Troubling spaces: The politics of New community-based guerrilla performance in Australia

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TROUBLING SPACES

The Politics of "New" Community-Based Guerrilla Performance in Australia

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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ORIGINALITY STATEMENT

'I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, or substantial proportions of material which have been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at UNSW or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by others, with whom I have worked at UNSW or elsewhere, is explicitly acknowledged in the thesis. I also declare that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work, except to the extent that assistance from others in the project's design and conception or in style, presentation and linguistic expression is acknowledged.'

Signed …………………………………………...............

Date ………………………………………….............

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Dr Rosemary Galvin. Our many debates and conversations change me and my work for the better every time. You have supported, loved, challenged and sustained me. Your academic insights shape my thoughts and the branches of our ideas intertwine together into a single, living (red) tree. This thesis is only here because you believed in me.

List of Publications Arising From This Research

FROM CHAPTERS 4 and 6

Rebecca Caines, "Haunted Voices in Everyday Spaces: The Community Based Hip-Hop of Australian "Guerrilla" Artist Morganics," in Community Performance: A Reader, ed. Petra Kuppers and Gwen Robertson (London and NY: Routledge, 2007)

FROM CHAPTER 5

Rebecca Caines, "Intimate Interactions: Spatializing a Postmodern Sociology of Theatre," in Ethnicity and Identity: Global Performance ed. Ravi Chaturvedi and Brian Singleton (New Delhi: Rawat, 2005)

FROM CHAPTER 4

Rebecca Caines, "Christian Boltanski: Representation and the Performance of Memory," *Afterimage* 32, no. 1 (2004)

FROM CHAPTERS 1, 2, 3 and 5

Rebecca Caines, "Guerillas in Our Midst: Contemporary Australian Guerilla Performance and the Poststructural Community," *Australasian Drama Studies*, no. 42 (2003)

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the ways in which community, site and politics meet inside the troubling spaces of twenty-first century performance. I came to this research from a background as a young community performance-maker, working for over ten years in a small town called Bellingen and surrounding areas, located along the North Coast of NSW, Australia. With young people and other artists from these communities, I facilitated a number of large multimedia performance events, and helped to establish new community facilities and resources in conjunction with local organisations, festivals and regional arts networks.[1] I saw community-based artwork as vital to engaging with the world and challenging social problems at the point where they intersected with everyday life. The people I worked with believed community artwork could do more than just challenge the inequitable social structures, stereotypes or government structures which constrained us. It could help us to examine how we saw ourselves and how we connected with others who were different from us.

In the process of my performance work and as I began to study at university, I saw that communities both liberated and constrained people. Many who engaged with the productions I facilitated saw their geographical or ethnicity-based community as repressive impediments to their development, yet they were still gaining entertainment, support and connection through many other types of community interaction. Many new types of social networks were emerging around me and some even questioned key notions in community performance such as "commonality" and "unity". While I remained committed to community performance, I began to believe new understandings of community were required to negotiate the many ways people form and resist these intimate networks of social interrelation. I needed new theoretical frameworks in order to understand how to negotiate the ethical difficulties of uneven power relations inside communities and to understand how community art could encompass and support difference.

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[1] I began the not-for-profit arts collective Greymantle Productions Inc. in 1993 with other young people in Bellingen. We worked in conjunction with local and regional community organisations. We were funded through various regional, state and national funding structures. The events were produced in the period 1993-2003 in Bellingen and in Sydney, and involved artists and participants from regional areas including Bellingen, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey, Forster-Tuncurry, Newcastle and Sydney. Greymantle also worked in conjunction with local schools, TAFE Colleges, unemployment organisations and youth, arts and skills festivals to create youth centres, youth-run cafes and galleries and a series of workshop and training programs in Bellingen and surrounding areas in order to help combat serious social problems amongst 12-25 year olds. These included regional isolation, drug use, high suicide rates and a lack of economic and social resources.

