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## About us

The *Scottish Journal of Performance* is an open access refereed journal which aims to promote and stimulate discussion, development and dissemination of original research, focusing both on performance in Scotland (contemporary and historical) and / or wider aspects of performance presented by scholars and reflective practitioners based at Scottish academic institutions.

Published bi-annually and run by doctoral students, the *Scottish Journal of Performance* welcomes submissions from both established and early career researchers and operates a peer review system ensuring presentation of quality research in performance.

Performance in this context encompasses a wide range of arts and entertainment and takes as central themes dance, drama, film, music and television. The *Scottish Journal of Performance* takes as a key focus the creation and execution of performance in various contexts, encouraging the adoption of a wide range of range of research methods and approaches.

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## Editorial

BEN FLETCHER-WATSON & KIRSTY KAY

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### Unpicking the familiar: new reflective routes

The third issue of the *Scottish Journal of Performance* presents a diverse selection of papers on the theme of 'New Reflective Routes'. This issue presents contrasting journeys made by three scholars as they unpick familiar routes of creative, analytic and daily practice, each finding potential for exciting new critical directions.

Laura Bissell and David Overend reflect on their investigation into the creative and nomadic potentials in their daily commutes, Alistair MacDonald critically examines his work dislocating the clarsach from its traditional context, discovering its alternative musical potential to explore themes surrounding Scottish heritage and identity, and Rui Pedro De Oliveira Alves's historical survey of the trombone in visual art leads him to argue for a re-evaluation of research into musical iconography and the need for revived debate.

Samuel Beckett notes in his essay *Proust* that 'habit is a compromise effected between the individual and his environment, or between the individual and his own organic eccentricities, the guarantee of a dull inviolability, the lightning-conductor of his existence... Breathing is habit. Life is habit. Or rather life is a succession of habits.' All three articles present the creative and critical possibilities of disrupting the habitual and playing with the boundaries of well-worn subjects, as well as showcasing the

performativity of the reflective process itself.

In the first article, Alistair MacDonald reflects on his collaborative process working with harpist Catriona McKay, utilising the clarsach and placing it within unfamiliar musical environments in order to create dislocated pieces which investigate the history of traditional instruments and the boundaries of tradition through sonic experimentation in order to create something 'consciously Scottish'. In doing so, MacDonald creatively deconstructs the invented nature of tradition, exploring the traditions associated with a certain location (in this case Scotland) through disrupting expectations. MacDonald and McKay embed the clarsach within live electronic performances as a means of 'playing with scales of dislocation' or placing the instrument along a continuum of direct and processed sounds in order to trouble people's expected aural associations and assumptions of the 'traditional'. In the article, MacDonald reflects on this creative partnership, interspersing personal and musical reflections with theoretical underpinnings.

In their keynote speech *Rhythmic routes: developing a nomadic physical practice for the daily commute*, replicated here verbatim, Laura Bissell and David Overend reflect on a joint project undertaken during 2014. The authors take the habitual routines of everyday life and re-imagine them as sources of creative potential. Investigating the rhythms and repetitions of their daily commutes, they begin to see them as potential sites of performance to search for what they call an 'alternative space of becoming'. Through a multimodal reflection of their experiences in which they attempt their usual commute without the aid of transport—walking and even swimming parts of their journeys—their interaction and critical reflections are presented in a way that both highlights and transgresses the rhythms and repetitions of embodied modern life.

Iconography offers the possibility of valuable insights into historical performance practices, but as Rui Pedro De Oliveira Alves contends in his paper *The trombone as portrayed in Portuguese iconography during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries*, images from the past can exaggerate and misrepresent. A gallery of illustrations allows de Oliveira Alves to postulate a foundation of evidence for emerging musical practices while he also acknowledges the slipperiness of artistic licence. His sources provide evidence of instrument design, playing methods, and the role of musicians in Portuguese society, highlighting the value of iconographic research within archival studies.

Continuing our desire to publish recent symposium proceedings in order to recognise the wealth of exciting research currently being conducted in Scotland, we are pleased to include complete abstracts from a recent postgraduate symposium sponsored by the British Sociological Association, held at Glasgow Caledonian University on 13 June 2014. Organised by research students Victoria Palmer of Glasgow Caledonian University and Bethany Whiteside of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, under the title 'Pace, pirouette and penalty: the sociology of physical culture', the abstracts cover a fascinating and wide-ranging selection of current research and practitioner reports.

As part of this conference, Emmanuelle Tulle reports on narratives of ageing in the public lives of elite athletes; Ursula Burger analyses roller derby culture to critique gender identities in sports advertising discourses; James Bowness explores issues of ageing and gender identities in Masters athletes at the Highland Games; Conor Heffernan recounts the strongman phenomenon and the crisis of white masculinity in depression-era America; Laura Bissell and David Overend present their keynote speech reflecting on

their performative investigation into the daily commute; Vanessa Coffey presents an investigation into the use of physical theatre by mental health service-users; Lito Tsitsou uses Bourdieusian approaches to deconstruct the meaning of 'talent' in ballet and contemporary dance; Kirsty Kay compares folk dance movements from East and West Europe to explore ideas of embodied national identity; Sue Smith critically appraises the use of audio-description in dance performances and proposes the possibility of more multi-sensual creative practice; Lucy Amsden reflects on her time at an Ecole Philippe Gaulier clown workshop to explore physical notions of the 'ridiculous'; Hande Güzel looks at gender and able-bodiedness in physical education classes in Turkey; Andria Christofidou draws on data by dance historians to present an account of how ballet emerged as a female-concentrated dance form; and Josephine Leask gives a reflexive account of her participation in a Bollywood dance class in a multicultural area of London.

This issue also presents reviews of a number of recently published texts addressing performance from many disciplines, including music, theatre, film, acting and pedagogy. Neil Rhodes reviews *Singing Simpkin and other bawdy jigs: musical comedy on the Shakespearean stage—scripts, music and context*, by Roger Clegg and Lucy Skeaping; Anselm Heinrich reviews *The theatrical public sphere*, by Christopher B. Balme; Gareth K. Vile reviews *All work and no plays: blueprints for 9 theatre performances by Ontroerend Goed*; Mieko Kanno reviews *Embodied knowledge in ensemble performance*, by J. Murphy McCaleb; Harry A. Whalley reviews *Music and the making of modern science*, by Peter Pesic; Sam Beaton reviews *Rancièrè and film*, edited by Paul Bowman; Mark Stevenson reviews *The actor and the camera*, by Denis Lawson; and Laura Bissell reviews *The reflexive teaching artist: collected wisdom from the drama/theatre field*, edited by Kathryn Dawson and Daniel A. Kelin, II.



Lastly, we would like to thank the University of St Andrews, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Anglia Ruskin University, the editorial team, advisory board, our peer reviewers, funders, and especially our authors.

BEN FLETCHER-WATSON AND KIRSTY KAY  
Co-editors, *Scottish Journal of Performance*



## Dislocation and relocation: clarsach and live electronics

ALISTAIR MACDONALD

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*In writing The Salutation (clarsach and electroacoustic sound) for harpist Catriona McKay in 2002, I wanted to create something which celebrated the history and music of the instrument itself, using studio technology to create a bridge between idiomatic writing for the instrument and environmental/anecdotal sound, including the voice, which referenced place and time.*

*This paper will chart and reflect on the collaborative work we have done together since then, describing our methodology for interrogating and relocating the clarsach. It will explore how we consciously play with musical, sonic and conceptual distances in our improvised performances, and examine aspects of this shared 'performance ecosystem' (Waters, 2007), which enables us to function in multiple contexts.*

*Keywords: clarsach, live electronics, improvisation*

[T]he constraints and constructs upon which music depends are not only, not even mostly found in the physical object of the instrument, but also in the physiology of this particular body, in the assumptions and embodied knowledge which operate in this particular player and in the interpenetrations between all of these and the framing acoustic and social environment (Waters, 2007, p.3).

In 2002, I was commissioned by harpist Catriona McKay to write *The Salutation*, a piece for clarsach and electroacoustic sound. Following this, we began to work on projects combining improvisation with live electronics, rather than creating fixed, pre-recorded electroacoustic parts. Some of this work, especially the ensemble projects, has clear connections to Scottish traditional music, principally through a preponderance of melodic material. Alongside this, the work of our duo, Strange Rainbow, is much more connected to our experiences in other genres and contexts, often exploring sound for its own sake. I hope to show how through this work we have developed a practice based on 'scales of dislocation' that relocates the clarsach and allows our music to function in multiple musical contexts.

Simon Emmerson (2012) discusses 'location' of live electronic music and considers the 'relocation of the *live*' (p.8) that technology brings about. He explores the nature of liveness of performance in space, time and causality, and suggests the idea of 'meaningful response' as a way to measure the effectiveness of interactivity. He says:

A performer might ask 'where are we?' in reference to a printed score or given structure within the (perhaps unwritten) music; but this question can also be asked with respect to a venue, furthermore we can ask it about a historical or sociological 'position'. It seems that this question is the most comprehensive it is possible to ask! (Emmerson, 2012, p.8)

In this paper I want to look at how the practice I have developed with Catriona McKay has allowed us to relocate the clarsach, a particularly Scottish instrument, in relation to its traditional identity and in different musical contexts, and how we have developed an interactive environment that facilitates 'meaningful response'.

In composing *The Salutation* I wanted to find a way of locating the clarsach in a consciously Scottish frame and to draw, as far as possible, on the instrument's Scottish identity within the bounds of my own musical language, which is rooted in contemporary classical, electroacoustic music. The reason for doing so was that, although the commission was for an electroacoustic piece, Catriona wanted music that she could perform in a programme of traditional Scottish music, rather than something intended for a concert of contemporary classical music. While I had composed for instruments and 'tape' or live electronics in the past, I had always avoided bringing extra-musical references (recognisably real-world, non-instrumental sounds or references to other musics) into these works, so this was a significant challenge for me. Throughout the process I was concerned not to lose sight of the clarsach: its characteristic sound, the physical and mechanical constraints of instrument and performer and the 'baggage' it brings with it as an instrument of folk history and culture. At the back of my mind were both my reading around that time of Hugh Trevor-Roper's (albeit exaggerated) portrayal of 'Scottishness' as a nineteenth century constructed mythology (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983), and an awareness of my own family's constructed Scottish mythology (one completely invented by my grandfather that prompted my parents to give me my Scottish first name, and that we only discovered to be fictitious years after his death). I therefore approached the task of composing something intended to be consciously 'Scottish', for a specifically Scottish audience, with some caution, avoiding musical pastiche and trying to incorporate signifiers of cultural identity. These would include sounds of the instrument, of place, of speech and other recognisable sounds referenced in the spoken words.

The clarsach is the Scottish member of the Celtic harp family. The earliest known examples date back over a thousand years and, along with the Great Highland Pipes, it

was an instrument of high status in the courts of clan chiefs up until the eighteenth century and so holds an important place in Scottish cultural history. Keith Sanger and Alison Kinnaird (1992) provide a detailed history of the instrument devoted largely to the period from the earliest records to its decline, which ran in parallel with that of Gaelic culture and patronage in the eighteenth century. Their invaluable work in rediscovering ancient repertoire laid the foundation for the revival of the instrument and its music over the past 40 years. Now a very familiar instrument in contemporary Scottish traditional music, its repertoire comprises music from the past along with a large body of work composed by contemporary players. This largely sits within and around the generic forms associated with Scottish traditional music, particularly dance forms such as reel, jig, strathspey and waltz, along with airs and other slower music. In addition, as contemporary Scottish traditional musicians absorb, at an ever increasing rate, influences from many other traditions and genres, the clarsach music we hear is ancient, modern, Scottish and global in origin. Nevertheless, the sound of the instrument (notwithstanding the differences between ancient and modern instruments, which also continue to evolve) is associated with a broadly Celtic identity, and certainly within Scotland an audience for Scottish traditional music would consciously ascribe 'Scottishness' to it in the same way as it might to the Great Highland Pipes.

In previous electroacoustic works *without* instruments I had made reference to place. These include *Busk* (with Nicholas Virgo, 1988), based on the sounds of street musicians in Birmingham, *Final Times* (1998), an audio portrait of Glasgow, and *Bound for Glory* (2002), set in southern Poland. There are also two works for dance, *Making of Maps* (1992) and *So Many Islands* (1996), which more generally reference city and coastline, respectively. So, I decided to use sounds of place to help situate the music of *The Salutation*. I chose to begin with a recording I had made of Margaret Hughes, a 90-year-old woman from

Buckie in the North East of Scotland, recalling her time as a 'fisher quine' ('quine', a Scots word for a young woman) in the 1930s herring industry in Shetland. Margaret's voice gave me a distinctive accent along with a specifically Scottish narrative which referenced a specific time in the past, a subject ('the herrin' fishin'...') and a place (Shetland - Margaret talks about working in the town of Lerwick). Her words also hint at other, less specific things that allowed me to incorporate exterior, environmental sounds (the sea, gulls, fishing boats, a harbour) and the domestic setting of Margaret's reminiscences (the sound of a grandfather clock). I use only fragments of Margaret's story but these fragments are enough to situate the narrative ('I belong up North in Buckie... aye, when I was sixteen... 1939 at the guttin'... at the herrin' fishin'... you worked three o' ye... two o' ye an' a packer... three in a crew... gutted and packed... herrin' barrels... thruppence the hour... at the herrin' fishin'...', and so on). These spoken fragments were combined with the other recordings and additional recorded clarsach sounds to create the electroacoustic part. So, while the live instrument has been dislocated from its familiar *musical* surroundings, the combination of clarsach-based sound and recognisable, 'referential' sounds, along with melodic elements, creates a sonic context for my more fragmented, less idiomatic instrumental writing. If this works for its intended audience, as I believe it does, it relies not on knowledge of electroacoustic repertoire but rather on a shared experience of sound design in film and television (which, of course, can also be an important point of reference for the expert audience).

The process of composing the clarsach part for *The Salutation* was collaborative and to some extent improvisatory. In writing the score, I worked closely with Catriona to unpick some of the instrument's and specifically her characteristics, idiomatic gestures and sounds. The live clarsach part moves between texture and gesture, relating and reacting to the voice and environmental sounds.

Catriona's love of reshaping simple arpeggios, her characteristic rhythmic driving chords and intricate high, repeated, improvised patterns all find their way into the writing. At the opening, for example, as the regular ticking of a clock gradually morphs into the arrhythmic clicking of rigging on ships' masts, simple repeated notes are gradually subsumed into more complex irregular note textures. Interjections of speaking voice are mirrored by broken clusters of notes which themselves suggest fragments of an imagined or half-remembered melody. Later in the piece, melodic writing is woven in, emerging from pitched, electroacoustic textures and rapid, repeated (diatonic) clusters, and gradually becoming fragmented in both register and meter as extra-musical sounds return.

*The Salutation* was to become the first step in a lasting collaboration to which we have both brought a range of musical experience. As improvisation was already part of our own practices, and as this had been part of the compositional process, it became our environment and methodology for further exploration. My own practice as a composer in the electroacoustic studio has always acknowledged the performative, improvisational and playful opportunities that the studio affords. Alongside this I had also had the opportunity to work with some extraordinary improvisers from the world of free jazz (including Paul Dunmall, 1997–2001, and Keith Tippett, 1999), I had improvised with dancers/choreographers (including Sue MacLennan & Company, 1993, and Anna Krzystek, 2000–2002) and I was soon to make large-scale, performative and improvisatory interactive installations (*Sensuous Geographies* with Sarah Rubidge, 2002–2003; *Sea Unsea* with Carol Brown and Mette Ramsgard Thomsen, 2005–2006). I also brought experience of writing fixed electroacoustic pieces as well as works with instruments and voices, and I had much experience performing electroacoustic work by other composers (working with Sonic Arts Network, 1985–2002, and Birmingham



Electroacoustic Sound Theatre, 1985–1995). Though Catriona is known principally as a clarsach player, as a soloist and in other contexts, she also plays organ and pedal harp. Improvisation has been part of her musical practice throughout her career and she is a member of the Glasgow Improvisers' Orchestra and other improvising groups. She is a prolific composer, largely of new traditional music, and is in demand as a player of contemporary harp music.

Throughout our work together since *The Salutation* we have continued to develop our sonic resources. For Catriona, improvisation has always been a place to explore different ways of playing the clarsach. For example, she uses plectra, guitar steels, and less conventional objects such as knitting needles and battery-powered fans, to prepare (in the sense of John Cage's prepared piano) or excite the strings. She also draws on harp techniques from other cultures, for example, that of playing hard, damped glissandi, which is something she found listening to Patagonian harp playing. I have continued to collect sounds of place and other 'real-world' reference. At the same time, I developed (and continue to refine) a collection of software tools and control interface mapping to capture, trigger and process sounds, working with MIDI controllers, sensors, pedals and touchscreen interfaces to achieve the fluid and rapid, *performative* control of sounds and their transformation.

The work that followed *The Salutation* can be divided into two distinct strands. The ensemble projects I shall describe have a musical core close to Catriona's Scottish traditional music yet also extend that language in ways that Lori Watson describes as 'beyond-tune'.

By 'beyond-tune', I refer to a piece of music that is longer in length and/or significantly more complex in arrangement, in terms of the textures created by utilising instrumentation, extended performance techniques and harmony, than, as

an example, a 'set' of three reels each consisting of 32 bars of melody with chord accompaniment... (Watson, 2013, p.38)

In her research, Watson makes a very useful survey of innovation and innovators in traditional music in Scotland, especially over the last thirty years (including Catriona's work, *Floe*). This is perhaps the most appropriate 'lens' through which to understand this strand of our work.

This move towards more complex forms and the adoption of new harmonic, melodic and rhythmic material is a significant trend in Scottish traditional music. As Simon McKerrell (2014) notes:

What was once considered kitsch tartanry has been re-mythologized and now hybrid sounds from Scottish musicians portray a newer, emergent sense of national identity. Increasingly, musicians are performing deterritorialized and commodified music which is shifting attention away from musical provenance and authentic ideology towards more transient sonic identities and blurring established musical genres (N.P.).

Our first piece after *The Salutation* which consciously ventured 'beyond-tune' was *Mareel* in 2007. Alongside mixing the recording of Catriona's CD *Starfish* (clarsach with string ensemble) we reworked the opening track, improvising with live electronics to create *Mareel*, which became the final track on the CD. Catriona's music for clarsach and string ensemble on this disc sits firmly in the genre of New Traditional music (Watson, 2012). In *Mareel*, the melodic materials from *Starfish* are clearly present and recognisable, but are also transformed with unconventional harp techniques, improvisation and live electronic processing. As pulse and harmony dissolve into texture, the structure departs from something defined by regular

groupings of bars and chords to become distinctly 'beyond-tune'.

