and the dilemma of the parts we have played in the events that have to lead to this situation.



Fig. 57: (opposite) service of the bacon, London 2004.

Fig. 58: (above) one of the waitresses feeds a hunter the pork mince from the microwave, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).

Numerous discoveries were made in these productions, suggesting new methods for approaching each subsequent staging. As activated bodies, the audience became a dynamic, spontaneous, even dangerous site for further 'signs', or important actions. In one London performance an audience member picked up his knife and fork, and held them as he watched the entire show. With these utensils clenched in each fist, his expectant figure engaged with the environment of the restaurant; and made it more believable and material. Finally, when he was served at the end he began to cut the bacon up on his plate. Audiences chatted with the waitresses, asked for more water, and sometimes stood up to read the orders to the hunters. Several refused the bacon at the end by turning their plates over, by covering them, or by asking not to be served. Left-handed patrons swapped their knives and forks over.

The territory between performance and audience continues to open up effective, visceral realms of theatricality. It took some time for both casts to acclimatize to the space that the audience created. They were used to not being able to see the audience, and not having to include them in the performance, so the immediacy of the contact was challenging. This was particularly true in the SEEyD Space, where a narrow and close playing space laid the acting bare. Never far from the public, it became necessary for the hunters to address many of their lines to the audience as fellow diners. If they did not establish this contact the proximity became uncomfortable, and the playing false. It began to work once the performers shared their jokes with the particular individuals, maintained then reincorporated eye contact with them, and

directed lines or actions to them. There is also unexplored potential in using the other materials of performance to connect with the sensual world of the audience: through affecting, or using items that 'stand in' for them, such as their coats, hats, or the settings in front of them. The design needs to continue exploring this territory, and continue pushing the involvement of the audience.

With plans to re-present the production in Italy next year, and in Auckland in 2007, it is hoped that the 'embodied audience' can be the site for further exploration and development. In these productions design will push the material performance further over a longer period of rehearsal and presentation, and in a number of venues. By serving food or wine in Italy it may be possible to further activate the audience sensorially and physically, while also engaging with an Italian passion for food and wine. The tradition of 'commedia dell' arte' will also be a valuable area to explore; where the putting on of a mask is accompanied with the stylised, hyperbolic performance of a number of archetypes, such as the "Zanni": a hungry and lascivious character, who tries to get his stomach filled at every opportunity. In Auckland the same cast from the Wellington production will be involved in order to push the theatrical experiences already created further, and to develop on from what has been learnt this year. The experience of working in the meta-theatrical style of 'commedia dell' arte' will be used in this production to engage the audience in the performance and establish a closer bond between performer and spectator. Design will also engage the audience more using object, garment, and space.

The most significant discovery for further exploration concerns the task, work, or the 'act'. Through the material actions described (the cream, the flour, and the cutting of the bacon mask) the bodies of performer and audience became united in an event that was less theatrical and more actual. In the application of the cream, the 'playing' of the character of the hunter was no longer important: the attraction became the materiality of the body and the act itself. It made no difference whether this was a hunter, a deliveryman, prisoner, soldier, or even an actor doing it. Thus when these bodies began to embody images from the media, the humor became poisonous, the objectification uncomfortable and challenging.



Fig. 59: carving the bacon mask, Wellington 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).

Material action also belongs to the body of the audience. First of all the audience must be a physical part of the space, and not 'looking in' to the performance. In his essay *Antonin Artaud and the Authority of Text, Spectacle and Performance* (2000) David Graver describes how important this 'surrounded' audience is to Artaud's concept of cruelty.

Whereas in traditional theatre the spectators can engulf the image isolated on stage with their eyes, in Artaud's theatre the spectacle dominates and engulfs the spectators. "Communication" rather than display is established between audience and spectacle in that the invisible fourth wall [...] is opened up so that the audience and actors can mix together. The result is cruel in that now the actions in the spectacle have immediate consequences for the audience and cannot be enjoyed and dismissed as images contained in a separate (aesthetic) world. If the spectacle involves fire, the spectators feel the heat. If dangers approach the characters from behind, the audience is just as likely to be unaware of and surprised by them because they are now vulnerable elements of the scene rather than invulnerable, omniscient eyes gazing comfortably upon events from a protective darkness (Harding, 2000, p.51).

The audience that Graver describes is similar to the audience in *The Restaurant of Many Orders*, which was solicited to play a role within the social morphology of the

performance space: the role of the diner. They also began to embody the inactive masses outside the performance that ‘looks in’ upon events in the media, and do nothing. Thus they embody themselves, inactive to the traumas that they witness in the world: petrified by the simulacrum, and the de-realisation of these events.



Finally by being given actions and acts the audience became activated and re-activated: a material part, of the performance. These actions began simply with having water to drink, or objects (knife, fork, and plate) to use. However, as the performance progressed, they were involved in further actions, such as the reading of the orders, or the carving of the bacon. Through such actions and tasks it is possible that the ‘virtual’ world created by the ‘suspension of disbelief’ can become less crucial. Instead the performance of material actions, and activities will begin to influence ‘theatrical performance’, making it more material and actual. Thus, through the act, the ‘virtual’ can become ‘act-ual’. Images from media that are incorporated or

'embodied' in this act can become re-animated and grounded in the act and the actual, forcing the activated, embodied, and implicated audience is forced to address their involvement or complicity with the events depicted on stage.