As I made performance and as I studied contemporary art, it became obvious that there is also a troubling connection between community and ideas of site. As an artist, I was told at a young age by inflexible funding bodies that my work was tied to my geographical community. Fighting against the oppressive idea that my geographical location was the sum total of my identity I also had to acknowledge that "site"–both in terms of physical structures and environments and conceptual and experiential understandings of space and location–was still vitally important. My work and my research began to circle around ideas of "site-specificity" and it became clear that site-specific, community-based performance offered unique opportunities for rediscovering and challenging the ways that both space and community shape our lives. I realised I needed to understand how other artists worked with site and community in Australia and internationally. I needed to understand how community-based, site-specific artists addressed pressing problems of widespread social injustice and a growing Australian and international climate of fear and division, without reproducing oppressive systems of power. I then began to search for new theoretical frameworks for ethical and political site-specific community work in order to apply them both in my performance work and my academic career. This quest forms the core of this research project.

Important Terms

I use the term "community-based" to describe a type of creative social practice in which the lives of people directly inform the subject matter and in which collaborative means of creation predominate. While the guerrilla artists discussed in the thesis are a specific sub-group of community performance, who deliberately disturb notions of "collectivity" and "communality", there is no denying that the process of this guerrilla work is community-based. In other words, it is based on dialogue, multi-authored and made by "small groups of people determining their own agenda",[2] who are foregrounding their intimate "community" networks.[3]

The term "community-based" has recently become common in US community arts scholarship. I find it very useful as it encompasses what eminent US community performance scholar Jan Cohen-Cruz calls community's "hyphenated relationship

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[2] Jan Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, (New Brunswick, NJ.: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 6. See also Jan Cohen-Cruz, "A Hyphenated Field: Community-Based Theatre in the USA," *New Theatre Quarterly,* 16, no. 4 (2000).
[3] For further definitions of community, see Chapter Three.

with other human endeavours, frequently education (transmission of cultural values and knowledge) or politics (such as local organizing)".[4] The term describes those artworks which are made in "hyphenated" collaboration between artists, non-artists and local organisations. I use the related term "participants" to describe those people who work in equal partnerships with trained professional artists/facilitators to create this collaborative artwork. Like Susan Haedicke and Tobin Nellhaus, I believe that community-based facilitators work with both their performers *and* their audiences as "participants" and "introduce participatory performance techniques that blur the boundary between actor and spectator in order to maximise the participants' agency".[5] As Petra Kuppers and Gwen Robertson suggest, in community performance, "artists lose their specialist status, and become companions in a collaborative search for an expressive relation to the world".[6] In Australia, many prefer the term "community cultural development" to describe the activities of community-based performers.[7] I shall discuss this field in more detail in Chapter One. For now it is sufficient to say that I find the term "community-based performance" more specific than "community cultural development", as it locates "performance" as the specific type of artistic and social activity and then ties this form to the intimate social community networks and processes that are used to create it. Unlike "community cultural development", the term does not make any claims as to the social goals of the art projects, nor does it limit the study of the works to this specific tradition in Australia.

The thesis examines a particular type of community-based "performance". Like many in the field, I prefer the term "performance" to terms such as "theatre", to describe the activities of these community-based artists. "Performance" refers not only to all types of live art, but also describes what Cohen-Cruz calls "a larger category of heightened behaviour intended for public viewing".[8] In other words "performance" covers the spectrum of live human presentation and representation, from all forms of ritual, ecstatic celebration, spectacle, or protest through to displays of specific systems of hierarchical artistic training and convention such as those found in the disciplines of

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[4] Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, 5.
[5] Susan C. Haedicke and Tobin Nellhaus, eds*, Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance*, Theater-Theory/Text/Performance (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 3.
[6] Petra Kuppers and Gwen Robertson, eds, *Community Performance: A Reader* (London and NY: Routledge, 2007), 2.
[7] See Arlene Goldbard for a useful international history of the term "cultural development". Goldbard draws links between community practices in many countries. For Goldbard, community is always recreated through cultural and creative development. See Arlene Goldbard and Don Adams, *New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development* (Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2006), 16.
[8] Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, 1.

dance, theatre or music. Performance studies scholar Richard Schechner states, "Any action that is framed, presented, highlighted or displayed is performance",[9] and thus suggests that even social acts such as "the enactment of social, professional, gender, race and class roles"[10] can usefully be understood as performance. Community-based guerrilla artists are located on this spectrum "between ritual and art".[11] Community-based guerrilla artists and participants create structures of meaning by making performances which are both creative acts and forms of social identification and interaction. The case studies in this thesis include a three hour, multi-locational and multidisciplinary performance event, two pieces of community hip-hop, examined in both live and recorded formats, and the lead-up, performance events and aftermath of an international festival of the arts.