Following the critical success of this CD, Catriona was commissioned by Celtic Connections (Glasgow's annual world music festival) to create *Floe* in 2008, a large-scale work for fiddle, accordion, piano, nyckelharpa, clarsach and live electronics. *Floe* was first performed at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall then toured smaller traditional music venues across Scotland. The piece draws influence from Catriona's previous collaborations with each of the musicians, and their different musical references find their way into Catriona's own distinctive language. In this case, live electronics are present through much of the work and there are also substantial sections with live electronics that involve the whole group improvising.

Later in 2008, Catriona and I were invited to the Norwegian Film Festival and commissioned to compose new music for a Norwegian silent film, *Historien om en gut* (1919). This is scored for clarsach, strings and electronics, and, again, consists of composed and improvised elements based around tonal, melodic 'traditional' writing. More recently, we worked with Gaelic singer Margaret Bennett on *Ciodabhaig*, based around a 1940s film, *The Western Isles*, and the Scottish Gaelic singer Kitty MacLeod, who appears in the film.

As *Strange Rainbow*, our improvised duo performances have been very different from these composed projects, involving little or no diatonic, harmonic or melodic material. For us this has been an outlet for a very different kind of music, in which we seek a new voice for the clarsach *without* reference to its Scottish identity. This body of work, which is usually performed for very diverse audiences and draws more heavily on other facets of our musical experiences in different genres, demands a quite different

contextualisation.

Unlike *Floe*, Strange Rainbow performances have taken place in venues not generally associated with traditional music, and for promoters of non-traditional arts and music. They have included a night club setting in Manchester as part of a sound art festival (Sonic Arts Network Expo Festival 2006); 'Noisy Nights' at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, and 'What Happened' at The Arches (an underground contemporary performance venue in Glasgow) for contemporary music ensemble Red Note; Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra's GIO Festival 2008, at Glasgow's Centre for Contemporary Arts; and 'Fest'n'Furious' at Dundee Contemporary Arts, 2007. We have played to an audience for traditional music once, at Celtic Connections' *A Night of Celtronika* (2011) at 2am in The Old Fruitmarket, Glasgow in the same programme as a string ensemble, rock bands, 'Punjabi-electronica pop-art' and more. As Waters says, 'the constraints and constructs upon which music depends [relate to] the framing acoustic and social environment' (2007, p.3). Venue, location, promoter and other musicians sharing the bill all not only colour an audience's expectation, but also influence our musical approach to an improvised performance.

Examples of this side of our output can be heard on our two CDs of improvised music, *invisible from land and sea* (2008) and *skimmerin'* (2009). In both cases, the music, or certainly our intention for it, was located more comfortably *within* a practice of free improvisation than 'beyond' anything.

*invisible from land and sea* (2008) is 'located' in the studio, recorded over a number of intense sessions with no audience. The sound world is close, dry and intense. The clarsach sounds are far from the conventional, plucked notes of the traditional instrument. Hand-held fans buzzing

against the strings create mechanical, often distorted textures, or clicks and scrapes are captured and looped. The harp becomes part of a single-sounding texture that is often indistinguishable from its electronic other.

*skimmerin'* (2009) was a live recording of outdoor performances in the ancient Battlehill Woods in Aberdeenshire. It was the culmination of an extended residency exploring the area, listening to and recording local rivers, wind turbines, voices, forest birds, distant farm machinery, amongst other things. The performance incorporates and responds to the environmental sounds of that location, though not its cultural history or the clarsach's place in it. Here, the harp is often more clearly distinguishable, weaving in and out of the electroacoustic soundscape, but still located within a sound world rooted in free improvisation.

Given our experience in multiple musical genres it is perhaps interesting to consider how audiences hear, locate and construct meaning in our music. Beyond the broad labels of 'free improvisation' and 'beyond-tune', where might one locate this body of work? Some audiences hear our performance in relation to the broad genre of works for instruments and 'tape' or instruments and electronics. My own practice as composer, my experience as performer/sound engineer with Birmingham Electroacoustic Sound Theatre and Catriona's performances of contemporary classical music might well suggest it. Others hear it in relation to their experience of free improvisation, in which live electronics has a long history. Groups such as AMM and Gentle Fire in the 1960s and 1970s were pioneers, and Evan Parker's Electroacoustic Ensemble is prominent today. Parallels might also be drawn with other work that seeks to explore traditional musics with improvised live electronics, including, for example, Yannis Kyriakides's work (2006) with guitarist Andy Moor,

which explores the Greek tradition of rebetika. There are other examples of music exploring traditional harps and electronics, such as Ruth Wall's long-standing duo (lever harp, Bray harp, wire strung harp) with Graham Fitkin, and Şirin Pancaroglu's recent collaboration on traditional Turkish harp with Erdem Helvacioğlu's live electronics (2010).

Our most recent project draws the two strands of our practice back together with a return to melodic and harmonic materials as the source for improvisation. A more ambitious project than *Mareel*, it is a reworking of all of the material on Catriona's most recent acoustic CD *Harponium* (clarsach and harmonium) with live electronics in place of harmonium. It draws on the ideas, materials and structures in improvised reimaginings. This work 'remembers' fragments of Catriona's acoustic music and consciously recalls the stereotypical 'clarsach'. Recognisable elements characteristic of Catriona's new traditional writing are present in idiomatic instrumental gestures, references to traditional forms, rhythms and harmony/modality. Unlike *The Salutation*, though, these are unfixed, improvisatory reworkings that change substantially from one performance to the next. In this excerpt, a rhythmic figure from the original is sampled and looped, forming a pulse-based backbone for our playing. The movement in and out of pulse, in and out of harmony and mode is where we find the connection with our freer improvisation.

Reflecting on the musical and technical processes we employ, it is clear that over a number of years we have developed strategies that allow us to function in multiple musical contexts while maintaining an identifiable core practice. This might best be described as playing with scales of dislocation on a number of levels. Though these strategies and processes are not important to the listener (as Emerson (2013) says, we hear effects, not causes), they

are nonetheless the underlying strategies that allow us to generate 'meaningful response' in our performance. As I have already suggested, we interrogate the distance between traditional and free improvised music, between an apparently familiar world and a new one, albeit one which has its own language and codes. The work may also be *perceived* to lie somewhere along other lines between genres- between 'contemporary music for instrument and electronics' and 'noise music'. We also *locate* the clarsach somewhere along a continuum from sound worlds which are familiar or real (musically *or* environmentally speaking), via those which might appear surreal (strange, uncanny, not quite believable), to somewhere apparently alien. On a simple technical level, we explore distances between direct and more processed sounds. Denis Smalley describes source bonding as 'the natural tendency to relate sounds to supposed sources and causes, and to relate sounds to each other because they appear to have shared or associated origins' (1997, p.110). A live instrument is naturally, highly source-bonded: we see the player and their physical gestures, and the nature of the sounds we hear is expected so we assign the instrument as the source of the sound. Some of Catriona's playing techniques and preparations (plating with plectra, damping the strings with found objects, and inserting foam, wooden skewers and wire between the strings) already alter the clarsach's timbre and make it less recognisable. Yet Emmerson (1998, p.148) points out that in live electroacoustic works 'the instrument is the anchor... We always refer back to its presence... Including an extended instrument'. Some of the electronic processes simply create repetitions of the live sound ('first order surrogacy' (Smalley, 1986, p.82)), and others transform it completely ('remote surrogacy' (*ibid.*)). This distance between the 'fact' of the live instrument and the mediated illusion gives us a powerful musical space in which to operate, as indeed we often do.

The use of external sounds and semi-composed materials,

in other words, sounds not only resulting from live electronic processing, is also a feature of our performance. There is a peculiar orthodoxy in *some* live electronic performance that demands all sonic materials be created in the moment. However, as Emmerson (1998) points out, a range of electroacoustic materials related and unrelated to the live instrument affords a greater variety of potential musical relationships. This is something I had explored in previous work for instruments and 'tape'. I often recontextualise the instrument with sounds from the (apparently) real to the surreal, along what John Young (1996, p.83) calls the 'reality-abstraction continuum'. In *The Salutation*, the illusory context was thematic. In other performances we play with changing realities, exploring the tensions in the references these sounds carry; the reframing of a musical figure changes its meaning, and, of course, there are parallels with common musical practices such as the reharmonisation of a melody. The processing of sampled harp sounds can also be heard in this way - the 'real' harp becomes surreal, or loses its sonic identity completely and becomes 'abstract'. For us, the use of 'external' material dislocated in time and place is a crucial part of the relocation of the harp and it also gives me, the live electronic performer, the opportunity to go beyond a reactive role, to interact and provoke. I can more easily (playfully) surprise Catriona and it gives us the opportunity to work with a greater degree of polyphony and heterophony in performance.

The live electronic processes we use have gradually coalesced into an adaptable toolkit that allows us to articulate various 'distances' with great flexibility. Microphones on the harp are fed into my computer; sounds from the microphones both unaffected and processed are then mixed with other sounds and output to loudspeakers. The processes are relatively straightforward in themselves but I have built varying levels and scales of unpredictability into the parameters to allow for a greater degree of play.



They can be described in terms of how they affect time, texture, space and timbre.

Delays (or 'echoes') spread out from Catriona at centre stage, reinforcing the *temporal* de-centring and scattering in their *spatial* behaviour; they can accelerate, decelerate, become successively louder or die away. Other delays have resonant filters which sweep dynamically; variable unpredictability can be applied to spatial position and spatial trajectory as well as to equalisation and resonance.

Granulation (temporal fragmentation of a stream of sound) similarly spreads the instrument's sound spatially and temporally with variable degrees of randomness; these processes can be controlled to create swarms or trails of sound fragments that recede into the distance, or dense clusters of fragments that mask the live clarsach. This can disturb or interrupt the flow of time in the instrumental performance.

Other processes create continuous textures from the sound of the clarsach, ranging from smooth drones to motoric, pulse-based layers or chaotic webs. Loops (repeated, short recorded fragments) and layers of loops can be subject to controlled or random dynamic change. They can be filtered and spatialised to appear distant (behind the live instrument), to appear to float above or to cut across the spectral frame, or they may drift within the stereo image. The fragments themselves can be stable and mechanically repetitive, or the looped selection can shuffle, constantly desynchronising. Thus, we can play between pulse-based and pulse-less textures.

Simon Waters' writing about performance ecosystems (2007 and 2013) has a very powerful resonance for me. Indeed, Catriona sometimes describes *me* (along with my laptop) as

part of *her* harp, though this might be better described as *our* performance ecosystem. It enables dynamic exploration of different clarsachs, different histories and different physicalities. From subtle shifts to radical, chaotic reshaping, 'electroacoustic dislocation' provides a multi-dimensional space, which has evolved around this particular instrument and specific aspects of its musical language. Our collaborative partnership ostensibly began with an intention to relocate the clarsach as a Scottish instrument for the twenty-first century (a rather grand ambition!). Nevertheless we have developed a practice flexible enough to relocate across genres of live electroacoustic music, new 'beyond-tune' Scottish Traditional music and free improvisation.

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## About the author

ALISTAIR MACDONALD is a composer and performer of electroacoustic music. His work draws on a wide range of influences, reflecting a keen interest in improvisation, transformation of sound, and space. Many of his works are made in collaboration with other artists from a range of media, and explore a range of contexts beyond the concert hall, often using interactive technology. He teaches composition and is Director of the Electroacoustic Studios at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow, where he was made Fellow of the Royal Conservatoire in 2012.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

## **Rhythmic routes: developing a nomadic physical practice for the daily commute**

LAURA BISSELL & DAVID OVEREND

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*How can the contemporary performance practitioner maintain a deterritorialised, nomadic existence within the regulated systems of twenty-first century mobile life? Elliott and Urry (2010) argue that ‘life “on the move” appears to unfold faster and faster in the early days of the twenty-first century, as people become more reliant upon interdependent, digitised systems’. In contrast, the nomad is an aspirational figure, ‘cut free of roots, bonds and fixed identities’ (Pearson, 2010). Responding to the increasingly globalised context of mobilities and Braidotti’s (2011) notion of ‘becoming-nomad’, this keynote asks whether nomadism can offer an alternative to the physical cultures created through the systemisation and repetition of everyday journeys. Rejecting conventional narratives of the ‘weary and dystopian commuter’ (Edensor, 2011), we aim to develop a series of performative interventions that reimagine commuting as a creative and productive embodied practice with the potential for nomadic disruptions to the routines and rhythms of our everyday journeys.*

*Keywords: commuting, mobilities, nomadism, performance, journeys*

## Introduction



*The road to Glasgow.*

It may seem counterintuitive to respond to a conference theme on the sociology of physical cultures<sup>1</sup> by discussing commuting, which has often been dismissed as a ‘desensitising’ experience in which Richard Sennett (1996) identifies a ‘disconnection from space [as] the body moves passively’ through urban roadscapes (1996, p.18). Likewise, Jean Baudrillard refers to the ‘effortless mobility’ of car journeys (2005, p.66), and Michel de Certeau points out the ‘immobility’ engendered by train travel (1988, p.111). However, this paper conceives of commuting as potentially far more active and embodied than these critical representations suggest. Like Tim Edensor, we distrust the popular perception that the commuter is ‘a frustrated, passive and bored figure, patiently suffering the anomic tedium of the monotonous or disrupted journey’ (2011, p.189). Instead, we conceive of commuting as a fertile ground for creativity, productivity and transformation.

Our key assertion is that commuting has the potential for a performative engagement with landscape, and that the physical practice of commuting offers a rich variety of

experiences of mobility that work against the ‘desensitising’ systems of contemporary mobile life. In attempting to develop an alternative mode of engagement with our regular daily journeys, we explore concepts of mobility drawn from nomadic theory. Commuting is often portrayed as a problematically limited, constrained and regulated mobile practice. In contrast, Mike Pearson sees the nomad as an aspirational figure, ‘cut free of roots, bonds and fixed identities’ (2010, p.20). Drawing on the nomadic theories of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1988), and Rosi Braidotti (2011), we aim to develop a performative ‘counterpractice’, reimagining our own commuting routes as creative spaces, and our travelling selves as ‘nomadic subjects’. In this keynote, we discuss the early stages of this ongoing collaboration.

For Braidotti, ‘nomadic subjectivity’ is an opportunity ‘to identify lines of flight, that is to say, a creative alternative space of becoming that would fall not between the mobile/immobile, but within [both of] these categories’ (2011, p.7). This linking of ‘lines of flight’ with ‘a creative, alternative space of becoming’ offered us a valuable starting point and in March 2014 we both set out to walk our commutes. David walked 48 miles in three days from his home in Glasgow to the University of the West of Scotland in Ayr. A few days later, after a ferry journey from her home on the Cowal Peninsula, Laura walked 27 miles to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow over the course of one day. Ostensibly, our commutes close down lines of flight to fixed paths across ‘striated’ landscapes (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). These walks aspired to the opposite—open routes through smooth spaces.

## Our commutes



*Clyde Estuary at Greenock.*

Laura's journey from her home in Innellan on the West Coast of Scotland is made up of four parts. The 'rhythms' of her commute between Sandy Beach, where she lives, and her place of work in Glasgow, are as follows: a ten minute drive from her house to the ferry terminal in Dunoon, a 25 minute ferry across the Clyde estuary, a 44 minute train journey from Gourock to Glasgow and a ten minute walk up Hope Street from Central Station to the RCS.

David's car journey from Glasgow to Ayr takes him initially through a maze of residential streets, roundabouts and traffic lights to the ramp at the end of Great Western Road where he joins a short stretch of the M8 south through the city and over the River Clyde to join the M77, which cuts through the Ayrshire countryside before meeting the A77 at Kilmarnock. This is 'Route 77', according to the sign for Balbir's Restaurant which marks the final stage of his journey, and David has always enjoyed the connection to the great American highway.





Crossing the M77.

In 2013, we started this project by keeping commuting diaries, documenting the range of activities undertaken during our regular journeys to and from work. Laura kept a record of her journeys in a notebook every day between September and December:

### **Tuesday 15th October**

7:00 leave house, 7:15 boat, 7:47 train, 8:45 arrive at work.

17:25 train, 18:20 boat, 19:00 arrive home.

On both journeys today I read Rebecca Solnit's *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*. I like it and a statement in capital letters on the back cover reads NEVER TO GET LOST IS NOT TO LIVE.

### **Monday 28th October**

16:55 train, 17:50 boat, 18:30 arrive home.

I take my suitcase on the train and finish reading the book my Aunt Mo has lent me called *Olive Kitteridge*. It is falling to bits as she read it on her travels to India. It travelled with me to Manchester but was not read.

Reflecting on her commuting diary Laura observed behaviours that she performs repeatedly: mainly reading and sleeping! She enjoyed noticing how many books had been passed on to her from friends and family, and how the books were on their own journeys through 'striated space' being physically marked by their journeys and the bodies that facilitated their wanderings.

Meanwhile, limited by his role as driver, David used the hands-free mobile phone device in his car to phone spoken diary entries to himself, which he later transferred to MP3 files.

“ *It's drizzly but the sun is cutting through the clouds and picking out the oranges and... and browns of the autumn trees and it makes me think this is so much better than having to commute on an Underground train or... a busy city. I really value this time to drive through the countryside every day.*”

*Extract from David's spoken diary entry.*

These diary entries immediately reveal an active and productive use of travel time. However, there are also significant parts of our journeys that more closely resemble Sennett's version of desensitised travel (1996). For example:

#### **Monday 4th November**

6:30 leave house, 6:45 boat, 8:45 arrive at work.

There is a boat refit on from the 4th to the 16th of November so I have to leave my house at 6:30am to get in for 9am. There is a long gap between the boat and the train, and the train at this time of the morning is very cold.

I read *Uncle Silas* (on loan from my sister) and doze on the train.

### **Sunday 24th November**

18:00 Western ferry, arrive home 19:00.

I drive so cannot do anything with the time.

There are also moments when we are prevented from undertaking the necessary journeys:

### **Thursday 5th December**

Both boats are off due to high winds and the road is flooded so I cannot travel to work today. This is the first time this has happened this year and I miss the second year show that I am supposed to be assessing which I am really disappointed about.

Laura's journey is much more open to disruption than David's due to the modes of transport involved.

This process of keeping commuting diaries prompted us to look for ways to open up our journeys and to more meaningfully connect with our commutes and the spaces that we move through.

## Commuting and collaboration



*David Overend and Laura Bissell walk their commutes.*

To paraphrase Deleuze and Guattari (1988) the two of us wrote this paper together. Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd. In practice, this made it difficult to find time to work together, and with both of our lives including full-time lecturing posts and long commutes, we were initially anxious about when we would find time to travel to places together to explore our ideas around journeying as a performative practice. It was this very practical consideration that dictated that the first stage of this project was for us to accompany each other on our commutes and it was during these specific and purposeful journeys and the subsequent meal at each other's homes that we were encouraged to critically analyse our daily repetitive journeys.

