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**THE ARTIST IS NOT PRESENT: A strategic investigation of psychological complexity through performance.**



THE ARTIST IS NOT PRESENT: A strategic investigation of  
psychological complexity through performance.

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A thesis submitted to the faculty at Massey University in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine  
Arts in the College of Creative Arts in Massey University.

25 October 2016

*“The whole process of living is my creative act.”*  
*- Joseph Beuys<sup>1</sup>*

## ABSTRACT

Hannah Beatrice, *THE ARTIST IS NOT PRESENT*: A strategic investigation of psychological complexity through performance.

A solo female figure manipulates hybridized subjectivity and performed authenticity. I have the ability to displace audiences and present an alternative perspective of reality through the form of a live performance.

I perform using expected frameworks: enacting social conventions and expectations based on the context of performances, [place, space, audience, time], and the subjectivity of performer; in order to simultaneously present, embody, and experience an exploration of the human psyche relevant to today's decaying Western society.

*"And the question we must now ask ourselves is to know whether in this world that is slipping away, committing suicide without realizing it, a nucleus of men can be found to impress [a] higher idea of theatre on the world, to bring to all of us a natural, occult equivalent of the dogma we no longer believe."* - Antonin Artaud<sup>11</sup>

The live performance work is influenced by tactics used in early Absurdist and Surrealist theatre practices, challenging traditional concepts of what live performance might achieve, along with its function:

- Questioning the nature of existence and the validity of a decaying society through the deconstruction of both characteristic and anticipated frameworks.
- Transgressing the boundary between audience and the performer to address psychological complexities.
- A practice orientated towards audience affect, performer and audience relationship, and the audience's specific role in relation to the body of work. The audience disturbs the work as much as the work disturbs the audience, making the practice audience responsive and it evolves based on its reception.

Whether it is genuine or not, I have been interested in manifesting induced 'liveness' through dismantling boundaries, whilst still maintaining distance between the audience and myself.

The reality of performing through qualities of intimacy, fantasy vs. fact, and performed authenticity, means that the work extends beyond simply the live performance event. I am not restricting myself to being responsive to the audience within the live performance events only, but across the practice through such things as residual documents and imagery. In this way, the emphasis is on a holistic practice, and the artist is then rarely present.



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