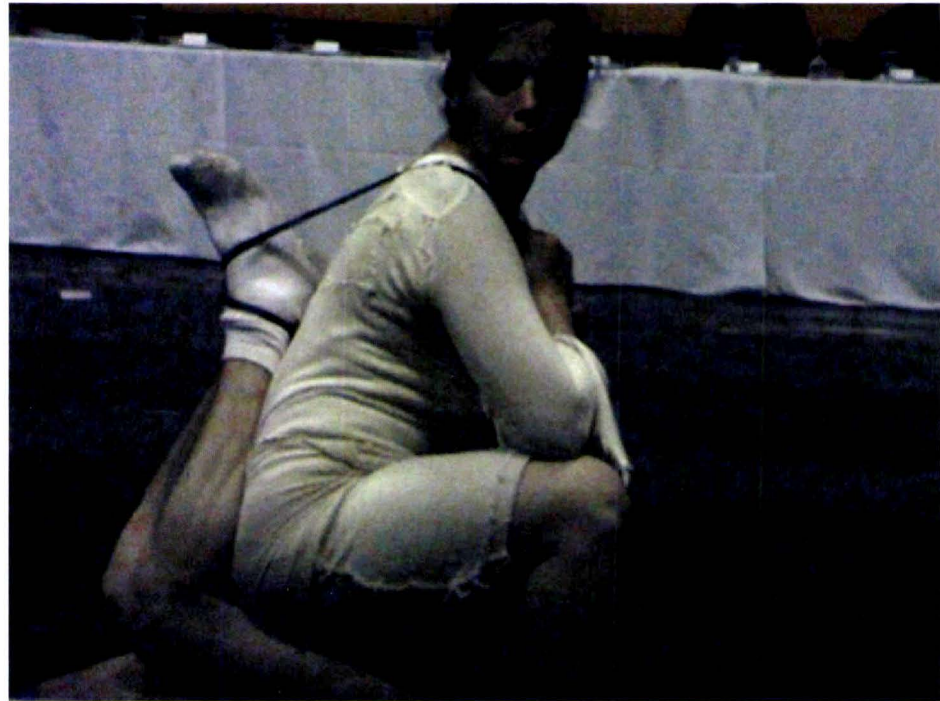


Fig. 60: (opposite) Wellington, 2005 (Photo: Ying Wang).

Fig. 61: (above) London, 2005.

Conclusion (The 1:1 Manifesto)

One to one is the scale at which we face life. It is the scale of performance that unfolds in real time, in real space, in the dimensions of our everyday existence. One to one is the genuine encounter between performer and spectator. It is the balance in that relationship; an equilibrium that does not elevate one above the other but brings them together in a moment of reflection. The colon between the two 'ones' is the two-way mirror of theatre: it is the arrangement that brings performer and spectator together, and helps them share a space. The interval between two individuals is the event, the action, and the object. It is the design. One to one is the scale and the materiality that design works in. One to one should not copy or reduce an object or action, but endeavour to use the thing itself. Thus design does not belong to one side of the relationship, but sits between the two realities and exists in both. A set that is decorative exists separate from the world of the audience, and separate from the world of action and event that the performer constructs. Hence a design that is decorative, or does not exist in the materiality of either performance or audience, exists outside the one to one relationship. Design must occupy both the experiences of performer and spectator: thus affecting theatre and the living 'double' that Artaud describes. Theatre faces its twin, everyday life, and together they are able to experience a moment of reflection, challenge and even the 'cruelty' with which one regards one's own image in the mirror.

Fig. 62: Entrance to DAW munitions factory, Buchenwald (Reinartz & Von Krockow, 1995, p.80).



Epilogue (A Manifesto in Motion)

I have never believed in a single truth. Neither my own, nor those of others. I believe all schools, all theories can be useful in some place, at some time. But I have discovered that one can only live by a passionate and absolute identification with a point of view. However, as time goes by, as we change, as the world changes, targets alter and the viewpoint shifts. Looking back over many years of essays written, ideas spoken in many places on so many varied occasions, one thing strikes me as being consistent. For a point of view to be of any use at all, one must commit oneself totally to it, one must defend it to the very death. Yet at the same time there is an inner voice that murmurs: "Don't take it too seriously. Hold on tightly. Let go lightly.

Preface to Peter Brook's (1994) *The Shifting Point*.

Theatre dies every day. That is the price paid for having lived, for theatre is made of the same stuff as life. It is a physical event witnessed by a gathering of people, which expires, to become a memory. It is an experience that cannot be substituted, recorded, or captured in any other way without losing some of the original experience. In a culture obsessed with materialism, theatre is refreshingly anti-materialistic, because you cannot own it in the way one can own a film by purchasing a book, video, or

DVD. However it is more material in other ways. Like life, theatre is a physical event every time; but also like life it is transient and ephemeral, and by dying it is something that no other art form can ever become. To enjoy theatre is to enjoy a moment that cannot be relived. To enjoy theatre is to live and die.

The two productions of *The Restaurant of Many Orders* are the material manifestations for a Theatre of Matter, where concepts took material form and were tested. Since the productions occurred during, and as a part of, the development of the manifesto they do not represent concepts carried forward to a final conclusion. Staged almost a year apart, these productions applied and reviewed the manifesto that existed at the time. The results in each case continue to provoke further directions and investigations. In *The Shifting Point* (1987) Peter Brook says, “captivity kills fast. For this same reason, there are no conclusions. The methods must always change” (p.134). Thus each manifestation of The Theatre of Matter has altered the manifesto. In London conditions enforced a re-consideration of designing space, object, light, and costume. It became necessary to discover a way of designing the body, and thereby designing performance. This ethic was then applied to a production in Wellington, where there was more freedom due to greater funding, more time in the space, and more freedom to alter the environment. This made it possible to explore more design elements in the space, and the use of materials in design. Yet this experience has necessitated further investigation, in particular where the body of the audience and material action is concerned.

In these discoveries the manifesto becomes a thing of motion and evolution. In the tradition of the many writings by Kantor, Artaud, and Brook, these ideas are constantly on the move, under constant revision, changing, evolving, and sometimes contradicting previous statements. This 'action', this movement, brings into question the empirical nature of the manifesto. Processes change and develop. Hence the manifesto must not be seen as a concrete set of principles. In order to continue to matter, theatre and the manifesto must be able to adapt to future conditions: it must become 'a manifesto in motion'. This quality mirrors the nature of the moving, living, dying medium that theatre is; where each performance is never the same; where each performance grows upon the remains of the other: going further each time. As the Theatre of Matter continues to revise itself further manifestoes will become necessary.