### **Tuesday 24th September**

17:25 train, 18:20 boat, arrive home at 19:00.

The train is busy. David and I travel back to my house together to talk about our project. David tells me that his commute is very different as his is solo in a car while mine is mainly made up of public transport surrounded by other bodies and has four different stages. We talk about lots of things that are going on in our lives (work, relationships, performances we have seen) but we don't talk much about the project until we are at my house and having some

dinner that I have cooked the night before. We come up with some areas to research and both agree that doing each other's commute is an important part of this process. We arrange for me to do David's commute on the 7th October and through this conversation I see my commute through David's eyes. I drive him to the ferry at 20:45 and David travels back to Glasgow alone.

### **Monday 7th October**

17:28 train to Ayr, 18:30 arrive in Ayr.

When I get on the train to Ayr I am struck by the fact that it is the same design of train that I get to Gourock on my journey home. It feels counterintuitive to be going elsewhere at the same time as I would normally be going home. On the journey to Ayr I do very little, I look out of the window and notice the changes in the light. I meet David in Ayr and he drives us back to Glasgow on the M77. We arrive at his house at 19:30. We have dinner at David's house with his partner Victoria and discuss work and our project. I get a taxi to the station and get the 21:50 train home and arrive at my house at 22:15. I am very tired and do little on the journey.

Our initial conversations around this project encouraged us to consider the commute as a time and space of possibility and creative resistance—a way of reimagining aspects of the working day.

The etymology of the word 'commute' is from the Latin 'commutare' which means 'to change, transform, exchange' (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). We are interested in the potential of this repetitive journey from home to work as creative or transformative. Braidotti claims 'the imagination is not utopian, but rather transformative and inspirational' (2011, p.14) and we wanted to use this collaborative project as an opportunity to experience these journeys anew, to revise them and reimagine them. The commute is often perceived

as a boring, stressful and frustrating experience (Mann and Abraham, 2006). However, for Edensor this 'everyday realm' of 'habit, routine, unreflexive forms of common sense, and rituals [...] paradoxically also contains the seeds of resistance and escape from uniformity [through] the intrusions of dreams, involuntary memories, peculiar events, and uncanny sentiments' (2003, pp.154–155). We have found that the experience of being in transit lends itself to such moments of imaginative departure.

### Thursday 14th November

11:50 boat.

I get this boat as it looks like there will be disruptions today due to high winds so I leave earlier than I need to. On the train I meet Margaret, a historian who lives in my village who I have been working with for the past three years on the Innellan Archive Project. This project has involved researching our village and three books have been published so far—Margaret is working on the next one. We are both trustees of the village hall so we catch up on some hall matters and then Margaret tells me she is on her way to London and is flying from Edinburgh at 7pm but that she plans to spend the entire day journeying there. I tell her about our commuting project and she tells me that she loves the journeys she makes as much as getting to the place. She calls it an 'adventure'. Margaret is 65 and we are friends. This is not the first time we have bumped into each other on the journey to Glasgow and I always enjoy our chats. She tells me that on a commute one day she was reading a book called *Alone in Berlin*. The man sitting across from her offered to rip out the last ten pages so that she would not gobble them up (Margaret had restricted herself to five pages a night to make it last longer—a thing I could never do!). The man says he offers this service to anyone he meets who is reading this book (which is his favourite). Margaret rips out the ten pages and gives them to him. When she gets to the end of the

book she emails him and he sends her the pages through the post. Margaret tells me this was a number of years ago and that they have become friends and frequently exchange emails and thoughts on books and history after this chance meeting on a train journey. The randomness of chance encounters of bodies sharing a space while in transit can lead to lasting relationships and remote friendships.

Laura Watts and Glenn Lyons account for 'imaginative departure', as movement leads to an 'ambiguity of place', a 'liminality' that can foster 'a valued sense of creativity, possibility and transition' (2011, p.109). We have aspired to engage with our commutes as spaces of creativity and productivity and used the 'gift of travel time' to mobilise a critical engagement with our mobile practices (Jain and Lyons, 2008).

### **Boundaries / becoming / rhythm / corporeality**

Four key concepts define the theoretical landscape through which we walked. Loosely, these correspond to the work of Deleuze and Guattari, Braidotti, and Lefebvre. However, as our experiences have shown, there are no clear boundaries here. We are moving through heterogeneous and multiple spaces, and routes interweave, blur into each other and amalgamate. These concepts offer us a structure, then, but should not be understood as discrete, fixed categories:

- First, convergences and divergences of paths and routes and their relationship to the boundaries and barriers that contain and define them.
- Second, notions of becoming, changing and transferring.
- Third, patterns and rhythms of commuting and ways

of documenting and analysing these processes.

- Fourth, the corporeality of commuting as an embodied practice.

For Deleuze and Guattari, nomad space is *smooth*, defined by ‘the variability, the polyvocality of directions’ (1988, p.382). Moving within vast, open spaces such as deserts, tundras and steppes, nomads make paths, moving from point to point through the landscape. However, as opposed to sedentary societies, the points of a nomad journey are ‘strictly subordinated to the paths they determine’, rather than the other way round (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.380). Importantly, although commuting does not fit easily within this model, this is not to say that the commute precludes a nomadic relationship with the environment:

Even the most striated city gives rise to smooth spaces [...] Movements, speed and slowness, are sometimes enough to reconstruct a smooth space. Of course, smooth spaces are not in themselves liberatory. But the struggle is changed or displaced in them, and life reconstitutes its stakes, confronts new obstacles, invents new places, switches adversaries (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.500).

Bearing in mind Deleuze and Guattari’s warning that we should ‘never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us’, we are setting out to ‘confront new obstacles’ and ‘reconstitute the stakes’. This notion of *reconstitution* resonates with Braidotti’s concept of nomadism as ‘a myth, or a political fiction, that allows us to think through and move across established categories and levels of experience’ (2011, p.26). Braidotti advocates ‘nomadic shifts’, ‘a performative metaphor that allows for otherwise unlikely encounters and unsuspected sources of interaction, experience and knowledge’ (2011, p.27). In these shifts, our everyday practices are opened up to the creative processes



of *becoming*, offering an ‘acute awareness of the nonfixity of boundaries’ and ‘the intense desire to go trespassing, transgressing’ (Braidotti, 2011, p.66).

For Braidotti, nomadism is ‘a cohesion engendered by repetitious, cyclical moves, rhythmic displacements’ (2011, pp.57–58). In the case of commuting, repetitions, cycles and rhythms are paramount. Here, we turn to Henri Lefebvre’s project of *Rhythmanalysis* (2013), which acknowledges repetition as a key concept. Stuart Elden suggests that:

In the analysis of rhythms—biological, psychological and social—Lefebvre shows the interrelation of understandings of space and time in the comprehension of everyday life. The issue of space and time is important, for here, perhaps above all, Lefebvre shows how these issues need to be thought together rather than separately (2013, p.1).

For Lefebvre, ‘each of us has our preferences, references, frequencies; each must appreciate rhythms by referring them to oneself, one’s heart or breathing, but also to one’s hours of work, of rest, of waking and of sleep’ (2013, p.20). This model can be applied to commuting as the rhythm of the journey itself is relative to the other rhythms that make up a day. Importantly, the living body is central to an analysis of these quotidian rhythms (Lefebvre, 2013, p.77).

Later in this paper, we explore the embodied rhythms of our walking commutes, and the alternative timescales that we travelled within, as key factors in counteracting the condition of the ‘dystopian and functional’ commuter and the ‘dreary and alienating’ commute (Edensor, 2011, pp.189–196). What follows is an account of the beginning of our research journeys made up partially from our written responses and critical reflections on our reimagined commutes. Our focus is on our walked commutes in relation

to the key themes of boundaries, becoming, rhythms and corporeality.

## *Boundaries*



*Fences mark the boundaries of prohibited areas on both walked routes.*

Shortly after leaving his flat, David followed a path along the River Kelvin. In his written account of the walk, he reflects on the way in which our routes through cities often follow fixed paths:

I [...] realise how much of the city is cut up and divided by fixed routes and paths. This grid of different boundaries and trajectories comprises bridges, footpaths, cycle lanes, roads, railways, canals and flight paths [...] But as I walk from point to point, following some routes and crossing others, I do not feel hemmed in or constrained. There is a freedom in this journey and an exhilarating sense of moving beyond the prescribed uses of urban space (Overend, 2014).

For both of us, undertaking our journeys independently, we enjoyed this sensation of transgression. Laura recounts a moment when a fellow pedestrian breaks out of a

designated route:

[A]s I am about to walk around the cordoned section to allow me to move towards Gourock, the woman in front of me undoes the catch on one of the metal gates, opens it and walks through [...] I follow her lead, glad of this minor transgression of the authoritative paths and designated walkways that the area by the water assigns (Bissell, 2014).

We are wary about the claims that can be made for such activities and want to avoid what Doreen Massey dismisses as ‘the least politically convincing of situationist capers’ (2005, p.46). However, these moments of quotidian transgression have offered many important formative experiences during our walks, many of which involved a rupture or break in an established pattern or rhythm that we have previously felt frustratingly locked into.

### *Becoming*

Laura undertook her walk on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2014, a journey which corresponded to the final two stages of her commute—the train journey from Gourock to Glasgow and the walk from Glasgow Central station to the RCS at 100 Renfrew Street. By altering the pace of this two-hour commute to take place between 7am and 7pm—the hours of her usual working day—Laura intended to open this journey up to creative possibility, diversion and interruption. She hoped to ‘become’ something different through this process of journeying and employ Braidotti’s ‘myth’ of the nomadic subject to ‘[blur] boundaries without burning bridges’ (2011, p.26). Laura hoped to learn something about her journey by undertaking this task, and for it to become something other than a functional and transitory commute through the spaces between home and work.

Braidotti's focus on process and 'becoming nomad' is analogous to looking for a marker on a road or path: 'the nomadic subject is not a utopian concept, but more like a road sign' (2011, p.14). For much of Laura's early route, particularly in the Argyll and Inverclyde stages, the road signs are supplemented by another with the Gaelic version of the town name. Often there are four signs which read as a list: district, town, PLEASE DRIVE CAREFULLY, and the Gaelic version. She notices that a large number of the signs also have stickers on them, added by people. Signs are objects that invite us to look at them for information or guidance, but these have been augmented by the public, creating an alternative meaning to that which was intended. What the signs are signifying is also in a state of becoming, the meaning malleable and open to interpretation, obliteration, and subversion.



*Road sign for Greenock on Laura's walked route.*

## *Rhythm*

Edensor points out that commuting takes place within 'routinised, synchronic rhythms [which] are bureaucratically regulated and collectively produced' (2011, p.196). For Lefebvre (2013), the establishment and regulation of such rhythms is one of the key ways by which late capitalism produces and controls space. Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari identify 'the function of the sedentary road, which is to parcel out a closed space to people, assigning each person a share and regulating the communication between shares' (1988, p.380). By attempting to establish a 'nomadic trajectory' we aspire towards the opposite: movement within what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'an open space' (1988, p.380) and the potential to take up Edensor's project of 'tailor[ing our] journeys in accordance with [our] own strategies, imperatives and feelings' (2011, p.196). Here, we present some of the ways in which we attempted this by engaging with our commutes as *rhythmic routes*:



Filmstrip from video at:  
<[www.scottishjournalofperformance.org/  
Bissell\\_Overend\\_rhythmic-  
routes\\_SJoP0201\\_DOI\\_10.14439sjop.2014.  
0201.03.html](http://www.scottishjournalofperformance.org/Bissell_Overend_rhythmic_routes_SJoP0201_DOI_10.14439sjop.2014.0201.03.html)>

*We surrender to the hypnotic quality of the turbines, which offer a regularity and rhythm approximating the effect of music. Our ambulatory rhythms sync up with the rotations of the blades and we adjust our pace accordingly. One foot after the other meets one rotation after the other. At the same time, in this exposed location, rain beats into our faces and blasts our bodies with icy water. The wind is blowing in tremendous gusts, which drown out all other noises, but in the occasional dip, our ears tune into another constant sound—the faint, humming drone of the windfarm.*

The rhythm of my usual commute is determined by the four stages of travel, the different modes of transport and the associated pace/rhythm/environment, but within its four distinct sections there are sub-rhythms. For the train journey, the stations demarcate the rhythm of the journey in terms of the time and space between stops (initially long periods of travel and infrequent stops and then towards the end syncopated with short bursts of travel and frequent stops).

While the pace of my walking remains largely the same, I still look to the road and rail signifiers to assert my sense of rhythm for my alternative commute.

From the viaduct at Stewarton to the A77 at Symington, I pass over, under and across a series of other paths. Rivers, roads and railways intersect my route and carry others on different paths to other destinations. All of these have their own distinct rhythms and functions. As Edensor acknowledges, 'all spaces are dynamic and continually pulse with a multitude of co-existing rhythms and flows' (2011, p.200).

In my car, the rhythm of the road takes precedence as my 'insulated mobile body' remains oblivious to everything else (Edensor, 2011, p.200), but this walk allows me to seek out, sense and immerse myself in multiple rhythms including weather, seasons, animals and people who use and inhabit the landscape that the road cuts through. As I approach Symington, there is a brief moment when I can see the A77, the Firth of Clyde and a Ryanair plane taking off from Prestwick—routes and rhythms coexisting.

### *Corporeality*

As David reached the southern boundary of the golf course at Pollock Park, his route was blocked by a high metal fence:



*My dilemma is whether to add more miles to my journey by trailing the perimeter looking for an exit, or to attempt to cross into the adjoining field.*



*The solution presents itself as I notice a missing railing which I suspect has been removed deliberately to open up a walking route. I make my way through woodland and clamber over another, lower, fence and land in squelchy*



*mud. Following the high wire fencing that separates the field from the M77, I enjoy a feeling of subversion and recall Rosi Braidotti's vision of nomadism*



*as the intense desire to go trespassing. Whether or not this is strictly trespassing, it is a moment which embodies the spirit of this journey: moving*



*against prescribed uses of space, and reimagining my route a space of creativity and transgression.*

*However, just as I cast myself*





Filmstrip from video at:  
<[www.scottishjournalofperformance.org/  
Bissell\\_Overend\\_rhythmic-  
routes\\_SJoP0201\\_DOI\\_10.14439sjop.2014.  
0201.03.html](http://www.scottishjournalofperformance.org/Bissell_Overend_rhythmic_routes_SJoP0201_DOI_10.14439sjop.2014.0201.03.html)>

*as the heroic psychogeographer,  
I come face-to-face with a large  
Highland cow. Its menacing  
state, sharp horns and slow,  
deliberate, movement towards  
me make me nervous and I look  
around for an exit route in case  
things turn nasty.*

*Unfortunately, I'm now too far  
from my entry point to retreat  
and the section of fence I am  
beside is too high to easily  
climb over. The cow lunges  
forward and a surge of  
adrenaline catapults me over  
the fence before I have time to  
think. On my way over, I  
scratch my shin and slightly  
cut my finger. Writing up my  
notes, almost exactly a week  
later, the cut is still faintly  
visible, a corporeal document  
of this encounter.*

These moments of pushing, testing or breaking the body punctuated our walks, which were defined by physical endurance as much as situationist escapism. Opening up the possibility of corporeal intrusion into our commutes provided an alternative to Sennett's passive commuter bodies (Sennett, 1996, p.18). Our experiences have also led us to question the suggestion that our everyday journeys are passive.

## **Conclusion**

On the first day of his walk, David cheated and briefly broke the task of his continuous journey on foot, returning by taxi to his home rather than spending the night in a soulless budget hotel. The following morning, returning as a car passenger to resume the walk where he left off, he noted that he was 'already thinking of [his] commute differently, pointing out places [he] walked through the day before and noticing features of the route of which [he] had previously been unaware' (Overend, 2014). Similarly, Laura noted her aspiration that the walk would allow her to 're-experience [her] commute in an active and embodied way' in order to 'emancipate' [her]self from what Braidotti refers to as 'the inertia of everyday routines' (Braidotti, 2011, p.90). Our work so far has shown potential in this respect as both of us feel that the walk has changed the way we experience our commutes in ways that correspond to our key themes.

First, although we continue to follow the same roads, railways and ferry routes, we no longer feel as limited by, or contained within, these prescribed patterns. We have developed the appetite and tools to go 'off route'. In this sense, we have inserted 'nomadic shifts' into our regular journeys (Braidotti, 2011).

Second, Braidotti's insights into nomadism as a way of reimagining subjectivity have allowed us to consider the commute in terms of 'becoming'. The change in time and space as we travel these repetitive routes provides a liminal space for commuters to be always 'becoming'. The sense of departing, moving, travelling and arriving all indicate moving in, through and out of places and the transitory and fluid sense of fixed time and space allow for a space of creative imagining.

Third, we have encountered multiple rhythms that are co-

present with our commutes, whether synchronously or asynchronously. Our walking journeys have offered us an opportunity to encounter this rhythmic multiplicity beyond those elements that are foregrounded during our regular commutes.

Fourth, we have pushed ourselves beyond the ostensibly passive bodily experience of commuting towards a more overtly corporeal engagement with the space of our commutes. We had the cuts, bruises and blisters to prove it.



*David during his commute by bicycle and Laura after her swim across the Clyde estuary.*

As we continue our research in this area, we will find new ways to reimagine our regular journeys, as we aspire to become nomadic commuters. Since we completed the walks, David cycled his commute, experiencing the journey at a different speed and rhythm, and Laura swam to the West Bay in Dunoon across the Clyde estuary.

To develop this project we hope to explore the relational potential of our commutes by asking people to join us on our journeys and hope to encourage others to consider the creative potential of the everyday journeys that they take. We are going to keep journeying together and hope to explore the potential of the repetition of our commutes over a much longer period of time. What is it for a body to move between two places repeatedly? What is the 'change' or 'becoming' within the body through this process? The challenge for us now is to maintain a sense of our commutes as spaces of becoming and to continue to reimagine what our journeys are and consider the potential of what they could be.

## Note

1. This keynote address was delivered at the *Pace, penalty and pirouette: the sociology of physical culture* symposium at Glasgow Caledonian University in June 2014. See Palmer and Whiteside et al., 2014 for more information.