The thesis also explores a type of "political" performance. Chapter 2 will focus on rediscovering and re-examining definitions of "politics" in performance. For now it suffices to say that all art is political, in that it either reaffirms or challenges the status quo. Rather than fearing a dislocation of the notion in the twenty-first century, in which "everything can be seen as political, so nothing is political,"[12] I see opportunity and hope in the many different ways performance work can be political. Artists continue to respond internationally to the ubiquity and diversity of oppressive power relations with impressive vigour and flexibility, and as a result the field of political performance remains, for me, the most innovative. I see the specific politics of community-based "guerrilla" art as the manoeuvring, sustaining or establishing of relations of power, rather than any engagement with other types of political activity such as oppositional strategies of protest or explorations of specific identity categories such as gender, ethnicity etc. Using the theories of Foucaultian and other post-structuralist scholars, I will examine the ways that these artists challenge the ubiquitous power relations which shape bodies, identities and daily practices at the most intimate of levels by creating and challenging community and by recreating the spaces we live in, imagine and are dominated by.

The spectacle of the Nuremburg rallies in 1939, or the triumphant presidential parades during the Rwanda massacres of 1994, remain ingrained in cultural consciousness to remind us that making "political" performance events does not

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[9] Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, 81-104.
[12] Peter Schumann, artistic director of Bread and Puppet Theatre (New York and Vermont), quoted in Susan Green and Greg Guma, eds, *Bread and Puppet: Stories of Struggle and Faith from Central America*,(Burlington, Vt.: Green Valley Film and Art, 1985), 14.

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predicate any commitment to social equality. The "political" artists I examine in this thesis, however, are all working from basic principles of "social justice", where the "idea of social justice is founded on the principles of equal worth of all; entitlement of all to income, shelter and other basic necessities; opportunities and life chances for all; and reducing/ eliminating unjust inequalities".[13] These artists aim for structural change to society to ensure that basic human rights are available to all people regardless of background. Like theatre scholar Rustom Bharucha I see this type of artwork as "an allegiance to people whose oppression cries out to be enacted on stage".[14] These works, as Alan Read suggests, "stimulate debate and pleasure; provoke reaction; provide resources for living; engage emotions and intellect and confound expectations".[15]

One key aim of this thesis is to find or rediscover terminologies to help uncover and explore a particular type of performance which I have seen in Australia and which I believe offers new insights into performance politics. This particular brand of late twentieth and early twenty-first century political, site-specific, community-based performance seeks to increase social justice through promoting and enabling difference, and pursues its aims through transient and subversive means. I name this type of performance "new" guerrilla performance, as I believe it exhibits "guerrilla features", familiar to us from a history of "guerrilla" activism which stretches across spheres as diverse as the military, theatre, TV, marketing, activism and the visual arts. The history and specific characteristics of twenty-first century guerrilla performance are outlined in Chapter One. I refer to these performance works as a new type of "guerrilla" activity in order to draw attention to the ways they engage with what I define as the broader "guerrilla" agenda: radical social change, challenges to social networks and the interrogation and the infiltration of public space.