As a performative act, the manifesto belongs in the instant it is conceived, in the 'now'. The manifesto is theatre. Today, the manifesto describes a method and practice for a Theatre of Matter. Tomorrow this manifesto will be applied to a new production; the method and practice will change; and the manifesto will change. Everyday the theatre dies: with unique performances that can never be repeated rising from the ashes of the previous one. With this same cycle the manifesto in motion also expires and is reborn.

The series of images that concludes this epilogue come from drawings, paintings, and

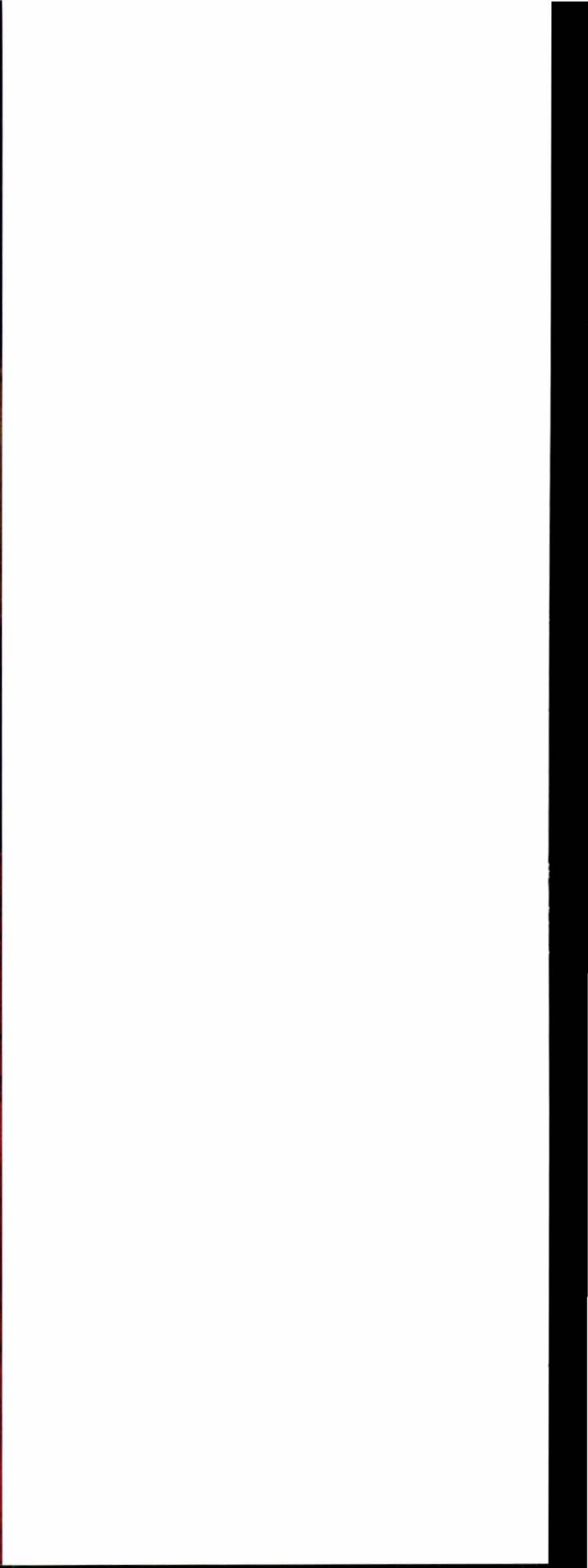
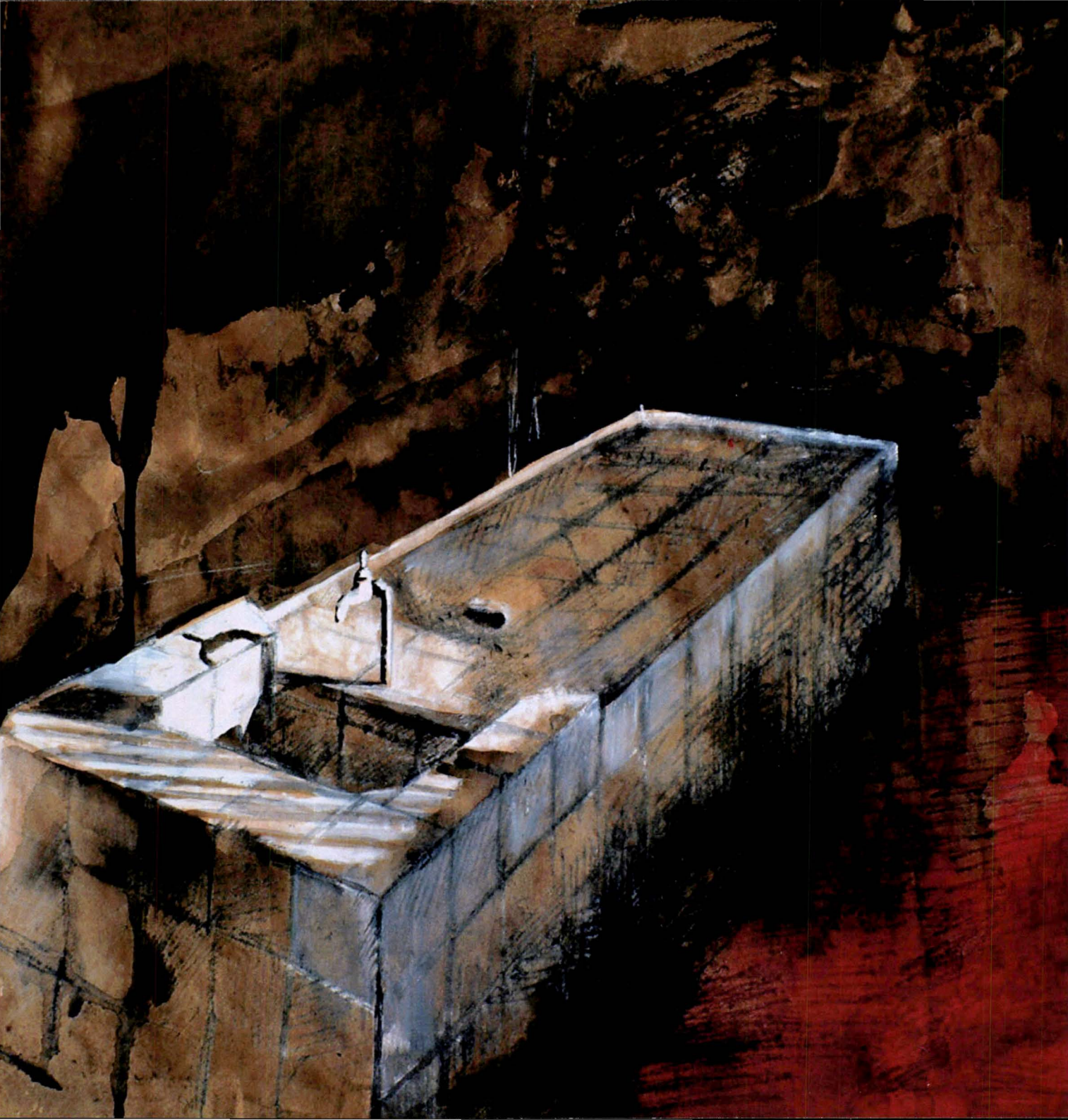
Fig. 63: *Phoenix* (2005). Sam Trubridge.

