**Documenting Intimacy http://www.documentingintimacy.co.uk/**

Documenting Intimacy is a research initiative piloted by Dr. Brian Lobel and Dr Marisa Zanotti to explore documenting one-to-one performance from the perspective of artists. The Live Art Development Agency (LADA) was invited to be a commissioning and publishing partner on the project and the project is archived on the Documenting Intimacy website

Project Statement

We initiated a research process by asking a community of artists about their experiences with one-to-one performance and the pressures, both artistically and professionally, to document performance, and to document performance well. A number of questions arose which informed our initial conversations. These questions included:

Does documenting, in a traditional sense, interrupt the intimacy which one-to-one performance often promises as its unique quality? What innovative methods can be used to capture a multitude of audience experiences? Does anyone really care about documentation or what remains after the performance? Is it purely an economic or professional pressure which demands this documentation?  Can documentation be an integral piece of the performance-making process?

We put these question to four different artists chosen because of the specific propositions that their work invites in relation to documentation: Oreet Ashery, Tania El Khoury, Taylan Halici and Amy Rosa. Without asking the contributors to create documentation as a direct answer to the questions, we instead asked them simply to create a document of a singular piece of their one-to-one practice. The openness of this prompt, allowed them to take the idea of documentation in whatever way felt most natural and exciting for them as artists.

The documentation created through these commissions, we hope, will be both useful to their practice and to ours, as researchers and artists who care about artistic methodologies and how these affect audience reception. We noticed the continuing emergence of some common themes and questions, amongst which are:

1. The relationship/tension/correlation between documentation as a performance or artistic strategy, and documentation as a commercial strategy or necessity, for example, the promotion of a work or artist, fundings bids, etc. What strategies can be put into place to allow a document to have many functions?
2. The difficulty with capturing the experiences of multiple audience members who, because of the dialogical and relational nature of much one-to-one performance, may each experience a very different piece. If documentation is – as some consider it – an attempt to capture the performance in the service of sharing the work with people not present, how are all of these experiences captured? Is there such a thing as an ‘average’ or typical version of a one-to-one?
3. How about documentation that does not try to ‘capture’ a performance? How do the documents created by artists become spaces to extend performances and interactions, to develop the discourse in the work?
4. The legacy of a one-to-one: is it most impactful on the audience member, the performer or to those who access the documentation in an archive or online?  Can these legacies speak to each other in a way which is meaningful and dialogical?
5. What are the possibilities in one-to-one performance for exploring the relationship between the documenter and the performer and audience?
6. It has never been so easy to access a variety of technologies for documenting performance, nor easier to find platforms to stage the resulting documentation. However, just because documentation is being made, doesn’t necessarily mean it is being made accessible. What is the role of format, design and site in documentation?

Brian Lobel and Marisa Zanotti