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# The trombone as portrayed in Portuguese iconography during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries

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*This article studies eleven sixteenth and seventeenth century iconographical sources depicting slide brass instruments, by both Portuguese and foreign artists active in Portugal, as well as foreign artists depicting Portuguese scenes. This study addresses questions concerning aspects of trombone technique that have not previously been considered and may have implications in the way the trombone was understood elsewhere in Europe. It focuses on aspects of technique depicted that may be representative of the trombone's contemporary design and performance and therefore the manner in which the instrument was held and indeed played. Finally, this article suggests a transitional technical period when the way of holding the single-slide trumpet may have been used to play the trombone.*

*Keywords: iconography, trombone, single-slide trumpet, wind bands, angel musicians*

## Introduction

The early development of the trombone and trombone playing in Europe was, since the first reference to its use during the fifteenth century, closely associated with the

development of the wind band, which was a regular feature of royal, municipal and ecclesiastical musical establishments. Wind bands became common in Europe through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, playing during royal banquets and processions as well as fulfilling military roles. The earliest bands were comprised solely of woodwind instruments—shawms—and commonly referred to as shawm bands. In the late years of the fourteenth century, other instruments such as trumpets, bagpipes and drums were added<sup>1</sup>. The shawm band has been extensively studied, and although our understanding of its role has been enhanced by authors including Keith Polk, Kenneth Kreitner and Herbert Myers, some questions regarding the formation of the band, the instruments used and the repertoire in certain parts of Europe remain unanswered. Band formation and the inclusion of a single slide instrument (the slide trumpet) have been particular focal points in debates. During the late fourteenth century, advances in metal-working techniques made it possible to fashion long straight trumpets into an S-shape. The need for an instrument capable of playing the contratenor voice in the shawm band appears to have encouraged the development of the slide mechanism by the early fifteenth century (Polk, 1997, pp.45–6; Herbert, 2006, pp.52–3). The idea that the slide trumpet developed from the fixed-length S-shape is generally accepted.

Iconography has been central to the scholarly debate regarding the development of the trombone and its evolution from a single- to a double-slide instrument, Downey (1984) challenges the consensus that the fifteenth century brass instrument of the shawm band was a single-slide trumpet and that this represented an evolutionary stage in the development of the double-slide trombone, basing his argument on a panel by Hans Memling, c.1460. Downey proposes that the handgrip used here, with the left hand holding the instrument close to the mouthpiece and right hand supporting the full weight of the static body of



the instrument, does not suggest movement of the sounding part of the trumpet. He suggests that this concurs with the handgrip used by trumpeters before cordage was wrapped around the fixed-length trumpets. Downey suggests that the elongated length of the instrument could be explained by the simple addition of a lead-pipe, which would lower its pitch<sup>2</sup>. In summary, Downey's work, which questions the existence of the slide trumpet, encourages debate on this matter, although it does not affect the overall consensus that the single-slide trumpet not only existed, but also played an important role in the history of the trombone.

In Portugal, this instrument was referred to as the trumpet of the shawm band (*trombeta das charamelas*). The instrument was likely introduced to Portugal by Flemish players in royal service. The earliest reference to a brass player in the Portuguese royal shawm band appears in a letter from King Afonso V to Janim de Reste, trumpeter of the shawm band (*trombeta dos nossos charamelas*), granting him the privilege to ride a mule, in 1453/4. The term *trombeta das charamelas* appears for the last time in Portugal in a 1465 privilege letter granting Johã De Reste (likely a relative of Janim De Reste) the right to adopt his stepdaughter. The earliest literary references to the trombone (*sacabuxa*)<sup>3</sup> emerge in the Chronicles of King João II, written by the royal chronicler Garcia de Resende, describing royal ceremonies taking place on 11 May 1455 and 20 October 1499 (De Oliveira Alves, 2013). The use of the term *sacabuxa* here suggests an instrument with a slide system, although the question arises as to whether it was a trombone or a single-slide trumpet (De Oliveira Alves, 2013).

Between the late fifteenth century and first half of the nineteenth century, the physical characteristics of the trombone changed very little. It consisted of three basic parts (the mouthpiece, the U-shaped slide and the bell

section), although the early double-slide instruments may have been demountable into several more parts. Some design features of the earlier trombones (see Figure 1, below, for details of ferrules and flat stays) have led scholars such as McGowan (1996, p.94) to propose that these instruments could be of a loose construction and therefore reassembled as single-slide instruments as required.

In the absence of surviving instruments, and music that specifically calls for the use of the trombone during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, iconography is crucial to the understanding of performance contexts in which the trombone was used. Whilst the interpretation of iconographical sources can help to understand aspects of historical performance practice, instrument design and construction, and repertoire, it is essential to consider the historical background of the sources and any associated symbolism. Problematic issues surrounding the use of iconographical sources relate to artistic licence, false perspective, distortion of three-dimensional subjects depicted in two dimensions, the representation of movement, whether the source is original or a copy and whether it has undergone restoration or alteration. Various scholars, notably Erwin Panofsky (1955), Emanuel Winternitz (1972, 1979) and James McKinnon (1984), have highlighted the issues surrounding the use of iconography for musicological research and provide a clear overview of the major issues of iconographical interpretation and the context in which instruments were used. Moreover, scholars including Brown (1995) highlight the difficulties of analysing iconographical evidence, with special focus on design features of the recorder, which can often be mistaken for a shawm or even a trumpet (Brown, 1995). Other scholars, including Trindade (1999), whose work has focussed on Portuguese sources—including some of the depictions studied here—demonstrate that iconographical analyses can provide valuable evidence of the physical characteristics of instruments, the manner in which they

were played and their role in society (Trindade et al. 1999).

The earliest surviving representation of a trombone as we know it today is Filippino Lippi's *Assumption of the Virgin* dating from c.1488–1493 in the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome. However, it has also been suggested that other sources, such as the Master of the Lyversberger Passion's *The Coronation of the Virgin* (c.1485, Alte Pinakothek, Munich) and Giovanni di ser Giovanni Guidi, lo Scheggia's mid-fifteenth century *Cassone Adimari* (Galleria Accademia, Florence), depict trombones (Myers, 2005, p.8; Herbert, 2006, p.60). Focusing on iconography portraying the trombone, Myers (2005) draws attention to aspects of the instrument's proportion, dimension and design features, with the aim of establishing whether or not the instrument in question in earlier iconographical sources was a single-slide trumpet or indeed a trombone. Crucial to this study are eleven sixteenth and seventeenth century iconographical sources depicting slide brass instruments, by both Portuguese and foreign artists active in Portugal, as well as by foreign artists depicting Portuguese scenes<sup>4</sup>. These sources show evidence of shawm bands with trombones and on one occasion with a single-slide trumpet, as well as a sculpture of a musical angel playing what appears to be a single-slide trumpet.

## Portuguese iconographic sources depicting brass instruments with a slide



Figure 1: *Mestre de 1515*, Assumption of the Virgin (*Assunção da Virgem do Retábulo da Madre de Deus*), 1515, *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, 1278 Pint, Lisbon.

Commissioned by Queen Dona Leonor, widow of King João II, this depiction was part of the altarpiece of the Convento da Madre de Deus in Lisbon<sup>5</sup>. The Virgin is portrayed in the centre, surrounded by seventeen musical angels with instruments including a lute, harp, viola and a psaltery, with a three-hole flute depicted on the left. On the right hand side, there is a shawm band, a trumpet ensemble, and a group of singing angels (see Figure 1a, below). The three trumpeters depicted in the top right-hand corner above the singers are not playing, and hold their instruments close to the mouthpiece over their shoulders

with the bells facing backwards, displaying folded banners (see Figure 1a)<sup>6</sup>.

The shawm band appears to be playing with the singers (who are depicted above the wind ensemble and seen singing from a manuscript score). The shawm band consists of three woodwind double-reed instruments (shawms and bombardas) and a trombone<sup>7</sup>. The various reed instruments illustrated show distinctive physical and mechanical details, suggesting that the artist was aware of the existence of different types of shawms (see detail of the hexagonal section of the bombard in Figure 1b, below). However, the artist depicts the shawm player, first instrument from the left, with his left hand placed on the lower part of the instrument<sup>8</sup>. The bells of the shawms also appear to be out of proportion compared to the other instruments depicted.

The brass instrument depicted in the shawm band resembles the modern trombone. However, not all structural elements of the present-day trombone are evident in this depiction. The bell stay connecting the two parts of the bell section and the static inner slide stay are both missing. The absence of a second, or even third, stay would make the instrument very unstable (see Figures 1a and 2)<sup>9</sup>. The movable outer slide stay is not visible, yet the way the right hand of the player is illustrated suggests the existence of one. The right handgrip appears to be underhand with the slide in a horizontal position, while the left hand is not visible (see Figure 1b). Most importantly, the trombone is held with the bell on the right-hand side of the player's head. The existence of two nodules at the connection point between slides and slide bow at the base of the U-shape slide suggests the artist was aware of different design elements of the trombone such as the existence of ferrules or claps (connection points) and agrees with McGowan's suggestion of a loose construction of the trombone (McGowan, 1996, p.94)<sup>10</sup>. The trombone player

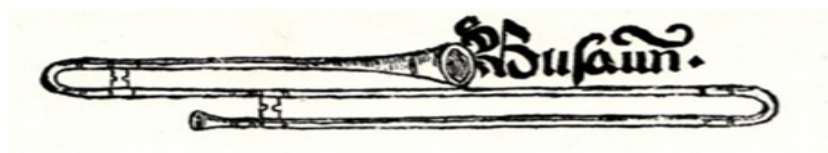
appears to have inflated cheeks, with a centred embouchure. This may represent the artist attempting to depict the action of blowing or may be indicative of a rudimentary stage of the blowing technique. Some of the first brass specialists writing on the subject of embouchure, including Bendinelli in 1614 and Altemburg in 1795, considered this aspect of playing technique a bad practice and one that should be abandoned (Wallace and McGrattan, 2012, pp.57–58; Tarr, 1988, pp.85–86).



*Figure 1a: Detail of angel musicians from Mestre de 1515. Shawm band plays (likely a motet) alongside singers. Trumpet ensemble depicted not playing.*



*Figure 1b: Detail of trombone player's handgrip from the Mestre de 1515. Design details featured: Slide bow and ferrules of trombone and hexagonal barrilete of bombard. Detail of bell's ferrules and missing stays (both the bell and slide stays). Technical elements: inflated cheeks and embouchure; details of underhand grip of trombone player's right hand.*



*Figure 2: Trombone with two flat stays (Virdung, 1511). The plate used here is likely the same used in Agricola (1529) and Luscinius (1536, p.23).*



Figure 3: Detail of a shawm band and its master by Mestre do Retábulo de Santa Auta [Workshop of Lisbon led by Afonso Jorge], from *The Encounter of Prince Conan and St Ursula (Casamento de Santa Úrsula com o Principe Conan)*, c.1522/1525, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, 1462, Lisbon (from right hand side of the reader: a bombard, trombone, shawm, bombard, shawm, bombard, and on top between the two last musicians the master of the shawm band).

The depiction was formerly part of a triptych depicting different stages of St Ursula's life by the Mestre do Retábulo de Santa Auta from the Workshops of Lisbon led by Afonso Jorge<sup>11</sup>. Additionally, according to Lowe (2005), this specific panel (*The Encounter of Prince Conan and St Ursula*), may depict the wedding ceremonies of King João III to his first cousin, Princess Catherine of Castile (or Burgundy) in 1525 (Lowe, 2005, p.158). Positioned in the top right corner of this depiction is the earliest known representation of a renaissance wind band formed exclusively of black musicians (see Figure 3)<sup>12</sup>.

The depiction provides details of physical and mechanical aspects of the woodwind instruments. The bombard player is holding the instrument with his left hand positioned on the lower part of the instrument. This may represent some level of artistic licence or misrepresentation. The brass instrument depicted shows most of the trombone's physical features in place, with inner and outer flat slide stays (the section of the instrument where a third stay would be positioned is not visible). The handgrip of the left hand is overhand, holding the slide section close to the mouthpiece. The right hand holds the slide stay in an underhand manner,



allowing good slide movement. The slide (depicted extended) appears to be in proportion with the rest of the instrument. Similar to the depiction by the artist Mestre of 1515 (see Figure 1, above) the trombone is rotated and the slide is in a horizontal position with identical handgrip to that used on the slide trumpet. Furthermore, the bell is located on the right-hand side of the player's head. Here too, the trombone player has inflated cheeks with centred embouchure.



*Figure 3a: Detail of the trombone player's handgrip from Mestre do Retábulo de Santa Auta (underhand movable slide and overhand around mouth pipe section) and trombone with two flat stays (inner and outer slide stays).*



Figure 4: *Oficina de Lisboa* (attributed), Assumption of Setúbal (*Assunção de Setúbal*),  
c.1519/20–1530, *Museu Municipal de Setúbal*, Setúbal.

This depiction (Figure 4) was commissioned by Queen Dona Leonor and showcases the ascension into Heaven of the Virgin, surrounded by two groups of musical angels: on the left, four singing angels and on the right, a shawm band including a trombone and three shawms. The two groups of musicians appear to be playing together. Indeed, this correlates with contemporary accounts by royal chronicler

Garcia de Resende where singers, organs and shawm bands are depicted playing together during the exhumation ceremonies and reburial of King João II on 20 October 1499<sup>13</sup>. While the *Assumption of Setúbal* presents a very detailed representation of a trombone with three flat stays (inner and outer slide stays and bell stay) it does show a few irregularities. The player's left hand holds the outer movable slide stay (instead of the inner static slide stay) in an overhand manner, making it impossible for the right hand to actually move the slide. Similar to other contemporary depictions of trombones, the slide appears to be extended, suggesting movement. However, the position of the stays suggests the slide is in a closed position. Particular physical detail is displayed on the bell garland as well as the mouthpiece. Here the player is again depicted with inflated cheeks and holds the instrument on the right-hand side. A clear distinction between the two types of woodwind instruments depicted is accentuated by the particular physical details of the bombard. However, when comparing the woodwind instruments with the trombone, the dimensions of the bells of the woodwind appear to be exaggerated in relation to that of the trombone (see Figure 4a, below). Few surviving contemporary iconographical depictions pay attention to proportion (Duffin, 2000, p.388). Even so, this may represent an attempt to depict the different instruments of the shawm family. In one such case, however, perspective awareness may be taken into account, especially since surviving instruments show a significant difference in the size of the bells of the shawm, which are significantly smaller than those of the early trombone.



*Figure 4a: Detail of a shawm band from the Oficina de Lisboa (attributed).*



Figure 5: Gregório Lopes (attributed), Assumption of the Virgin (Assunção da Virgem), first quarter of the sixteenth century, Museu da Música, M.M. 1085, Lisbon<sup>14</sup>.

This depiction (Figure 5) follows the same Marian theme of the ascending Virgin surrounded by musical angels (as discussed above) with a similar group of depicted musical instruments: on the left-hand side, lute and rabeca, and on the right, shawms and a trombone, together with a trio of singers. The trombone's bell section, with flat stay and ferrules, is extended a considerable distance from the back of the player's head. The inner fixed slide stay is not visible and the trombone is held with the left hand close to the mouthpiece in an overhand manner. The player operates the slide with his right hand, using a similar handgrip to the standard modern trombone, thus suggesting movement. The slide, although depicted in an extended position, appears foreshortened. The position of the trombone on the right hand side of the player's head is consistent with the depictions described above, as it is the representation of

trombone player's embouchure with puffed cheeks.



*Figure 5a: Detail of a shawm band from Gregório Lopes (attributed).*



Figure 6: *Cristovão de Utreque (attributed), Assumption of the Virgin (Assunção da Virgem), first quarter of the sixteenth century, Museu Municipal Leonel Trindade, 331, Torres Vedras.*

The Virgin is surrounded by musical angels, four singers and a shawm player on the left-hand side, three shawms and a trombone on the right and two other shawm players in the two lower corners of the painting (Figure 6). The wind band appears to be playing alongside the four singers who are reading from a music manuscript. The trombone is depicted with two flat slide stays and a flat bell stay. The instrument is held with the left hand in an overhand manner away from the mouthpiece, below the inner slide fixed flat stay. The slide is operated with the right hand in an underhand grip while the arm is outstretched. However, similar to other contemporary depictions of the trombone, the slide is portrayed foreshortened. The bell of the trombone is

positioned on the right-hand side of the player's head (see Figure 6a, below).



*Figure 6a: Detail of trombone from Cristovão de Utreque (attributed).*



*Figure 7: Detail of a shawm band by Friar Carlos Taborda Vlame (Frei Carlos), Assumption of the Virgin (Assunção da Virgem), c.1520–1530<sup>18</sup>, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, 82 Pint, Lisbon.*



The depiction (Figure 7) was painted at the workshops of Espinheiro led by the Flemish Mestre Taborda Vlame to form part of the main and collateral altars of the Espinheiro Convent in Évora. The depiction is divided into two, accentuating both the divine and mundane aspects of the life of the Virgin—Heaven and Earth<sup>16</sup>. The upper level or plan of the depiction, studied here, represents the Virgin surrounded by two groups of musical angels: on the left singers and an organ player with a portable organ (*orgão positivo*) and on the right a shawm band comprised of two shawms, a bombard and a trombone. The instruments depicted display unlikely design characteristics. The trombone in particular features a very large bell with an abrupt tightening of the bell flare which extends uniformly into the remainder of the bell section and into the slide section (there is also no evidence of a bell stay). The player holds the instrument with the left hand on the inner slide stay next to the mouthpiece, in an overhand manner. The slide is operated with the right hand in an underhand manner. While the outer slide stay under the player's right hand is not visible, the position of the hand on the slide suggests the existence of one (see Figure 7a, below). The player's body appears to be slightly bent with his right arm outstretched, thus suggesting slide movement. The embouchure of the player is centred with inflated cheeks and the instrument is held on the right-hand side of the player's head. Similarly, the shawms present exaggerated dimensions whilst the bells, especially the bombard's (second from the left), are particularly large. The bombard player is holding the instrument with his left hand on its lower part.



*Figure 7a: Detail of trombone player from Friar Carlos Taborda Vlame.*



Figure 8: Detail of shawm band from *Mestres de Ferreirim* (Cristovão de Figueiredo, Gregório Lopes and Garcia Fernandes), Assumption of the Virgin (Assunção da Virgem), c.1520–1540, Igreja Matriz de Sardoura, Castelo de Paiva.

In this depiction (Figure 8) the Virgin is surrounded by musical angels: on the left-hand side by an organ player and singers, and on the right by a shawm band. The trombone depicted features details of ferrules on the bell, flat bell stay, and bell bow. The slide has inner and outer flat stays and there are also two rings: one on the bell and one on the slide bow. The trombone player holds the instrument with his left hand in an identical manner to the modern handgrip, close to the static inner slide stay. The slide is operated by the right hand, also in an identical handgrip to the modern trombone technique, with the hand holding the slide around the outer movable slide stay. The embouchure of the trombone player is again depicted with inflated cheeks.

The two following iconographic sources represent two sixteenth century depictions of what appear to be single-slide trumpets: a sculpture by French artist Jean de Rouen

dated 1535<sup>17</sup>, and a Flemish tapestry from the Workshop of Bartholomeus Adriaensz in Brussels, completed between 1555 and 1560.