photographs made during the designing of *The Restaurant of Many Orders*. As such, they represent the ideas and speculations that were realised in different ways within each production. Images of the performing figure are set next to images of objects and spaces, to allow the reader to consider the potential interactions, inhabitations, and manipulations (the performances) that may occur. Thus while expressing aspects of the productions that have been, these images also suggest future manifestations of *The Restaurant of Many Orders* and The Theatre of Matter.











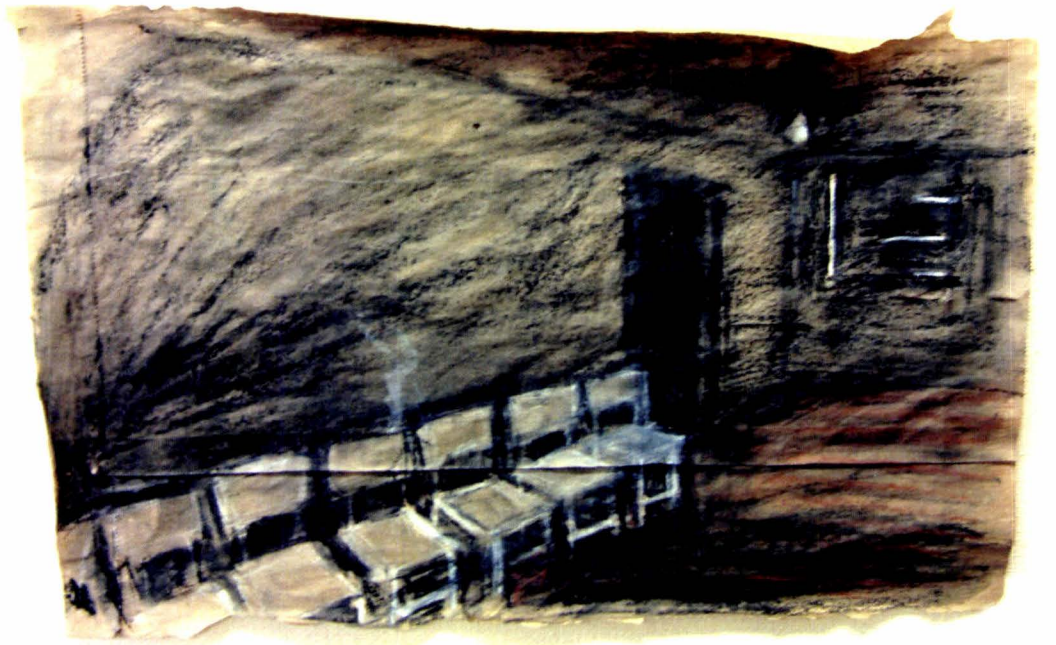






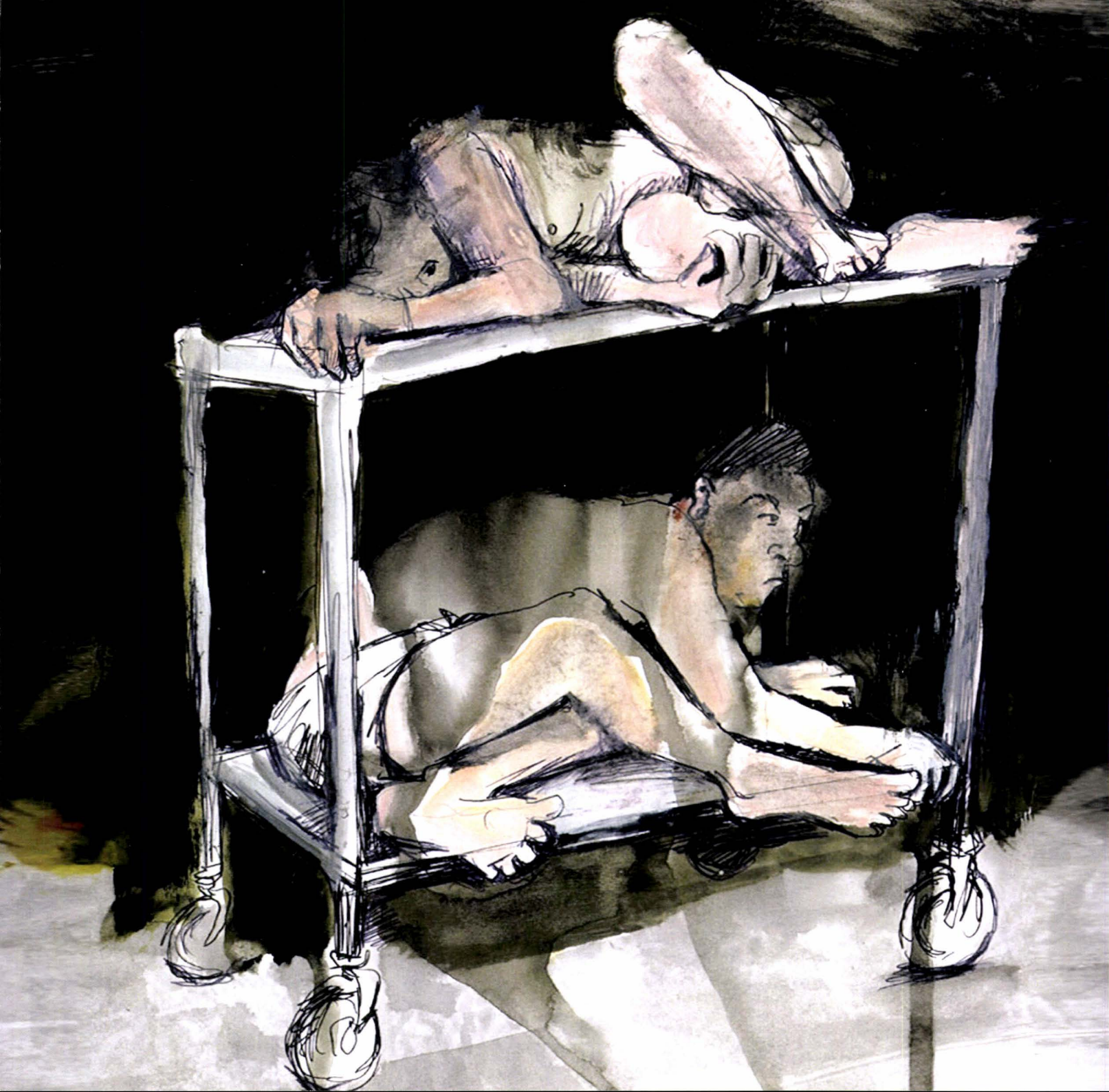


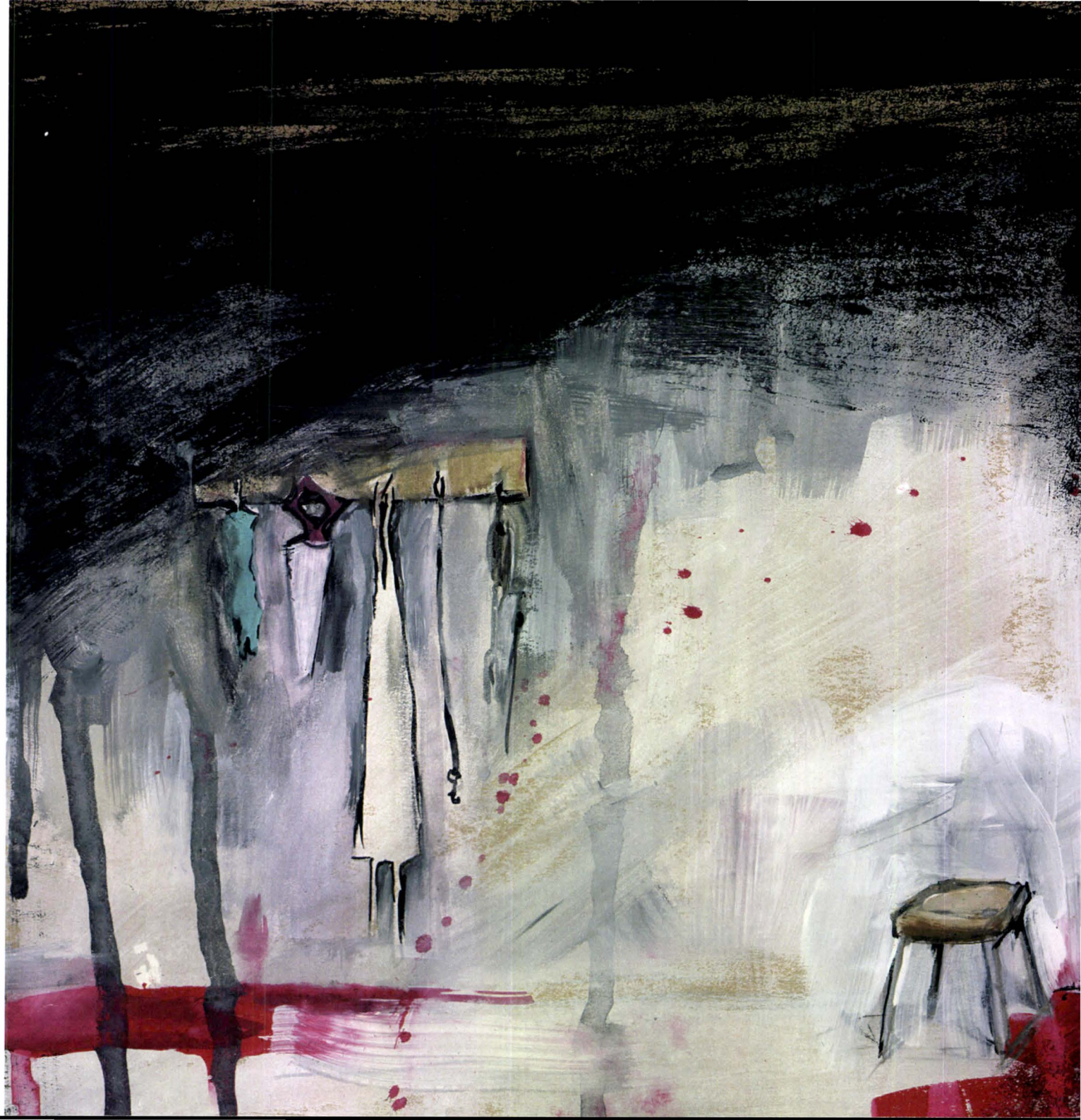




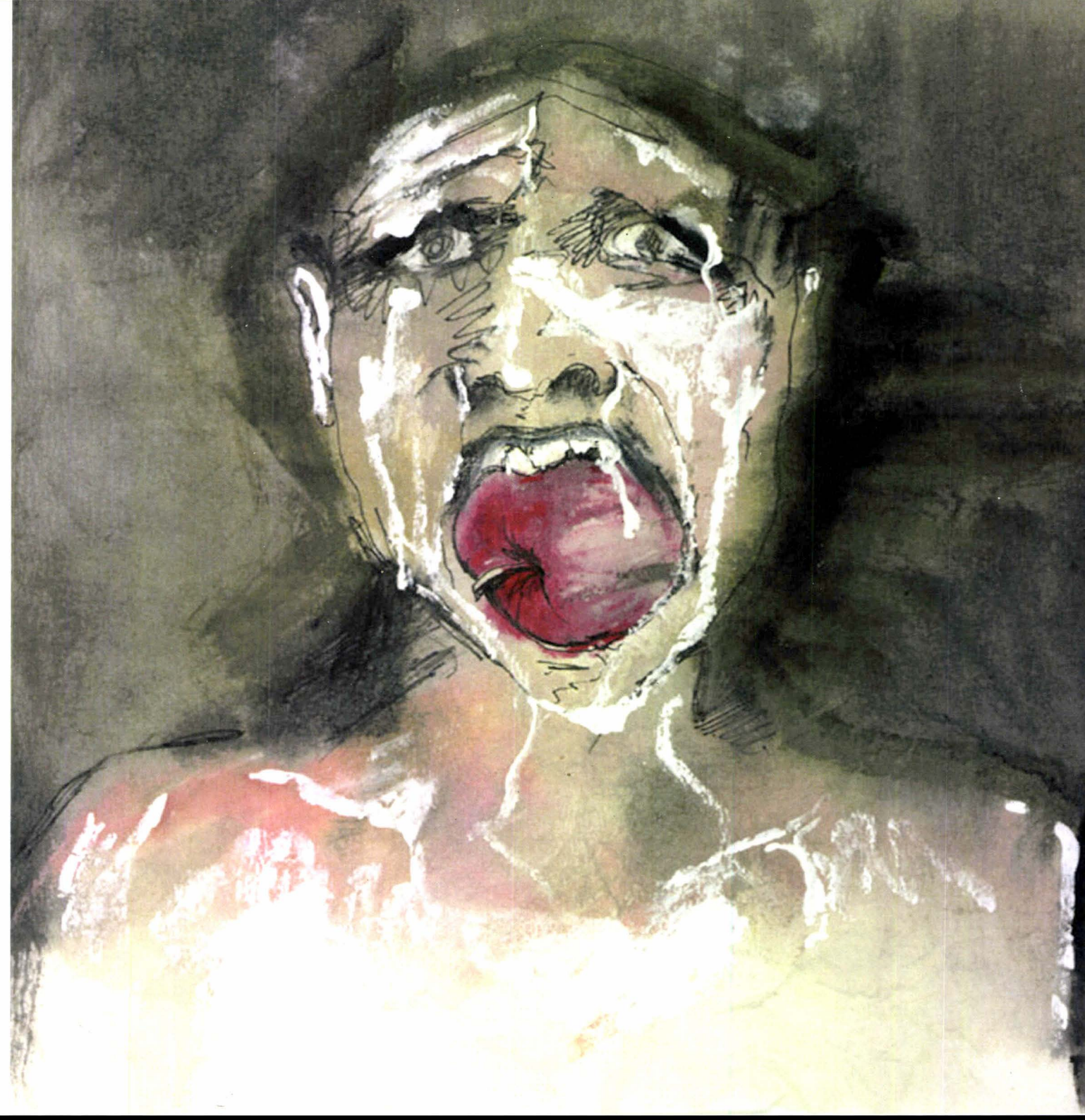


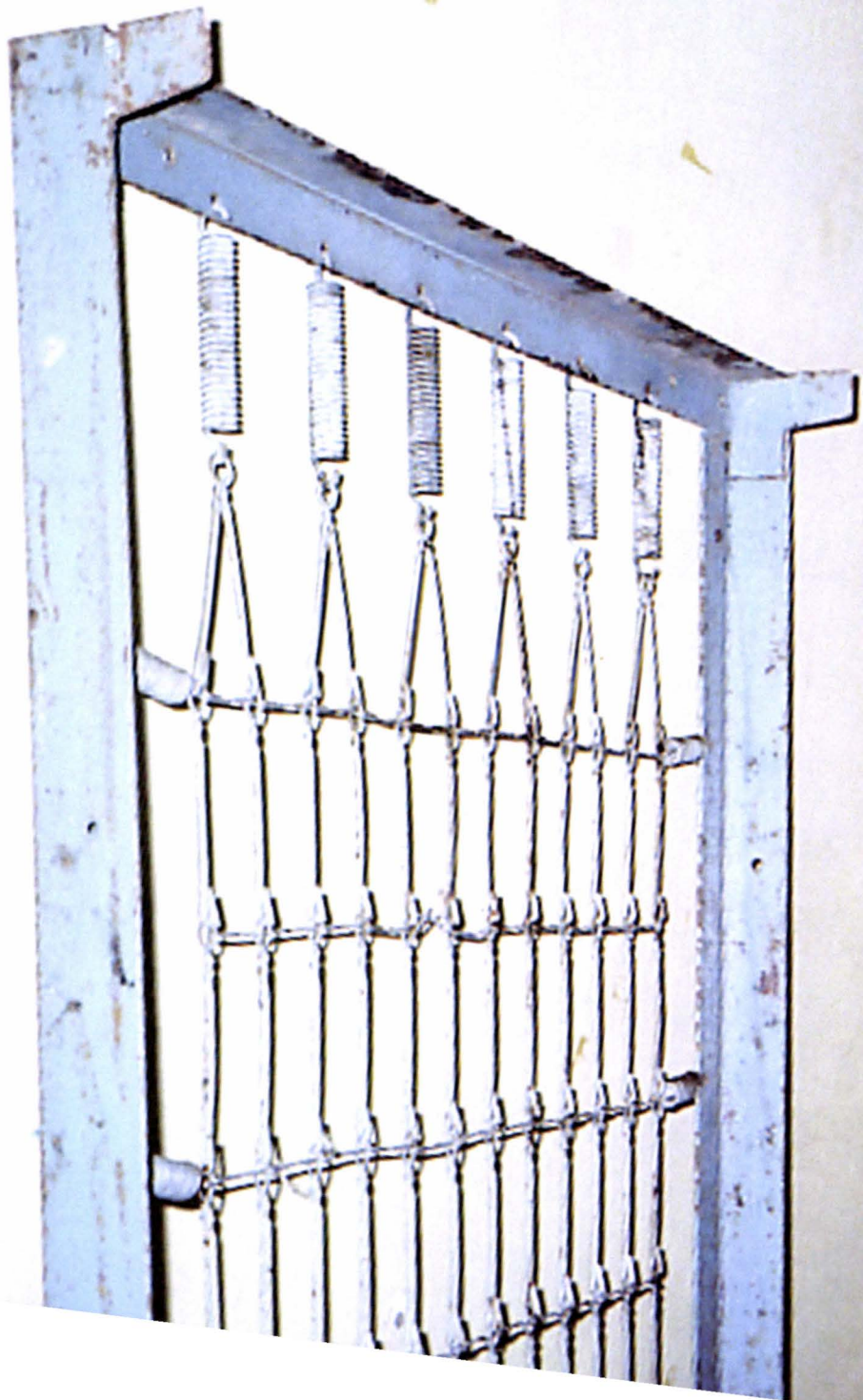


















APPENDIX
The Restaurant of Many Orders
by Kenji Miyazawa

The Restaurant of Many Orders

The original short story by Kenji Miyazawa, written in 1918

Two young gentlemen, carefully dressed like English soldiers, were walking along with two dogs that looked like polar bears, rustling through the fallen leaves deep in the hills, carrying their sparkling hunting guns.

"I must say, country around here is really awful, there's not a bird or a beast in sight. I'm just dying to let fly at something. Bang! Bang! Anything, so long as it moves".

"Aye what fun it would be to let a deer or something have a shot in its tawny flank. I can just see him spinning around and flopping down with a thud!"

They were far back in the hills. So far back that even the expert hunter who had been their guide had become confused and wandered off somewhere. On top of that, the mountains were so steep that both the polar bear-like dogs became dizzy, howled briefly, and fell down dead with their mouths foaming.

"Do you realise that dog cost me 2.400 yen?" one hunter said, peeling back one eyelid and taking a look.

"Mine cost me 2,800," the other hunter said sadly, bowing his head.

The first hunter flushed a bit, and looked steadily into the face of the other.

"I think I'll be getting back".

"As a matter of fact, I was just beginning to feel a bit cold and hungry myself, so I think I'll join you"

"Then lets call it a day. What does it matter? On our way back we can drop by at yesterday's inn, and pick up a couple of game birds".

"They had hares too didn't they?"

The one problem, however, was that they had no idea which way to go to return home. The wind was whistling, the grass was whispering, the leaves were rustling, and the tree branches were scraping together.

"I really am hungry, I've had an awful hollow feeling under my ribs for quite a while now".

"So have I. I don't feel like walking any further".

"I don't want to walk. Ah, what a fix. I want to eat something."

"Oh, for something to eat!"

This is how the two gentlemen talked as they walked through the high, whispering grasses. Then they happened to look back, and saw a splendid, western-style house. The placard on the porch read '*Restaurant Wildcat House*'.

"Look! This is perfect. This place is civilised after all. Why don't we go in?"

"Funny finding it in a place like this. But I expect we'll be able to get a meal at any rate".

"Let's give it a try. I'm just about collapsing with hunger".

They went up on the porch. It was built of white glazed brick, and was a fine one indeed. The glass door was lettered in gold: '*Everyone Welcome. Please Feel No Restraint*'. The two were extremely happy.

"How about that. The world is a wonderful place after all. We've toiled all day, and now we come to such a nice place. It's a restaurant, but we can eat free of charge!"

"I must say, it does seem like it. That's what 'please feel no restraint' seems to suggest"

They pushed on the door, and went inside. They were standing in a corridor. There was more gold lettering on the back of the glass door: '*Plump parties and young parties especially welcome*'. The two were very happy to be especially welcome.

"Look, we're especially welcome it says!"

"Because we satisfy both conditions!"

They hurried down the corridor and came to a door painted a pale blue.

"What a strange place. I wonder why are there so many doors"

"It's the Russian style. Everyone does it this way in cold places and in the mountains."

As they were about to open the door, they looked up and saw a notice written in yellow letters: '*This is the Restaurant of Many Orders. Welcome to the Feast!*'

"They've really done it up right. And out in the mountains like this!"

"But of course. Even in Tokyo the big restaurants are seldom on the main avenues."

He opened the door as they talked. And on the inside: *'There are rather a lot of orders; so we hope you will be patient'*.

"Now just what does that mean?" one gentleman asked, knitting his brows.

"It seems to be apologizing for the delay, because they get so many orders."

"I suppose so. I want to get settled down as soon as possible, don't you?"

"I'd like to sit down at a table."

But unfortunately, they came to another door. There was a mirror beside it, below which there was a long-handled brush. The door had red letters: *'Guests will please arrange their hair and remove any mud from their footwear'*.

"Very right and proper too. And back at the hall I was thinking this was just a place for the locals."

"They have strict etiquette. I'm sure that grand people often come here."