*Figure 9: Detail of an angel musician playing what appears to be a single-slide trumpet from Jean de Rouen (João de Ruão), Music Angels (Anjos Músicos), 1535, Museu Nacional Machado de Castro, E97, Coimbra.*

This limestone sculpture (Figure 9) depicts an angel playing what appears to be a single-slide trumpet which features a long pipe connecting the mouthpiece to the main body of the instrument. While the left hand holds the instrument halfway along the descending slide pipe, the right hand is depicted holding the main body of the instrument with an overhand grip. This manner of holding the instrument would be more suitable for a natural trumpet without a moving slide and, although feasible on the single-slide trumpet, the overhand grip would reduce the movement of the instrument's main body. Moreover, the position of the left hand halfway along the mouth pipe would equally reduce the already limited movement of the slide trumpet.



Figure 10: Detail of a shawm band with slide trumpet from Bartholomeus Adriaensz (tapestry) and Michel Coxcie (drawings), Entrance of Dom João de Castro in Goa (A entrada triunfal de D. João de Castro na Cidade de Goa em 22 de Abril de 1547), c.1555–1560, Kunsthistorisches Museum, TXXXII 10, Vienna.

This tapestry is part of a group of ten panels depicting the History of Dom João de Castro, Portuguese Viceroy of Goa in India, with particular focus on his conquests and achievements between 1546 and 1547. It was commissioned by his son Dom Alvaro de Castro<sup>18</sup>. This tapestry (number three in the series of Dom João de Castro) depicts the entrance of the Viceroy in Goa on the 22 April 1547. The events have been correspondingly recorded in the chronicles of Portuguese Gaspar Correia (1858) in his *Lendas da Índia* whilst most of the elements depicted agree with the named chronicles. The depiction shows a shawm band comprising three shawms and a brass instrument which appears to be a single-slide trumpet, and presents one of the latest representations of a shawm band with a

single-slide trumpet. The event depicted occurred at a time when the trombone was already a well-established instrument in the shawm band. However, the fact that the single-slide trumpet is depicted here may suggest that the instrument was still in use in the middle of the sixteenth century. Another view would be that the artist was still using earlier musical iconographic elements in his tapestries. The single-slide trumpet player holds the instrument with his left hand on the descending slide pipe with two fingers over the border of the mouthpiece, fixing it against his lips. The right hand operates the main body of the single-slide trumpet in an underhand grip manner, extended and retracted along the slide pipe.



*Figure 11: Vasco Pereira Lusitano, Coronation of the Virgin (Coroação da Virgem), 1605,  
Museu Carlos Machado, Azores.*

The last Portuguese depiction of trombones in the shawm band studied here is a Coronation of the Virgin from the beginning of the seventeenth century (Figure 11). A group of musical angels surround the Virgin in the centre, including one trombone on each side. The player on the right, appearing to be reading from a score, holds the trombone in a manner close to modern technique (see Figure 11a, below). The player on the left holds the trombone with the right hand and the slide is operated by the left hand. The bell section on this trombone is also extremely elongated compared to the size of the instrument, meaning that the slide section appears foreshortened. These features seem unrealistic and may perhaps be attributed to artistic licence.



*Figure 11a: Detail of trombone player on the right-hand side of the depiction from Vasco Pereira*

*Lusitano.*

## **Conclusions**

Documentary sources can date the use of a brass instrument in the shawm band—the trumpet of the shawm

band (*trombeta das charamelas*), likely a single-slide trumpet—in Portugal between 1453 and 1465. Although the term *sacabuxa*, which is described by royal chronicler Garcia de Resende in the chronicles of King João II in Portugal, is likely a slide instrument, it remains uncertain whether this instrument was fitted with a single- or a double-slide system. There are also no references to trombones or *sacabuxa(s)* from Royal Court records during the second half of the fifteenth century. The transition between the use of the single-slide trumpet and the use of the trombone in Portugal was perhaps taking place between 1465 (the date of the last reference to the *trombeta das charamelas*) and 1499. The study of Portuguese sixteenth century iconographic sources establishes that the trombone in Portugal was in use by 1515—although it is likely that the single-slide trumpet was still in use—and, by c.1520–1540, trombones start to be depicted on the left-hand side of their player’s head (the standard modern position). These depictions also reveal a range of design elements and physical features of these instruments, suggesting that the earlier trombones were of a loose construction with flat stays (thus easily reassembled as a single-slide trumpet as required). It is feasible that in the earliest references to the trombone in the late fifteenth century and the early depictions of the trombone on the left-hand side of the player’s head, the two instruments were—for practical reasons—held in a similar manner with the left hand close to the mouthpiece in an overhand fashion and the right hand positioned over the flat slide stay in an underhand fashion.

The majority of sources depict the trombone in the shawm band in religious scenes, although on one occasion (see Figure 10) the shawm band (with a single-slide trumpet) is depicted fulfilling a more secular role. Moreover, they provide some evidence of the way in which the trombone may have been played, the most apparent being the way the trombone was held. The manner in which the instrument is



held in these sources—with the main body of the instrument placed on the right-hand side of the player's head (in opposition to the standard modern left-hand side)—deserves special consideration and prompts a re-evaluation of this aspect of playing the instrument as it is portrayed in depictions from elsewhere in Europe.

Carter (2012) provides the most comprehensive collection of sixteenth century iconographical sources from around the world, depicting the trombone or a trombone-like instrument. At least 31 of the 62 depictions of trombones presented by Carter show the trombone on the right-hand side of the player's head<sup>19</sup>. This number does not include the Portuguese sources. In Germany, 26 of the 45 sources show the trombone on the right-hand side of the player's head. In comparison, the percentage of the iconographical sources depicting the trombone on the right-hand side of the player's head in Portugal is higher than elsewhere in Europe. However, if this manner of holding the instrument did indeed occur, it seems unlikely that this would have been particular to Portugal alone. Although factors such as artistic licence influencing the process of depicting these instruments should be taken into consideration, there is sufficient iconographical evidence in this study to—at least—suggest that this could have possibly been the case and therefore prompt a re-evaluation of contemporary iconography and encourage debate on this matter.

## Notes

1. See Polk (1997) for a more detailed chronology of the development of the shawm band.

2. In a brass instrument the lead-pipe is a tube of variable shape and size where the mouthpiece is placed. Lead-pipes are generally soldered to the instrument. However, in some instruments they may be detachable, movable and interchangeable.

3. The term *sacabuxa* is used in Portugal to refer to a brass instrument with a moving slide system, the trombone. The earliest entry of the term *sacabuxa* in a Portuguese dictionary appears in Hierónimum Cardoso's 1562 *Dictionarium ex Lusitanico in Latinum sermonem*, which is considered to be the earliest surviving Portuguese-Latin dictionary: *Sacabuxa. Tubaductilis, fábuca/æ* (p.95).

4. The depictions are, unless stated otherwise, catalogued in the database of the Portuguese Institute of Museums and Conservation (Instituto dos Museus e da Conservação). The Institute preserves information of the holdings of the major Portuguese museums. Full images (and details), dates and locations of the depictions are in accordance with this database (see <http://www.matriz.imc-ip.pt>).

5. According to Gaio (1989), most scholars agree the Mestre de 1515 to be Afonso Jorge.

6. Royal Court records for 4 January 1514/15, show clothing allowance to three trumpeters of the King, Pedro Vicente, João de Évora and João de Final. These players might be the same depicted here (De Oliveira Alves, 2013).

7. Royal Court records (clothing allowance) for 15 May 1515 provide the names of the following royal shawm band players: Alberto de Arsia (*chameleiro*), Adrião da Marcha (*chameleiro*), Cornélio (*chameleiro*) and Luís de Flanders (*chameleiro*) (De Oliveira Alves, 2013).

8. Woodwind players are frequently depicted showing this handgrip fashion during the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. See Carter (2012) for a more comprehensive list of iconographical sources.

9. The 1511 depiction of a trombone from Sebastian Virdung's (1511) *Musica Getutsch* also shows only two flat-stays (one bell stay and one slide stay).

10. See also McGowan (1994).

11. In the past, different artists have been appointed as the possible creator of the depictions: Vasco Fernandes (by Cyrillo Volkmar Machado), Cristóvão de Figueiredo (by José de Figueiredo and Reinaldo dos Santos), Gregório Lopes (by José de Figueiredo) and Garcia Fernandes (by Luís Reis Santos) (<http://www.matriznet.dgpc.pt>) (accessed 2 September 2013).

12. These players are likely six of the seven slave musicians named in the testament of Duke Dom Jayme of Braganza (De Oliveira Alves, 2013).

13. 'Singers and clerics started the Response, the prior the *Preces* (or prayers), all in a very divine manner, and the Mass was played with organs, shawms, trombones (& a *Missa soy tangida cõ orgaõs charamelas, sacabuxas*)... the body was then brought inside the chapel by the bishops whilst the singers sang the chant of *Zacharias, Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*, with so many voices and instruments (*com tantas vozes, & estromentos*) and devotion that everyone was crying' [translation by author] (Resende, 1554, pp.117–117V).

14. Gregório Lopes (1470–1550) was subsequently royal painter of both Kings Manuel I and João III.

15. Trindade et al. (1999) date this depiction to 1535.

16. According to Trindade et al. (1999), the two different levels of the depiction have been painted by different authors.

17. Coimbra-based French artist João de Ruão (Jean de Rouen) was one of the most distinguished artists (sculptor and architect) of the Portuguese Renaissance. Ruão was brought to Portugal by request of King Manuel I in 1517/8. The sculpture (*Music Angels*) originally formed part of the Monastery of Santa Maria de Celas in Coimbra and is now held at the Machado de Castro National Museum.

18. The presence of the coats of arms of both the Viceroy and his son, Alvaro de Castro, confirm the content of the scene depicted.

19. The majority of the depictions presented in Carter (2012) show brass instruments with a slide system. However it is not always possible to ascertain whether some instruments are in fact trombones, proto-trombones or single-slide trumpets. Thus, the number of trombones depicted on the right-hand side of the player's head may—in different contexts—be considered higher or, indeed, lower.

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## About the author

DR RUI PEDRO DE OLIVEIRA ALVES graduated from Superior School of Music and Drama in Porto. In 2006 he was offered a scholarship from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation to complete a Masters of Music at the Royal Northern College of Music and a Postgraduate Diploma in orchestral training at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Rui Pedro is a freelance trombonist and has played, recorded and broadcast live with some of the leading UK orchestras and chamber groups. In 2013, Rui Pedro completed his PhD at the University of St Andrews and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. As a member of the New Wallace Collection, Rui Pedro continues to perform and develop his research interests in the history, repertoire and performance practice of historical brass instruments.



## **Pace, penalty and pirouette: the sociology of physical culture**

SYMPOSIUM ABSTRACTS:

VICTORIA PALMER & BETHANY WHITESIDE;  
EMMANUELLE TULLE; URSULA M. BURGER,  
ELAINE THOMSON & ELENI THEODORAKI;  
JAMES BOWNESS; CONOR HEFFERNAN;  
LAURA BISSELL & DAVID OVEREND; VANESSA COFFEY;  
LITO TSITSOU; KIRSTY KAY; SUE SMITH;  
LUCY AMSDEN; HANDE GÜZEL;  
ANDRIA CHRISTOFIDOU; JOSEPHINE LEASK

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**Pace, penalty and pirouette: the sociology of physical culture**

Friday 13th June 2014

Buchanan House, Glasgow Caledonian University

Funded by the British Sociological Association (BSA)

*Pace, penalty and pirouette: the sociology of physical culture was an event organised and hosted by PhD students Victoria Palmer (Glasgow Caledonian University) and Bethany Whiteside (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland). Funded by the British Sociological Association as a Postgraduate Regional Event, the day was primarily designed to be a supportive platform for postgraduate students from across Scotland and further afield to unite, discuss, present, and share their research with academics with similar interests. The event focused on aspects of 'physical culture', attracting scholars from several areas of study including dance, leisure studies, outdoor activity, physical activity, physical education, physical theatre, outdoor activity and sport. Broadly speaking, those who study physical culture are interested in the ways in which individuals engage in (or do not engage in) physical practices and how these individuals are affected*

*by, or influence their social and cultural environment.*

*The event aimed to explore and unite the various practices of physical culture and to interrogate how they intersect with sociological issues such as ageing, class, disability, gender and race. Moreover, an uneasy relationship has traditionally existed between sport and dance, with the latter often subsumed into the former in myriad ways (for example, through the necessary physicality and the adoption of competition formats). However, as this event demonstrated, the methodologies and approaches adopted across these disciplines highlight the compatibility between them when the focus is on the moving body.*

*Through a formal review process, eleven speakers were invited to present their research from institutions across the UK and Europe. Structured around three panels focusing on 'Sport and Physical Activity', 'Dance and Physical Theatre' and 'Gender and Physical Culture', scholars spoke about such diverse subjects as the place of white masculinity in the fitness arena of 1930s and 1940s America (Conor Heffernan), 'body-mapping' as a technique in physical theatre devising (Vanessa Coffey) and the concept of the 'ridiculous' in clown performance (Lucy Amsden). In addition, we were delighted to be joined by two keynote speakers: Dr Emmanuelle Tulle (Glasgow Caledonian University) focused on the portrayal of ageing elite athletes in the media and Dr Laura Bissell (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) presented on the exploration and framing of the daily commute as 'Rhythmanalysis' (Lefebvre, 1992).*

VICTORIA PALMER & BETHANY WHITESIDE



EMMANUELLE TULLE

### **In Search of Lost Times or Time Regained? Numbers and ambiguous narratives of ageing in media reports of elite athletes**

The presentation will engage reflexively on the ambiguity of the scientific project which on the one hand provides the means to more effectively develop physical capital, offering the promise of time regained via anti-ageing pronouncements, and on the other hand contributes to the discourse of ageing as decline. To explore this conundrum I will focus on two high-profile male athletes—Lance Armstrong and Roger Federer—and show how their ageing is foretold in media and personal accounts of their achievements. What is striking in these documents is how numbers and a specific conception of time informed by science are deployed to construct a truth of the athletes' elite status as well as their ageing. The athletes are prematurely aged and subjected to the dominant discourse of ageing and old age as decline, which puts their reputational capital at risk. Supported by Foucauldian theoretical and conceptual tools, the analysis reveals strategies the athletes themselves use to attempt to protect their reputation, their futures and social position. Two narratives emerge: one of active retirement which is described as socially desirable (Lance Armstrong), and a narrative foregrounding of age as a positive process of discovery (Roger Federer).

*DR EMMANUELLE TULLE is Reader in Sociology at Glasgow Caledonian University. She has over 15 years' experience of conducting research in old age, with a particular focus on understanding and theorising how older people make sense of, and manage, the process of bodily ageing from a cultural perspective. The research underpinning her theoretical and conceptual development has focused on Master athletes and their experiences of ageing in sport, symptomatic older people who engage in regular physical activity, and media reporting of the ageing of professional elite athletes. She has also cast a critical eye on the legacy implications of large sporting events and the role of sport science in legitimating the turn to physical activity in later life. Tulle is currently examining the science of sedentary behaviour and is the author of a monograph,*

Ageing, the Body and Social Change: Running in Later Life (*Palgrave, 2008*) and with Dr Cassie Phoenix is currently co-editing a collection entitled *Physical Activity and Sport in Later Life: Critical Approaches*.

URSULA M. BURGER, ELAINE THOMSON &  
ELENI THEODORAKI

### **Marketing women's sports grrrl style: a feminist analysis of advertising, commoditisation and identity in roller derby**

Brace-Govan (2010) cites Hirschman and Stern (2000) to argue that the advertising discourse of the athletically active female has an important effect on women consumers 'through the creation of ideal, or aspirational, kinds of femininity which can be viewed and imagined by all women' (p.371). From a feminist perspective, this discourse is problematic due to its pre-occupation with the inequity of the sexes in all aspects of life, and the negative impact certain depictions of femininity can have on female body issues (Gill, 2008). Riot grrrl is a branch of third wave feminism (Gillis et al., 2007) that has been positioned against mainstream patriarchal culture. Peaking in the mid-1990s, its proponents expressed their anger at inequality via the (ephemeral, postmodern) medium of zines (self-produced and distributed print magazines) and punk music (Dunn & Farnsworth, 2012; Feigenbaum, 2007). In a postmodern world of global capitalism, most aspects of life have become commodified and marketing communications now have a fundamental cultural role to play (Shankar et al, 2009). Using the example of roller derby, an emerging female, full-contact, grassroots sport (Breeze, 2010; Finley, 2010; Pavlidis, 2012), in combination with the tenets of self-sufficient and independent production of female voices of the riot grrrl movement, this study explores the connections between roller derby's alternative character and the riot grrrl characteristics of its marketing communications output. The aim of this paper is to draw a connection between these two different women-powered outlets through analysing programmes, websites, and blogs of UK

roller derby leagues and comparing them to the riot grrrl zine productions.

URSULA BURGER is a postgraduate research student at Edinburgh Napier University's School of Marketing, Tourism and Languages.

DR ELAINE THOMSON is a lecturer in Marketing at Edinburgh Napier University's School of Marketing, Tourism and Languages.

DR ELENI THEODORAKI is a reader in Festival and Event Management at Edinburgh Napier University's School of Marketing, Tourism and Languages.

JAMES BOWNESS

### **Ageing, identity and gender in the Masters sports movement**

An ageing population and an unfettered societal exultation regarding sport and its benefits have resulted in a new phenomenon, the Masters athlete. An increasing level of agency has cultivated the practices of middle age and extended the period before the often undesired old age. Successful ageing, a natural precursor to medical discourse, consumer culture and capitalist ways, is in vogue in our current times. Masters athletes are the pioneers of successful ageing, radicals opposed to social disengagement and frailty commonly associated with biological ageing. Much academic work has been done on the structural influences which generate such dispositions. However, more work is needed in understanding the effects of ageing on the identity of an athlete, how they fit into the aged social field and how they encounter societal marginalisation. To illuminate such theoretical queries, an interesting group of athletes will be utilised. Masters athletes involved in the Highland games movement will meet in Inverness this September for the World Highland Games gathering, an event steeped in masculine identity. How do older women experience these practices, being both deviant to the

stereotypes of their age and their gender? Furthermore, research into physical activity and age has found strong links between increased levels of activity and prolonged longevity. How do the Highland games athletes experience mundane tasks and how has their participation in a highly strength-based event aided their successful ageing? This presentation aims to answer these questions and more.

JAMES BOWNESS is a PhD student within the Social Sciences and Media Journalism department, part of the Glasgow School of Business and Society at Glasgow Caledonian University. His research interests surround the sociology of sport and in particular, the various avenues of ageing research.