And so they combed their hair and brushed the dirt from their boots. But when they put the brush on the floor, it grew hazy and disappeared, and a blast of wind howled out at them from the next room. The two were surprised, and moved closer together, then pushed open the door and went in. They were thinking something absurd might happen if they didn't quickly eat something warm to restore their spirits. There was another strange notice inside the door, over a long, black table: *'Please place your guns and bullets here'*.

"Of course, no one ever ate with his gun."

"I'm beginning to think their customers must all be rather grand".

They lay down their guns, then took off their ammunition belts and placed them on the table as well. The next door was black. *'Please remove your hats, coats and footwear'*.

"What about it? Do we take them off?"

"There's really no choice. They must really be grand people, the ones inside."

The pair hung their hats and overcoats on pegs, then removed their boots and walked through the doorway in their stocking feet. *'Please remove your tie pins, cuff links, spectacles, purses and anything else with metal in it'* was written inside the door. A lovely black lacquered strongbox was standing open next to the door. The key was right in its place.

"Metal objects would be dangerous, especially pointed ones".

"I suppose so".

"So it seems."

"Yes, I'm sure of it."

And so the two took off their glasses, removed their cufflinks, put everything in the strongbox and snapped it shut. Then they walked a ways to the next door, in front of which was a glass jar. The sign on the door said, *'Please cover heads, hands and feet with cream from the jar'*. They could see that the jar was indeed filled with sweet cream.

"Why should they want one to put cream on?"

"Well, if it's very cold outside and too warm inside, one's skin gets chapped, so this is to prevent it. I must say they only get the very best sort of people coming here. At this rate we may soon be on speaking terms with aristocracy."

The two spread cream on their faces and on their hands, then removed their socks and covered their feet with cream. There was a little left, which they stealthily ate while pretending to spread it on their faces. Then they rushed through the door. '*Did you spread the cream well? Don't forget your ears!* – was written there, over a small jar of cream.

"Of course, I didn't do my ears. And ears are in the greatest danger of chapping from the heat. The proprietor of this place really is very thoughtful!"

"Yes, he's got an eye for every little detail. All the same, I'd like to eat something right away. How much longer will we be running here and there through the hallways?"

And then they came to the next door: '*The meal is almost ready. Please wait 15 minutes. You will be served soon. Please sprinkle your head with perfume from the bottle*'. In front of the door was sparkling bottle of perfume. The pair splashed the perfume around their heads. The aroma of the perfume, however, was very much like that of vinegar.

"This stuff's awfully vinegary. What is wrong with it do you think?"

"It must be a mistake. Perhaps a scullery maid caught a cold and couldn't tell the difference."

They opened the door and went through. Inside the door was a notice in large letters: *'We are sorry to have troubled you with so many orders. There is only one more. Please sprinkle your entire body with salt'*. There was, needless to say, a splendid blue, porcelain salt cellar. This time, however, the pair gulped and looked at each other's cream-covered faces.

"That is odd."

"It seems odd to me, too."

"By 'many orders' they seem to mean orders *they* gave us."

"It's as though this restaurant did not prepare meals and feed it to the people who came, but rather, prepared the people who came as meals, and then ate them. In which case, w-w-we would b-b-be . . ." He was shaking too much to finish.

The other one also shook badly. "Then, w-w-we w-w-would w-waaahh!"

"Run!" the one gentleman yelled shakily, and pushed on the door, but the door did not budge.

There was one more door into the dining room, with two keyholes in the shape of a silver knife and fork. The lettering there said, '*Thank you for your pains. Everything is quite ready. Please come inside*'. Two blue eyes could be seen peering through the keyholes.

"Waaahh!" one hunter cried, shivering shakily.

"Waaahh!" the other cried, shakily shivering.

As the two cried, quiet voices could be heard on the other side of the door. "Too bad - they've noticed. They won't be salty enough."

"I'm not surprised. The boss doesn't write very well. Feeble-minded stuff like 'We are sorry to have troubled you with so many orders'."

"It doesn't really matter. At least he lets us have a share of the bones, doesn't he?"

"That's true. But if those guys don't come in, he's going to blame us!"

"Should we call to them? I'll call. Hey, honored guests. Please enter-- right now. Welcome. Welcome! The platters are clean, and the greens are nicely salted. We just need to toss you with the greens and arrange everything on the nice white platters. Hurry on in!"

"Yeah, welcome. Welcome. Or don't you like salad? If that's the problem we can light the fire and do some frying instead. Hurry in, anyway."

The pair, consumed with anguish, looked at one another with faces like crumpled waste paper. Inside there was a little chuckling, then more yelling.

"Come in, come in. If you keep crying like that, it will wash off the cream you've taken the trouble to apply. Hey, right now! Hurry up! Please come in here!"

"Hurry in! The boss is awaiting his guests, wearing a napkin, holding a knife and licking his lips."

The two cried and cried and cried. But then there was a noise behind them. Barking loudly, the two dogs that looked like polar bears broke through the door and bounded into the room. The eyeballs in the keyholes disappeared immediately. The dogs

howled and ran around the room for a moment; then there was another loud bark and they threw themselves at the last door. The door slammed open, and the room seemed to suck the dogs in.

Inside the room was total darkness, but confused yelling could be heard at first, and then gasping wails. And then the room disappeared like so much smoke, and the two gentlemen were standing in the grass, shivering from the cold. Looking around, they could see their jackets and boots and wallets and tie pins hanging from branches here or scattered among the roots over there. The wind was whistling, the grass was whispering, the leaves were rustling, and the tree branches were scraping together. The dogs came back, puffing.

Then, behind them, the gentlemen heard someone calling to them.

They took courage at once, and called back, "Hallo-- Over here! Come quickly."

Their guide, wearing his hunting cap, made his way to them with a swish through the dry grass. At last they were able to relax. The pair ate the dumplings the guide brought with him and, then stopping on the way to buy some pheasants for 10 yen, returned to Tokyo, where they soaked in a hot bath and felt completely themselves again.

'The World of Kenji Miyazawa' web site presents a wide range of information on Kenji Miyazawa, including downloadable translations, images, and essays on the topic (www.kenji-world.net/english/).

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