CONOR HEFFERNAN

### **Charles Atlas and American physical culture in the early twentieth century**

Fitness and the fitness industry are relatively unmined topics for historical research. Such research as exists tends to focus on biographies of famous figures in the industry, rather than the analysis of societal trends and identity formation. I intend to juxtapose both approaches. In the early twentieth century, Charles Atlas and his business partner Charles Roman created a mail order workout course that continues to this day and has had over thirty million customers. By focusing on the early years of the Atlas business, specifically 1929 to 1948, I look at what the success of Atlas's business tells us about constructions of white masculinity during this time, along with exploring what Atlas's business meant for American physical culture. I contend that Atlas's business came at a profound juncture in US history during which there was a perceived crisis of white masculinity by both the public and elites. Atlas's business was successful because it asseverated that it could provide qualities men believed they needed and wanted at this time. In arguing this, I will firstly give a brief historical background to establish the crisis of masculinity that

existed. Atlas and Roman themselves will be studied briefly to establish their public personae. The product, and more importantly its advertising, is studied to elucidate the marketing campaign utilised. Lastly, I examine the qualities which Atlas's product purported to provide, namely a sense of control, increased sexual vigour and attractiveness, and a strong personality. Such qualities, it is argued, were taken to represent the cornerstones of American white masculinity at this time in response to a perceived crisis of masculinity.

CONOR HEFFERNAN has recently completed a bachelor's degree in History and Political Science at Trinity College, Dublin. His historical interests focus primarily on health and fitness and American culture in the twentieth century, but also includes areas such as consumption politics in Nazi Germany and identity formation in Zaire. He plans to enter postgraduate research next year.

LAURA BISSELL & DAVID OVEREND

### **Rhythmic routes: developing a nomadic physical practice for the daily commute**

How can the contemporary performance practitioner maintain a deterritorialised, nomadic existence within the regulated systems of twenty-first century mobile life? Elliott and Urry (2010) argue that 'life "on the move" appears to unfold faster and faster in the early days of the twenty-first century, as people become more reliant upon interdependent, digitised systems'. In contrast, the nomad is an aspirational figure, 'cut free of roots, bonds and fixed identities' (Pearson, 2010). Responding to the increasingly globalised context of mobilities and Braidotti's (2011) notion of 'becoming-nomad', this keynote asks whether nomadism can offer an alternative to the physical cultures created through the systemisation and repetition of everyday journeys.

This keynote introduces and reflects on an ongoing collaborative research project by Laura Bissell and David

Overend. Focussing on the everyday rhythms of commuting, this practice-based enquiry uses Lefebvre's *Rhythmanalysis* (1992) to explore the interrelatedness of time and space in the routines of our everyday journeys. Rejecting conventional narratives of the 'weary and dystopian commuter' (Edensor, 2011), Overend and Bissell aim to develop a series of performative interventions that reimagine commuting as a creative and productive embodied practice with the potential for nomadic disruptions to the routines and rhythms of our everyday journeys.

DR LAURA BISSELL is a lecturer in Contemporary Performance Practice within the School of Drama at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Laura is a visiting lecturer on the MRes in Creative Practices programme at the Glasgow School of Art and has presented her research on contemporary practices at conferences nationally and internationally.

DR DAVID OVEREND is a freelance director and lecturer in contemporary theatre and performance at the University of the West of Scotland. He trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts and was associate artist at the Arches, Glasgow (2007–2010). His current research focuses on performance and mobilities.

VANESSA COFFEY

### **A mind of its own: accessing the unconscious through physical movement**

This presentation will focus on documentary and physical theatre specifically devised on the basis of narratives from mental health service-users, particularly using a technique known as 'body-mapping'. In the first instance, I am interested in how people perform their own stories physically, when overcoming trauma or dealing with day-to-day lived experience of mental health conditions. In the second, I am interested in how others can truthfully represent these stories.

Does the use of dance or physicality in the presentation of mental health narratives interfere with what the audience understands to be 'truthful' on stage? Can using a recent Finnish study (Nummenmaa et al., 2013) on body topography and somatosensory memory help us to physically portray emotion?

VANESSA COFFEY is a theatre-maker who makes work through her company Down the Rabbit Hole, which focuses on mental health issues using physical theatre. In addition to the work she undertakes with her company, Vanessa also works independently as an actor, dancer, choreographer and dramaturg. Vanessa teaches at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in several capacities: as a tutor on the Masters (Acting) programme, a tutor on the undergraduate Acting degree, as well as teaching young people from the age of five through to adults in the Short Courses programmes through the Conservatoire, particularly the Junior Conservatoire of Drama's movement modules.

She was also employed by Sense Scotland as a drama tutor where she worked with adults with profound mental health concerns, and physical and learning disabilities. Her undergraduate degrees are in Law and French and she has a specific interest in the ethics of performance.

LITO TSITSOU

### **Deconstructing talent in theatrical dance**

This paper will deconstruct the meaning of talent in ballet and contemporary dance in an attempt to overcome the myth of gift. Utilising a historical and empirical approach unified through the lens of the Bourdieusian field (Bourdieu, 1993), I will argue that any field of physical activity measures ability and talent with reference to internal field criteria, which are historically and socially shaped. Specifically, talent in theatrical dance is correlated with specific bodily ideal types and the ability for expression or expressivity primarily through the body. Further, talent is linked to musicality and rhythm. This paper argues that very often these are attributes passed on from teachers and

the exposure of the body to other bodies. Similarly, such exposure constitutes a form of conditioning that determines both physical ability and expression. Finally it is argued that, above and beyond all, talent is constructed through economic and cultural capital that allows for the introduction of bodies in dance.

DR LITO TSITSOU is a former dancer and currently a researcher and teaching assistant at the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Glasgow. She obtained her PhD from the University of Glasgow during which she examined the social and aesthetic conditions of possibility of ballet and contemporary dance production, drawing on historical material from the West and on an empirical comparative investigation of dance in Greece and the UK. Lito focused on the class origins of dance practitioners, phenomena of institutional power and aesthetic tensions as interwoven in the politics of dance in different social contexts. Her current interests revolve around the making of the dancing body, disability and dance, and the social theory of Pierre Bourdieu.

KIRSTY KAY

### **Folk dance and embodied national identity: a Scottish and Hungarian comparison**

This paper is a comparison of Scottish Cèilidh and Hungarian Táncház folk dance movements as they relate to national identity construction. Folk traditions provide premodern ties to geographic regions and a subsequent cultural-historical backbone to ideas of the nation-state. These two case studies will be used to reassess binary assumptions of two different 'types' of nationalism: Western Civic and Eastern Ethnic, critiquing the notion that ethno-cultural forms are in some way antithetical to a liberal democratic society. In researching the two folk dance revivals this paper will reflect on recent scholarship of national identity formation as a reaction to, and resistance against, external ruling elites. Scotland and Hungary both experienced a folk revival in the early twentieth century in the face of rapid modernisation, which subsequently became aligned with more civic political ideas of the nation.



Folk dance places the body at the centre of debates around nationalism. After increased political autonomy in the 1990s (Hungary's transition to democracy and devolution in Scotland), what began as physical forms of resistance to imposed national forms have now turned into cultural commodities with an ascribed political rhetoric.

This paper will discuss my upcoming fieldwork which uses multimodal methods to reassess individuals' engagement with these dances and to what extent they conform to elite narratives of meaning. Using theoretical ideas around phenomenology and affect theory, I hope to investigate dance as a useful locus for understanding nationalism as a lived identity, through attempting to let people's experiences and identities be expressed corporeally, rather than relying on ascribed political meaning to explain national identity.

KIRSTY KAY is a second-year, part-time PhD student in the Central and Eastern European Studies Department of the University of Glasgow. Her academic work focuses on the reinvention of traditions in national contexts in East and West Europe, using multimodal methodologies to elicit non-elite experiences of embodied nationalism. Kirsty also works as a freelance writer and editor and, having lived and worked in Central Europe and Scotland for over a decade, writes about both regions online.

SUE SMITH

### **Dancing in the dark: described dances and unseen choreographies**

A visually impaired person attends a dance performance. What is the point? Sometimes theatres provide live audio-description, via earpiece, commentating on what is seen. Through considering the history, philosophy and embedded ideology implicit in audio-description as a tool of access, this presentation asks: what makes a dance? What is being described? Tensions between what is described, listener

expectations and who is 'interpreting' make this contentious territory.

Dissatisfied with the basic premise of an audio-description as translation of visual to verbal, I question how a critical appraisal of the current practice of audio description in dance, and the function of the audio describer can provide a foundation for new choreographies. I explore the artistic potential of access 'tools' as creative media in themselves and alternative approaches to what constitutes an experience of live dance performance. This presentation will reflect my search for alternative bodily presences in performance and new communicative processes which emerge out of the encounter between artistic production and social inclusion.

How can choreographic practices centralise a diversity of sensory perceptions as a steering artistic tool during the making of new work? Just as the ramp has become a design feature of award-winning recent architectures (think Tate Modern and Laban Centre, London), can access 'problems' allow cultures to think differently about who is participating in art? What kinds of new work can be created through an encounter between artistic production and social inclusion? Can new dance be made that doesn't need 'translating' at all?

SUE SMITH is a choreographer, Rayne Fellow (2006) and PhD candidate at Falmouth University. Her practice includes dance in elderly care, with cancer patients and Royal Marines. She believes that the potential for accessible, quality dance lies in the most unexpected places. She believes in reinterpreting 'dance' to reflect and reveal real lives across the broadest spectrum of experience.

LUCY AMSDEN

## **Ridiculous physicality in clown workshops at Ecole Philippe Gaulier**

Though the word 'clown' might conjure up a generic image, each clown student at the Ecole Philippe Gaulier looks different, wearing a costume that can elicit laughter or make their body ridiculous. My paper examines how students of the clown workshop develop ridiculous physicality, using the social exchange of laughter.

Clown physicality depends on contrast, partnerships and contradictions. A clown is a skilled performer, using physical skills in service of gags, with the direct intention of laughter. Ridiculousness is closely associated with ineptitude, and laughter can be generated by failure to function according to social expectations. As a result, clowning has the potential to highlight, challenge or enhance social norms. I explore this relationship using a case study of a clown act in Cirque du Soleil's *Varekai*, performed and directed by participants of Gaulier's workshop. This act includes a variety of physical and social ineptitudes and contrasts.

I explore the term 'ridiculous' to examine how clown performance has been understood as personal to the performer, in some way dependant on the performer's own body. I suggest that Gaulier teaches students to find what is ridiculous about their own body, or in other words, in what ways their body can be used to make people laugh. The social environment of the clown workshop is an international and multilingual one, which may have an impact on the extent to which physicality is used (more than language) to generate laughter.

LUCY AMSDEN is a third-year PhD student in Theatre Studies at the University of Glasgow. She has presented research at postgraduate

colloquia nationally, was part of the Performer Training Working Group in TaPRA 2013 at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and performs in Glasgow and Edinburgh with Bright Club, presenting research through stand-up comedy.

HANDE GÜZEL

**Fictive ability, fictive masculinity: gender and able-bodiedness in physical education classes in Turkey (1969–1983)**

In the year 1969, a Ministry of Youth and Sport was established for the first time in Turkey, lasting until 1983. This institutional change on the surface reflected a discursive shift in terms of the state's relationship with the body. The interest in the body is reflected in physical education, yet physical education itself plays an active role in the definition and redefinition of the 'invested body', the body which is subjected to social controls and interventions (Harvey and Sparks, 1991). Based on this novel relationship, this paper concentrates on how physical education cuts across the categories of gender and disability in relation to the dominant and alternative conceptualisations of the body in that period in Turkey.

Based on a discourse analysis of primary sources related to physical education classes and policies, my preliminary results indicate that the physical education classes and the training of physical education teachers in this period strengthen hegemonic gender roles. While assigning particular activities to each gender, it also subordinates alternative femininities and masculinities. Furthermore, the physical education programmes display that the students are imagined as a group of 'fictive ability' (Galusca, 2009), as an extension of the nationalist goals behind physical education programmes. This ideology of the state—assuming that each citizen is able-bodied—not only further marginalises the disabled body, but also helps the state to exert further control on its citizens. Therefore, it is possible to call the disabled body the *absent body*, as it is not existent

in written documents pertaining to this period.

Upon completion of her BA High Hons at the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Bogazici University in 2011, HANDE GÜZEL has worked as a Social Research Project Coordinator at a private research centre. In 2013, she joined the MA Comparative Studies in History and Society programme at Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey. Currently, she works as a research assistant at the same institution. Her Masters thesis investigates the conceptualisation(s) of the body and physical education through physical education classes that took place in Turkey between 1969 and 1983. Her research interests include sociology of the body, masculinity studies and disability studies.

ANDRIA CHRISTOFIDOU

### **A historical account of genders in ballet**

Ballet, a dance genre with a long history, emerged as an activity by and for men. However, since the eighteenth century it has become an activity associated with women and femininity which has resulted in ballet's transformation into a low-status activity and profession. It turned into a scrutinised field for men to get involved in and those who chose to practice it often risked being characterised as feminine and/or homosexual.

This paper draws on data collected through the work of various dance historians and theorists (Burt, 2007; Daly, 1987; Hanna, 1988; Kraus, 1969) to give an overview of the alterations in Western theatrical dance between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries. It particularly describes the socio-cultural and economic conditions of that time and will refer to the most important transformations that affected ballet (among others, the introduction of point shoes and lighter costumes, the *danseuse en travesti* and the idea of narrative), to sociologically explain how they influenced the participation as well as representation of female and male dancers in dance performances. The talk presents how females were introduced and established into

what used to be a male-dominated field, as well as how males slowly disappeared from it. Overall, this paper is a presentation of how the dance emerged in its various forms, how it resulted in what is today known as ballet, as well as how it became established as a female-concentrated, yet not dominated, activity and field.

ANDRIA CHRISTOFIDOU is a PhD candidate at the University of Glasgow looking at masculinities in the field of theatrical dance. She has a BA in Sociology and an MSc in Cultural Sociology. Andria is mostly interested in gender studies, masculinities/femininities, queer theory, cultural and dance sociology.

JOSEPHINE LEASK

### **Shimmying hips and rotating wrists: the transformational room of the Bollywood dance class**

I participate in a local Bollywood dance class for mothers at my children's inner city London school. In this class, I am in a minority together with the teacher and one other mum, as being the only white, non-Muslim women. The majority of the other participants are migrant Bengali or Arabic women. In spite of our very different backgrounds and ages what we share in addition to being mothers is a joy of dancing, learning new choreography and sweating within the safe confines of a supportive group.

In this shared cultural space we are able to not only embody a variety of Indian, Arabic and Latin dance styles free from a critical eye or judgemental gaze, but also escape from the (often) disempowering environment outside.

Angela McRobbie (2005) argues that dance remains a complex and powerful manifestation of women's identity. The function of this class goes beyond that of an exercise class and establishes a nurturing place for female

empowerment, identity formation and also pleasure experienced through the actual dancing. It also allows for cross-cultural sharing and a place in which community value and belonging can be experienced, as discussed by Sherril Dodds in her writing about the usefulness of diaspora studies in making sense of such cultural activities (2011). This Bollywood dance class challenges the notion of an amorphous, 'containing' multiculturalism (Bhabha, 1990) which suppresses unique identities and difference (Hall, 2003), through offering a place in which participants can embody and create diverse diasporic identities.

JOSEPHINE LEASK is a dance writer and lecturer with a background in performance, having worked as both a performer and deviser with a variety of choreographers and performance artists. She currently writes for *londondance.com* and is London correspondent for *The Dance Insider* as well as contributing to a variety of specialist dance books, academic and art publications. Each year she mentors aspiring dance writers who take part in *Resolution Review!* at The Place, London, and edits the online review magazine that covers the season. She is an associate lecturer on the BA (Hons) Contextual Studies programme at The London Studio Centre, Middlesex University, specialising in cultural studies and postmodernity.

## **Acknowledgements**

*The British Sociological Association, founded in 1951, is a registered charity (registered charity number: 1080235). The BSA is also a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number: 3890729). [www.britsoc.co.uk](http://www.britsoc.co.uk).*





## **Book review: *Singing Simpkin and other bawdy gigs*, edited by Roger Clegg and Lucie Skeaping**

NEIL RHODES

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Publication date: 16 December 2014

***Singing Simpkin and other bawdy gigs*, edited by Roger Clegg and Lucie Skeaping. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2014; ISBN: 9780859898782 (£30.00)**

Scholarly efforts to record the popular culture of the past began in the eighteenth century as the final stage in a process of separation between elite or educated culture and those forms of expression produced by and for the people. The best-known part of this process was the collecting of folk ballads by antiquarians. Interest in 'low' cultural forms in this period also went hand-in-hand with a re-evaluation of Shakespeare and the Elizabethan drama, so what had previously been thought of as impressive but barbaric was now felt to have been touched with the genius of nature. But as far as the drama was concerned, the line had to be drawn somewhere, and it was definitely drawn at a point above the lowest of low theatrical forms, the 'jig'. Although the performance of a jig was part of an afternoon's entertainment at the English public theatres in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (and has been revived in a reduced version at the modern Globe Theatre), it has largely disappeared from the public perception of early modern English drama and is known to scholars mainly from C. R. Baskervill's study *The Elizabethan Jig* (1929).

This will certainly change with the appearance of Roger Clegg and Lucie Skeaping's wonderful collection of nine

English jigs, which are presented here with a substantial historical introduction, accompanying music alongside the texts themselves, and finally a detailed explanation of how the jigs were staged, covering text, music, and dance moves. The edition ends with an appendix on dance instruction by Anne Daye. Both principal editors have long been engaged in the recovery of the jig for modern audiences: Skeaping has run workshops on jigs with the Royal Shakespeare Company, performed broadside ballads and jigs with her band City Waites, and produced a CD, *The English Stage Jig* (2009). Clegg has written a doctoral thesis on the jig and has worked on the staging of jigs at Shakespeare's Globe and the University of Exeter. This is an exemplary exercise in collaboration.

It is also one that is demanded by the form, since the jig was the most hybrid kind of theatrical performance in a theatre where the mainstream plays were themselves notably hybrid. The stage jig derives from a combination of popular song (the ballad), dance (the stepping of morris men) and folk drama (the mummers' plays). The central performer is the clown, with the role of jig-master defined first by the immensely popular Richard Tarlton from the 1570s onwards, and then by Will Kemp, Shakespeare's clown until 1599 and arguably the first celebrity as a result of his famous dance to Norwich. As the form expanded from its origins in the ballad into a rudimentary form of drama, it drew upon both native story motifs (Robin Hood) and continental material (tales from Boccaccio, the *commedia dell'arte*, and the French *soties*). But it also allowed for the jig to become a form of libel as generic tales of adultery and other sexual misdemeanours were adapted for particular circumstances and identifiable subjects (the word 'jig' itself has strong sexual connotations). This inevitably brought it into conflict with city authorities who had it suppressed at various points. However, the other aspect of the form that was felt to be threatening was one that, interestingly, kept it on the very margins of what we might see as

commercialised or commodified popular culture. As the editors point out, vagrants and others who couldn't afford the admission price often forced their way into the theatres for the jig at the end of the performance. This last phenomenon returns the jig to something like a communal social practice, but only in a context which reconstructs the participants as a threatening urban crowd.

The jigs collected here include *The Black Man*, in which a rustic clown called Thumpkin pursues a barmaid, only to have her snatched from him by a pair of gentleman thugs. He then manages to get her back by posing as an elderly parent. In *The Jig of Denys' Ghost* a girl is wooed by a cobbler and a carter, and after she rejects the cobbler he decides to return as the ghost of St Denys in order to frighten the couple. The situation is echoed in Donne's poem, 'The Apparition'. The more *ad hominem* kind of satire is represented by *The Libel of Michael Steel*, which was written to expose a Yorkshireman's affair with his maidservant.

For a modern analogy with the jig, we might imagine a cartoon—*Tom and Jerry* perhaps—following the main feature. And making such an analogy highlights what is perhaps the oddest feature of the early modern jig, which is the fact that it was an afterpiece, not a prelude. There are many references to the jig coming at the end of the performance, as Clegg and Skeaping note, but this may not have been the unvarying practice. One of the most famous references to the form is Marlowe's 'From jigging veins of rhyming mother wits/We'll lead you to the stately tent of war' in the prologue to *Tamburlaine*, which is always interpreted as a reference to the offerings of rival dramatists. Yet the most obvious explanation of the lines is that they refer to what the audience has just seen.

This and other questions about the relationship of the jig to

the mainstream dramatic genres which they accompanied will surely be reopened by this volume. This is an excellent piece of research and a valuable resource for anyone wishing to study the history of performance, the popular cultural forms of the early modern period, or the repertoire of the playing companies in the first age of the English professional stage.

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## About the review author

NEIL RHODES is Professor of English Literature and Cultural History at the University of St Andrews and Visiting Professor at the University of Granada. He is co-General Editor of the MHRA *Tudor and Stuart Translations* for which he has contributed the volume *English Renaissance Translation Theory* (2013). His other publications include *Shakespeare and the Origins of English* (Oxford, 2004), and his first book, *Elizabethan Grottesque*, was reissued by Routledge in 2014. From 2014–2016 he holds a Leverhulme Research Fellowship to work on a book entitled *Common: The Development of Literary Culture in Sixteenth-Century England*.

## **Book review: *The theatrical public sphere*, by Christopher B. Balme**

ANSELM HEINRICH

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Publication date: 16 December 2014

***The theatrical public sphere*, by Christopher B. Balme. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014; ISBN 9781107006836 (£60.00)**

Christopher Balme opens his investigation into the theatrical public sphere with a fascinating example of an event put on by the Munich Kammerspiele in 2012. The city's municipal theatre had invited citizens to take part in an open air meeting conducted at one hundred tables set up on exclusive Maximilianstrasse just outside the theatre building. Each table was assigned a topic for discussion. The theatre's invitation asked participants to turn this meeting into a centre for public debate asking 'what does it mean to be poor and rich in Munich?' (p.2). Now, repoliticising theatre and performance has been much discussed recently but most commentators still assume that theatrical events still take place on stage in front of an audience gathered in a theatre building. The Kammerspiele, however, took this approach a step further by moving out of the confines of the theatre building to use the public sphere itself as a stage.

It is these kinds of interventions in which Balme is interested, as they link to Jürgen Habermas' theory of the public sphere as a discursive space in which the public can engage in political debate on equal terms (1989). The author places his discussion on the border between public and private, arguing that the still-prevalent bourgeois theatre model had turned it into a private space 'at the cost of theatre's very publicness' (p.3). Balme sees a way out of this

dilemma but only if the theatre finds 'strategies to connect established institutional practices with the rapidly changing dynamics of the public sphere in its new media manifestations' (p.21).

In the book's first chapter, Balme locates the term of the theatrical public sphere. With admirable ease he discusses examples from different centuries, countries and commentators, focussing on the distinction between private and public. He pays particular attention to ancient Greek performance practice as constituting an early form of the theatrical public sphere (pp.28-36). The book's second chapter concentrates on mediated communication as Balme discusses the interconnections between theatre and the media. Again, he covers significant historical ground here by starting with early examples of playbills during the seventeenth century, leading up to Twitter, Facebook and blogs. His discussion of the German online review portal *nachtkritik.de* illustrates the serious debates around ownership of the public sphere in cyberspace (pp.71-73). In Chapter 3, Balme turns to a specific historic example when referring to the closure of theatres in England between 1642 and 1660 as 'perhaps the first instance of a genuine theatrical public sphere, understood as an arena of debate conducted in countless pamphlets and tracts, on the stage and off, in courthouses and churches' (p.75). Balme specifically refers to the anti-theatrical discourse leading up to the permanent closure of playhouses in 1649, a discourse - as he points out- which was quite diverse and cannot be simply labelled 'Puritan' (pp.76-77).

Chapter 4 continues with the issue of religion but puts it in a global context. In this section, titled 'The prophet onstage: theatre, religion and the transnational public sphere', Balme refers to events in which depictions of the prophet Muhammad onstage and in print sparked global protests. Here the author establishes a fascinating link between two

late nineteenth century productions of plays portraying Muhammad in London and Paris, which were cancelled due to international protests, and a 2006 production of *Idomeneo* in Berlin which was initially taken off the programme and then reinstated due to public pressure. The 1889 production of Henri de Bornier's play *Mahomet* in Paris and its British production a year later were widely discussed and caused frictions and diplomatic irritations not only in Europe but also further afield. Ultimately, the productions were 'sacrificed on the altar of realpolitik' (p.127). In 2006 Berlin, however, a similar sensitivity was not displayed, Balme claims, with the 'politically enforced' performances of *Idomeneo*, which in Hans Neuenfels' production used the decapitated head of Muhammad as a prop on stage. In dealing with these two instances Balme also observes a shift in the relationship between theatre and the public sphere. In late nineteenth century Paris and London, the theatre was seen as having a potentially decisive influence in the public sphere, whereas with the Berlin *Idomeneo* the performance itself was hardly recognised and failed to contribute to public discourse. Balme acutely observes 'the somewhat depressing irony [...] that it took a non-performance to actually re-establish contact between the theatrical and the political public sphere; the production itself singularly failed to do this' (p.138). In Chapter 5, Balme more generally discusses thresholds of tolerance and the publicity of scandal as 'theatre scandals and controversies represent perhaps the most prominent points of articulation between performance and the public sphere' (p.140). He particularly refers to Weimar Germany, which saw unprecedented levels of scandals and riots in the wake of abolishing theatre censorship after 1918, but he also looks at a more recent example by Italian company Societas Raffaele Sanzio who were accused of blasphemy by Catholic pressure groups. He rounds off the chapter with another recent example from Berlin, where blackface caused protests exemplifying the 'corrective' power of the public sphere, which increasingly used social media to organise opposition (p.172).

Balme concludes with a somewhat more positive outlook discussing recent attempts to reintegrate the public sphere with performance particularly using new media and relating to notions of 'postdramatic theatre' as defined by Hans-Thies Lehmann (2006). The author usefully discusses Christoph Schlingensiefel and his influential public performance *Please Love Austria*, which took place in Vienna in 2000, as well as Rimini Protokoll's 2005 piece *Call Cutta*, among others.

Overall, Balme presents us with a fascinating tour-de-force, although his findings may be slightly limited in that his examples are not only Eurocentric but really almost entirely relate to Britain and Germany. On the other hand, he is not only able to unravel a persuasive argument and extend Habermas' theory to performance, but by doing so he also questions the very fabric of the theatre and the way it operates.

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## About the review author

ANSELM HEINRICH is Lecturer and Head of Theatre Studies at the University of Glasgow. He has published on different aspects of German and British theatre history, including two monographs on *Entertainment, Education, Propaganda. Regional Theatres in Germany and Britain between 1918 and 1945* (London: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2007), and *Theater in der Region: Westfalen und Yorkshire 1918 bis 1945* (Paderborn: Schoeningh, 2012). He is currently under contract from Routledge for a book-length study of European theatre under Nazi occupation. Other recent publications include a collection of essays on *Ruskin, the Theatre, and Victorian Visual Culture* (co-edited with Kate Newey and Jeffrey Richards and published by Palgrave in 2009) and journal articles in *New Theatre Quarterly*, *Theatre Survey* and *Theatre Research International*.



## **Book review: *All work and no plays: blueprints for 9 theatre performances by Ontroerend Goed*, by Ontroerend Goed**

GARETH K. VILE

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*All work and no plays: blueprints for 9 theatre performances by Ontroerend Goed*, by Ontroerend Goed. London: Oberon Books, 2014; ISBN 9781783191055 (£18.99)

Reflecting their devised creative process and provocative productions, Belgian company Ontroerend Goed's collected works, *All Work and No Plays*, is an iconoclastic document from a company who question the boundaries of theatre. A series of texts that claim not to be definitive representations of the works as performed, but a broad representation of each show's general shape and structure, the company offer their words as a guide to the recreation of their first nine performances.

Because of the loose nature of the company's work—and its emphasis on the engagement of the audience—most of the scripts include a notional spectator's thoughts and emotional responses to the performance. Their earliest pieces (collected as *The Personal Trilogy*) are examples of intimate theatre, for either a single audience member (*The Smile Off Your Face*) or a small group (*Internal*) and set the tone for the publication, alternating between descriptions of the performers' actions and the possible feelings of the audience.

Although the intention of the book is clearly identified as an encouragement to other theatre-makers to adapt Ontroerend Goed's performances to their own needs, the range of styles on display—*Teenage Riot* almost feels like a traditional script in places, while *A History of Everything* is presented as a collection of notes and meditations, defined more by stunning design than content—operates as an introduction to the company's devising aesthetic and philosophy of theatre. As such, *All Work and No Plays* is important reading for anyone interested in the potential of performance to escape traditional format and challenge audiences, or indeed the recent history of European devised theatre.

If each of the texts for the performances follow a similar pattern, suggestive of what can or did happen in performance rather than a didactic script to follow, the introductions to each text are consistently enlightening. From *The Personal Trilogy* through to *Fight Night* (the last of the texts printed here and a powerful entry in the 2013 Edinburgh Festival Fringe), Ontroerend Goed have confronted audiences with a bleak vision and manipulated the format of theatre to challenge expectations. *Teenage Riot* addresses the fears and aspirations both for and about young people; *Fight Night* savagely deconstructs a democratic process to reveal how easily it can slip into demagoguery. And in the introductions, Ontroerend Goed reveal their own intentions.

Certain themes are revisited: a surprise at the controversy their work receives; the importance of following the performers' process during the making of theatre; a restless desire not to repeat the format or style of earlier pieces. That the texts are all credited to Ontroerend Goed rather than the individuals involved in the making follows the rehearsal process described for *Once And For All We're Gonna Tell You Who We Are So Shut Up And Listen* (p.173) or

*The Smile off Your Face* (p.17): the collective is more vital than the individual. The inclusive approach of the devising process may appear at odds with some of the outcomes—*Audience* descends into a video sequence that refuses to distinguish between the group dynamic of civil rights marches and football hooligans on a rampage (p.437), while *Fight Night* concludes with the question of ‘whether their vote really matters’ (p.525).

Yet the introductions suggest that Ontroerend Goed’s intentions are compassionate: the challenges to the audience are described as finding out ‘how personal we could get without losing the theatrical footing’ (p.71) or wanting ‘to get under the audience’s skin, rather than forcing them to be defensive’ (p.396). It is this tension—between the positive intentions, and the apparently nihilistic message of their shows—that drives their dramatic impact. It also provides the impetus for the most challenging aspect of these texts: the inclusion of a putative audience experience.

While the audience’s response is an attempt to recognise the role of the audience in the creation of meaning, and certainly clarifies the intentions of the various scenes—something which the company place above more traditional text concerns like the script as written—it also undermines the reader’s ability to interpret much of the material. At times, it may be optimistic (the mentions of feeling comfortable in the early works may be wishful thinking, as no-one feels that comfortable blindfolded and handcuffed), or suggesting too easy a connection between the company’s aims and the audience’s understanding. By the time of *Fight Night*, the intention of the company has become more vague (they suggest that both *Fight Night* and *Audience* are provocative rather than didactic), and so the actions of the audience are described, yet the originality of the format, and the persistent shifts of perspective are dazzling and

confusing.

In some sense, this mimics the experience of an Ontroerend Goed event: technically brilliant, disturbing and intelligent, shifting between ideas and emotions relentlessly. Alongside the hints for other makers to recreate these performances, this could be the most powerful part of the book. Combined with its idiosyncratic yet coherent design, it allows the texts to stand out against mere publication of scripts.

However, it also highlights a problem: without previous knowledge of Ontroerend Goed's oeuvre, it becomes difficult to imagine how each text would have been staged, to gauge the real relationship between stage and auditorium or feel the emotional impact of what appear to be highly theoretical and formally experimental dramas. While the tone of the book captures the company's adventurous approach, its diverse influences and obvious enthusiasm for experiment (and a restless energy) it naturally loses the immediacy of the productions. Without having seen them in action, it is hard to translate the ideas from page to the stage of the imagination.

Nevertheless, it is an entertaining read that flickers through the company's history and struggles, and marks their journey from outsiders making one-to-one shows to the large-scale theatre of *Audience* and *Fight Night*. And, through the complexity, it offers an insight into the most consistently challenging theatre-makers of the past decade.

### **About the review author**

Gareth K Vile is the theatre editor of *The List*, a recent graduate from the University of Glasgow and a determined blogger. He threw a shoe at Ontroerend Goed, which is mentioned in the book, but more from a sense of engagement than outrage. He is known for his experimental approach to popular criticism.

## **Book review: *Embodied knowledge in ensemble performance*, by J. Murphy McCaleb**

MIEKO KANNO

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***Embodied knowledge in ensemble performance*, by J. Murphy McCaleb. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014; ISBN 9781472419613 (£50.00)**

This is the latest addition to the increasingly popular and sophisticated field of performance studies, under the auspices of the series by SEMPRE (the Society for Education, Music and Psychology Research). The dust jacket says the author of this book ‘explores the processes by which musicians interact with each other through performance’ and the book ‘provides an holistic approach to ensemble research in a manner accessible to performers, researchers and teachers’. Indeed McCaleb achieves these things, but I believe the book does more than that.

*Embodied knowledge in ensemble performance* originated as a PhD examining the role of physical gesture in small performance ensembles. Chapters are laid out to follow the development of the author’s thought and experience through undertaking this research, and trace a journey full of interesting turns, which is a pleasure to read.

Chapter 1, ‘A Question of Ensemble’, lays out four main research questions and their context. From the outset, McCaleb articulates clearly what each question addresses, how the questions relate to each other, which existing research contributes to the understanding of each question,

and perhaps most significantly, how he defines his role within the framework of this research. There is a healthy amount of 'I' throughout the book, pointing to his personal viewpoint being an important feature of its research methodology. Chapter 2, 'Beyond Communication', addresses the first of the four questions—'how do musicians interact and share information with each other while performing?' (p.19)—and is a critique of the existing literature on themes of verbal communication, gestural communication, and different types of leadership observed in ensemble communication, from a variety of sociological fields. Chapter 3, 'A Question of Content', follows on from Chapter 2 in examining varied means of communication in ensemble situations, and asks what is being communicated there.

A dramatic turn takes place at the end of Chapter 3, concluding:

I have found that research that applies sociological models of communication and leadership to ensemble interaction is flawed and incomplete. Whilst there is a wealth of possible models and theories that may be applied to ensembles, a fundamental understanding of the phenomenology of performance is absent. When compared with practical experience, the research available does not sufficiently account for the complexity inherent in musical practice (p.60).

In the following two chapters, 'The Process of Performance' and 'Reaction and Inter-reaction', McCaleb identifies critical elements that constitute the phenomenology of playing any musical instrument, develops a new understanding about the information content, and demonstrates how such information content is communicated in performance ensembles. He is at his best in these chapters, skillfully drawing on concepts from psychology, sociology, neurology



and philosophy, as well as music theory. The distinction he articulates between 'intention of action' and 'intentional action' in musical situations is well-judged; the multimodal nature of learning process supports the argument persuasively. The argument developed in Chapter 4 (on the phenomenology of solo performance) expands logically to ensemble situations in Chapter 5, where communication is considered as a developed stage of the elements observed in the phenomenology of solo performance.

At the end of Chapter 5, McCaleb proposes a new paradigm of 'inter-reaction' for understanding communication in musical ensembles, consisting of three abilities: *transmitting*, *inferring*, and *attuning*. The implication and potential of the new paradigm is further explored in Chapter 6, 'Reflecting on Musical Knowledge'. For me, the proposed paradigm of 'inter-reaction' bears a resemblance to the models proposed in literary theory (particularly the New Criticism, deconstructionism, and postmodernism) and practice theory in anthropology: time-dependent, iterative process between the object and subject generates unforeseen development and transformation in the products of enquiry. Such a process is often characterized as experimental in its nature, and considered a key methodological tool in many disciplines today.

Throughout the book, video clips from an accompanying DVD are used to problematise issues—McCaleb excels in drawing appropriate examples from real situations. It is his ability to refer to real situations of ensemble performance with sensibility, even when the argument is most abstract and remote from music, that makes this book most engaging.

While the book is exemplary in its scholarship and an invaluable addition to the literature on musical performance, this text is foremost a celebration of the

musical ‘information content’ as understood by musicians. By explaining the mechanisms through which musicians play alone and together, the book highlights the inimitable information content, the complexity and richness of which grows as people become more proficient as experienced musicians. Indeed, as mentioned earlier in the book, musicians hear the same things as others, but they hear differently—that is to say, information is formulated differently for musicians in order to act. The experience of playing, and getting better at playing, increases ways in which musicians gain access to this information. In describing the complexity via a paradigm of inter-reaction, the book sheds light on why playing an instrument is a fascinating activity, and why playing together with other musicians is even more so. The richness of information content revealed through the act of performance—embodied knowledge—may also explain other, global phenomena: why many young people want to become performers and get hooked, and why many others enjoy playing music regardless of their proficiency.

### **About the review author**

MIEKO KANNO is a violinist and Senior Research Fellow at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She specialises in the performance of contemporary music and publishes her research through performances and written articles. She commissions and gives concerts internationally in solo and small ensembles, and is a member of the Netherlands-based new music group *Insomnio*.

## **Book review: *Music and the making of modern science*, by Peter Pesic**

J. HARRY WHALLEY

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***Music and the making of modern science*, by Peter Pesic. London: MIT Press, 2014; Hardcover ISBN: 9780262027274 (£27.95), eBook ISBN: 9780262324373 (\$20.00)**

In his latest book Peter Pesic skillfully frames the interrelationship between music and science in the context of intellectual exploration. He leads the reader from the ancient historical connections of music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy (the Quadrivium) to concepts that shape our modern understanding of nature by Riemann and Holtz. Importantly, the investigations start from the musical or auditory concept and work towards the related scientific or mathematical idea and not, as is often the case in literature on these subjects, in the other direction. As a composer, my relationship with mathematics, physics and science in general is both explicit in the acoustic properties of the sounds that I want to hear produced, and implicit in the structural and conceptual background work (the pre-composition). I came to this book hoping to find bridges between these two interests.

Pesic carefully balances detailed explanation with swift chronological progression through each of the eighteen chapters (or episodes). Starting with 'Music and the Origins of Ancient Science' and recounting the tale of Pythagoras and the blacksmith, he cements the core concept of mathematical proportion as musical interval and musical interval as mathematical proportion. Even at this early stage

we are invited to consider not only deep, empirically verifiable connections between subjects, but also how music and science were understood both culturally and philosophically during the time period under consideration. Key intellectual developments in history, such as the discovery (or invention) of irrational numbers, had precursors in the arts. Pesic invites us never to underestimate the importance of the philosophical groundwork that music and the arts in general provide society—a concept that today’s politicians might well benefit from understanding.

The searchlight of Pesic’s enquiry rapidly shines on topics such as ‘Descartes’s Musical Apprenticeship’, ‘Mersenne’s Universal Harmony’, ‘Euler: from Sound to Light’ and ‘Helmholtz and the Sirens’. Within these slightly enigmatic headings lie pivotal points in our collective scientific history such as the motion of heavenly bodies, colour and optics, and quantum theory.

Previous to his current employment as Tutor and Musician-in-Residence at St. John’s College, Santa Fe, Pesic was a research assistant and associate at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center. His deep understanding of both disciplines is apparent in his clarity of writing. Fellow musician and physicist Douglas Hofstadter has also written extensively on understanding one discipline in terms of another and how he believes that analogy-making lies at the core of our cognition. In his foreword to *Gödel’s Proof*, Hofstadter (2001, p.xviii) writes:

Numbers are a universal medium for the embedding of patterns of any sort, and for that reason, statements seemingly about numbers alone can in fact encode statements about other universes of discourse.

This powerful idea is fundamental to how Pesic clearly shows, through example after example, how numbers are integrated into the fabric of our understanding of the natural world. Furthermore, by understanding relationships and patterns in the context of music we are able to build an intuitive relationship with them, one that can be used as another tool in the toolbox of scientific discovery. In turn these discoveries inform and shape our work within the creative arts. Andrei Riabovitchev (2013, p.36) in his introductory chapter to *Art Fundamentals* writes:

The Theory of (artistic) composition is built upon a scientific base. Mathematics enables us to calculate geometry and perspective; physics determines colour and light; biology and physiology drives our perception of colour and its effect on humans.

The highlight of the book for me was 'Planck's Cosmic Harmonium'. Max Planck's outstanding test compositions integrate certain tuning systems as an essential part of the composition. Through using these systems he plays with our expectations and our perceptions of sounds. Like an Escher print, Planck was able to, for example, slowly shift a tonic up five syntonic commas (about a semitone). As compositional material, *Planck's first test composition* acts as a reminder of how understanding the building blocks of our western harmonic system can be used as the fabric of a compositional process. Similar investigations in *How Equal Temperament Ruined Harmony (and Why You Should Care)* by Ross Duffin (2007) provide a further framework for this type of enquiry. There is fun and beauty in this type of 'what if' investigation. Surely this is as much a common thread between art and science as anything else.

To conclude this wonderful work Pesic summarises music and science as a hybrid enterprise. I would have liked to

have had a little more information on where he sees this enterprise going in the future and also how developments in technology may also have a bearing on this relationship. Above all, on reading this book I have been left with a lasting impression of the sophistication and depth of true interdisciplinary thinking.

The book is available in both hardback and eBook editions. Audio examples are available online to accompany the book, and the eBook edition has these examples as embedded multimedia. I would unreservedly recommend this book to anybody interested in the history of science and music. Educators, students and other interested parties in both disciplines can benefit from thinking of one field in terms of another and thus understand their own more fully.

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## About the review author

DR J. HARRY WHALLEY is a tutor at the Reid School of Music at the University of Edinburgh and Tutor Technician in Sound for Moving Image at the University of Creative Arts. His practice-led research focuses on relationships between music and music theory and wider subject areas. His PhD thesis investigated the concept of a tangled hierarchy as outlined in Douglas Hofstadter's 1979 book *Gödel, Escher, Bach* and how this might be mapped onto a music composition process. He is currently working on the use of music and dramaturgy as a means to highlight contemporary issues in bioethics.





## Book review: *Rancière and film*, edited by Paul Bowman

SAM BEATON

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Publication date: 15 December 2014

***Rancière and film*, edited by Paul Bowman. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013; ISBN: 9780748647354 (£24.99)**

It is to the credit and overall success of *Rancière and Film* that the essays featured in the book both transcend film as merely features on cinema screens, and investigate Jacques Rancière's writing in wider-ranged terms than simply his later writing on the topic.

Paul Bowman, who incidentally maintains the useful *ranciere.blogspot.co.uk* website alongside Michael O'Rourke, is tasked with editing the volume. Although a preface introducing the chapters would have been desirable, he nonetheless sets out many of the key themes that run through Rancière's work, paying particular attention to his relationship to disciplines and disciplinarity. Bowman's overview on this point is helpful when considering subsequent chapters that investigate Rancière's place in film, media and cultural studies<sup>1</sup>. There is also a lot to be said for how the book is structured: despite the standalone nature of contributions, the order in which they appear is deliberate. For example, Nico Baumbach's essay, 'What Does It Mean to Call Film an Art?' is conveniently placed in the second chapter, offering clear and concise models of categorising film as art which, in a book that deals heavily in aesthetics, is a helpful point of reference for subsequent passages.

In several cases, authors discuss a point that is developed further in succeeding chapters. For example, Richard Stamp's well-researched investigation into animator John Whitney cites 'Stanley Cavell's point when he criticizes (academic) film for "getting technical", the only relevant technical issues being those in front of the spectator's eyes' (p.165)<sup>2</sup>. Not only is this a neat, if slightly condensed understanding of Rancière's own prioritisation of spectatorship over medium-specificity in viewing film, it also provides a segue into James A. Steintrager's chapter where he employs *The Future of the Image* (2007) amongst other texts to elaborate on the Rancièrian rejection of 'the materialist determinism of dominant discourses about images and mediation' (p.169). By using sources written at a time where some claimed digital media (such as the internet) would bring around the end of film's dominance, Steintrager shows with great clarity why Rancière opposes film study that fetishises the medium over the image itself. The thought-provoking questions he posits on this point are succinct, identifying the flaws in this mediological discourse:

What happens when a film is shown on television? Even given the different apparatuses of diffusion, is a television camera significantly different from a movie camera? What happens when both television and cinema images are captured, processed or created digitally? (p.172)

Steintrager's summary of these problems goes to the heart of what is still a much-debated issue in the field of film studies. Rather than being in the author's words 'simplistic' (*ibid.*), however, what is contained in the chapter is a readable and reasoned argument that holds a great deal of value in this area, arguably more so than some of the more theory-heavy pieces that are occasionally rather difficult to follow.

The range and scope of the essays within *Rancière and Film* are too numerous to do justice in this review, including Rancière's own postface setting out his agreements and, where necessary, clarifications. Nevertheless, there are two further chapters deserving of attention here. As mentioned earlier, there is more to this book than just feature film: although features have been employed as examples throughout some pieces, animation and documentary (including 'false documentary' or docufiction) are also focused on. A decade on from Dina Iordanova's observation that documentary film is 'the least explored cinematic form' (2003, p.19), this development is to be welcomed. Rey Chow's 'After the Package of the Beast' sets out to explain the relationship of sound to the representation and authenticity of the documentary and—as alluded to previously—the 'false documentary' (in this case Resnais's *Hiroshima mon amour* (1959)) that copies elements of technique or style while being based in fiction. Valuable points are raised throughout, with the distinction of 'documentary's *claim to be*, and *assumed status as*, a truthful record, transcript or repository' (p.35, emphasis mine) perhaps being the most crucial in understanding non-fiction film as being an explanation of reality as opposed to pure objectivity. This avenue is subsequently developed by Bram Ieven's study of medium-specificity, modernism and the historical validity of the documentary. Particularly interesting is Rancière's idea of the fable, which is not solely within the realm of feature film: that 'documentary must draw on the same sources and methods as the feature film' (p.94) is an often-missed observation that demonstrates non-fiction's need for image and signs, as much as any other genre. Using director Chris Marker in his arguments, the essay is of great use to those who take an interest in the documentary form.

Although some elements could perhaps be clearer, and prefaced more successfully, the sheer amount of research, scope of contributions and argument put into *Rancière and*

*Film* make it an engaging and thought-provoking text for study into Rancière's writings and of film study. Researchers in the field will find much to praise as the scholars critically engage with the material and frame new angles for consideration, leading to a far more enriching experience than merely spelling out where they believe the answers lie. Informative and provoking, it is a welcome encouragement to explore film study further.

## Notes

1. Rancière himself alludes to this question in the postface: 'I have never in my life given a single lecture on film theory nor have I taught in a "film studies" department. Neither have I ever been a cinema critic' (p.185).

2. The first chapter in Cavell's *The World Viewed* takes up the question of 'what is art?' and the relation to cinema (pp.3–16), again underpinning the usefulness of Baumbach's categorisations.

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## About the review author

SAM BEATON is a PhD candidate in Czech Studies at the University of Glasgow, funded by the Madeleine Albright Scholarship. His research investigates the longitudinal documentaries of Helena Třeštková, paying close attention to changes in style and language brought on by the Czechoslovak transition from state socialism to liberal democracy. He has a wider interest in Central and East European feature film, and contributes reviews and opinion pieces to Czech online journal *Britské listy*.



## Book review: *The actor and the camera*, by Denis Lawson

MARK STEVENSON

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Publication date: 16 December 2014

***The actor and the camera*, by Denis Lawson. London: Nick Hern Books, 2014; ISBN 9781848423459 (£10.99)**

*The actor and the camera* is a guidebook for inexperienced actors looking to work in film and television. Denis Lawson is sharing his approach garnered from 40 years in the business. Trained, as I was, at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (now known as the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland), Lawson is keen to pass on the gems of his knowledge learned on the job rather than at drama school. As I now teach at the RCS, I am constantly looking for ways to explore the process of acting and explain to our students the differences in approach and requirements of theatre and screen. This work is a useful addition to the arsenal of books on screen acting already published.

Lawson is not interested in theory, but in practice. This is not a book on how to act, but assumes the reader has the basic (theatrical) skills and gives advice on how to convert these to the surprisingly different media of film and TV. Based on a lifetime's work as an actor for theatre, TV and film, as well as some experience behind the camera as a director, he seems ideally placed to provide these insights and tips.

Generally speaking the text follows the actor on their journey through the process of making a film or television

series—getting the part, preparing the script, what to expect on set, post-production responsibilities and so on. It is casually divided with subheadings at thumb-level making it relatively easy to navigate. There are occasional, but useful diversions from this chronological approach into, for example, the technology of the cameras worked with and modern technologies such as performance-capture.

Lawson's book is readable with an informal, personal style. It is an insider's view—no-nonsense, honest and revealing. For me, it had three main messages: the collaborative nature of filming; knowledge of the technicality of the process; and perhaps the most novel, the actor's relationship to the camera.

On collaboration, Lawson talks us through all the important personnel and relationships we need to cultivate in the filming process, establishing the actor's role within the larger whole.

He covers the technicality of shooting with clear explanations and tips, sometimes illustrated, to help demystify what may be an arcane process to many. For Lawson, knowledge is power: if you understand how something works, you have more creative control over your own craft.

While these first two areas have been extensively covered in other works (for example, Michael Caine's well-known *Acting in Film* or Mel Churcher's *Acting for Film*) it is this third aspect—relationship to camera—that provides the most important lesson for me. Lawson's (clearly successful) attitude is that his performance is 'a very private relationship between me and the lens'. He talks of the image you are creating on film or within the camera as the end-goal of your work. This is a seachange from theatre-based



practice, where relationship between actors, or actors and audience, is key, and is therefore a very useful concept for actors-in-training to understand in accommodating their style.

I believe actors inexperienced in camera work could benefit from this book. As Lawson suggests, while drama schools do usually now offer some form of on-camera training, the main thrust of drama-training in the UK is still theatre-based, despite the fact that most graduating drama students are more likely to be employed televisually than theatrically. Having the right skills for the different media of acting can only enhance employability.

As Lawson writes in his introduction, while an actor still has to make their own mistakes and learn their own lessons, he offers this book as a springboard to hopefully 'help you arrive at your filmic destination a few years earlier than you might have done' (p.ix).

It may have been useful to offer some exercises, like other works do on DVD (even at a similar price), or examples of Lawson's approach to text work, but this is not the stated aim of the book. He achieves what he sets out to do: give actors a clear understanding of the practicalities of filming and their place in it. *The actor and the camera* is an easily accessible and stimulating read offering insight, food for thought, and giving enough information to hopefully empower inexperienced actors to have confidence in building a working relationship with the camera.

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## About the review author

MARK STEVENSON gained a BA in Human Sciences from Oxford University before re-training as an actor at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. He worked for a number of years as an actor both in Scotland and further afield before returning to Scotland to teach. He currently teaches acting and theatre history at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He directs projects both within and without the Conservatoire. With his RCS colleague Katya Kamotskaia he has translated several plays and this year conducted research into the application of Butkevich's method of improvisation to rehearsal. Their most recent collaboration, based on this research, has recently won the 'Grand Prix' at the 34th International Student Festival at VGIK in Moscow.

## **Book Review: *The reflexive teaching artist: collected wisdom from the drama/theatre field*, by Kathryn Dawson and Daniel A. Kelin**

LAURA BISSELL

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Publication date: 15 December 2014

*The reflexive teaching artist: collected wisdom from the drama/theatre field*, by Kathryn Dawson and Daniel A. Kelin, II. Bristol: Intellect, 2014; ISBN 9781783202218 (£28.00)

*The Reflexive Teaching Artist: Collected Wisdom from the Drama/Theatre Field* by Kathryn Dawson and Daniel A. Kelin, II develops ideas of the role of the teaching artist explored previously by Eric Booth (who provides the foreword) in *The Music Teaching Artist's Bible* (2009) and also aims to further explicate the role of reflective practice for those working in the drama/theatre field. Referencing key theorists in the field of educational theory such as Phil Race (author of *The Lecturer's Toolkit*) and others, Dawson and Kelin offer an 'interactive text' with exercises and reflective tasks for the reader to apply to their own practice. In my role as Lecturer in Contemporary Performance Practice at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, I consider ideas around reflective practice/praxis and the development and design of assessment and so this text was highly relevant to my own teaching practice.

This study is building on previous models of reflective practice for artists working in the drama/theatre sector and provides an overview of many key ideas in this area such as: 'Reflection', 'Collected Wisdom', 'Quality', 'Artistic

Perspective', 'Assessment', and 'Praxis'. Within each of the sections there is a diverse and vibrant range of examples of practice from school, community, and professional theatre settings. Written in the first person or in the form of an interview, these case studies of reflexive practice offer refreshingly honest and varied examples of approaches from a diverse range of geographical and cultural positions. Amanda Hashagen offers reflections on devised performance in a gender-specific juvenile probation program in the early 'Collected Wisdom' section, while in 'Assessment' Ryan Conarro reflects on his experiences of creating a community documentary project in rural Alaska. Christina Marin shares her thoughts on how drama praxis and Latino leadership intersect in the final 'Praxis' section, which also offers a critique of current perceptions of what the term 'praxis' encompasses. The inclusion of multiple, concise reflections in each section allow for a multivocality of voices, while each sharing of experience or 'wisdom' emphasises the importance of reflective practice in accordance with the overall theme of the book.

One of the contributors, Roxanne Schroeder-Arce, identifies her practice as 'culturally responsive teaching' (p.60), and many of the artists and educators who share their practice reflect on their previous attempts to enforce their own ideologies and methodologies on to a group of students without understanding the context or the needs of the group. Several of these reflections stress the importance of listening to and responding to the specific group, and suggest that flexibility and a willingness to show vulnerability as a facilitator is vital in educational contexts. Many reflexive practitioners cited highlight their own learning and development throughout their teaching experiences. The role of reflective practice as a tool for developing and improving your artistic and educational practice is a key tenet of this study.

The authors write from the perspective of teaching artists themselves and the dual authorship allows for Dawson and Kelin's personal accounts and motivations to frame the book before opening the conversation to a wide range of perspectives. This co-authored introduction is in keeping with the study as a whole which collates numerous voices in the field. An action-research model is introduced at the outset of the text, then the idea of 'Collected Wisdom' of the title is realised through the varied contributions. The authors include guided reflective activities for the reader to carry out to relate their own practice to the ideas explored, although these appear most frequently at the beginning and end of the book as these sections focus mainly on the sharing of reflexive/reflective practice from artists and educators. The tasks are useful in attempting to demonstrate the 'praxis' that the authors are keen to fully explore, but these could have been interspersed throughout the volume more consistently in order for them to feel embedded within the text and for it to feel more 'interactive'.

I would highly recommend this text to teaching artists working in the drama/theatre field. The authors acknowledge their use of both 'drama' and 'theatre' in their title and justify their inclusion of both terms. While the definitions they provide for these concepts are quite specific, the examples of practice open up these terms to illustrate the commonalities in experiences of teaching in an artistic/educational context without making generalisations. The case studies are all recent and relevant, honest in tone, and genuinely reflexive, providing a refreshing perspective on the role of the contemporary artist/educator. The authors advocate Booth's philosophy behind the concept of the 'teaching artist': that the individual who creates the learning environment is important. The collated voices and experiences throughout *The Reflexive Teaching Artist* testify to the practitioners' own learning experiences encountered as educators and artists in the field. This study includes high-quality

reflection on the issues surrounding the role of the teaching artist in the drama/theatre sector, while reflective exercises offer practical ways to embed these ideas and concepts into an existing teaching practice.

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## About the review author

DR LAURA BISSELL is a Lecturer in Contemporary Performance Practice within the School of Drama at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Laura is a visiting lecturer on the MRes in Creative Practices programme at the Glasgow School of Art and has presented her research on contemporary practices at conferences nationally and internationally.