I argue that these guerrilla performance artists utilise "post-structured" ideas of language and culture.[16] I use the term "post-structured" throughout this thesis to denote philosophical concepts and cultural phenomenon that are essentially contested and always under reconstruction.[17] In particular, I use this term to refer to

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[13] "Social Justice: Unpacking the Equalities Dimension", Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (2003), http://www.scvo.org.uk/Equalities/resource_base/ (accessed August 19, 2005).
[14] Rustom Bharucha, *Rehearsals of Revolution:The Political Theater of Bengal* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), xvii.
[15] Alan Read, *Theatre and Everyday Life: An Ethics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), 60.
[16] The term was coined by Erik MacDonald, *Theater at the Margins: Text and the Post-Structured Stage*, Theater-Theory/Text/Performance (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993). 182
[17] Marvin Carlson uses the terms "post-structured" and "essentially contested" to refer to performance practice, . Carlson, "What Is Performance?" 1. Carlson takes this term "essentially contested" from Mary

contemporary ideas of "community". I argue that post-structured notions like "community" have multiple, contrasting definitions and have been both overused and heavily critiqued, whilst remaining ubiquitous in contemporary society. "Post-structured" communities are thus unstable and cannot easily be framed within established structures and hierarchies. They are not unstructured, but rather their structure is constantly being both reaffirmed and challenged. This idea will be further discussed in Chapter Three. This thesis will argue that guerrilla artists utilise the "post-structured" nature of contemporary community to help facilitate social justice.

The term "post-structured" also invokes useful post-structuralist and postmodern theories that I utilise throughout this thesis.[18] Like theatre scholar Erik MacDonald, however, I prefer the term 'post-structured' to related terms such as "postmodern" or "post-structuralist".[19] MacDonald coined the term "post-structured" as he believes that the field of post-structuralism "loses much of its radical potential when it becomes an ism". He sees a connection between "post-structuring" and the critical school of thought "post-structuralism" which came to prominence in the 1970s and 80s, but prefers his term as it does not "follow a party-line ("French" or otherwise)" and signifies an "uneasiness with terminology" and a desire to keep language fluid, highlighting "the fact that that no unifying core of meanings or hierarchy of signs effects post-structuralism".[20]

"New" Community-Based Performance Scholarship

In the last ten to fifteen years emergent theories and practices in the field of community performance have begun to be explored and have been documented in new community-based online archives.[21] There has also been a welcome return to international community-based performance in academia, evidenced in a host of new

S Strine, Beverly Whitaker Long, and Mary Frances Hopkins, "Research in Interpretation and Performance Studies: Trends, Issues, Priorities," in *Speech Communication: Essays to Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Speech Communication Association*, ed. Gerald M. Phillips and Julia T. Wood (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990). He takes the term post-structured from Erik MacDonald. Carlson's work is further discussed in Chapter Three.

[18] For a useful discussion of the terms "postmodern" and "post-structuralist", see Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London; New York: Routledge, 1989).

[19] Erik MacDonald, *Theater at the Margins: Text and the Post-Structured Stage*, Theater-Theory/Text/Performance (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993). 182

[20] Ibid.

[21] For Australia see *Community Cultural Development Homepage,* Community Arts Network (South Australia) (2006), http://www.ccd.net/ (accessed January 12, 2006). For the US see *Community Arts Network Homepage,* Art in the Public Interest (2006), http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/ (accessed January 20, 2006). For Europe see *The Community Art Lab (Cal) Homepage,* Peace Treaty of Utrecht (2007), http://vredevanutrecht.com/community-art/ (accessed July 15, 2007).

books, conferences, websites and forums.[22] These opportunities for new research have multiplied as community performance makers have taken up academic positions and encouraged new research programs. Recent compilations of theory and practice, as well as special journal editions, books and conferences investigating notions such as "citizen art",[23] "civility",[24] and "community performance",[25] all contribute to this academic development, and this thesis aims to continue this ongoing project.

Community-based practitioners are understandably wary of academics who theorise their work in ways that are inaccessible or irrelevant to the communities they serve. With a few notable exceptions, much community-based research has thus come either from those involved in some way with the artwork being studied, or from those interested in understanding the working methodologies, funding structures and welfare applications of community art, rather than being conducted by those interested in new philosophical debates over community, culture and politics.[26]

While I certainly see the need for continuing to document the practices and insights of artists and participants, I strongly believe that community-based performance needs more international critical scholarship and academic partnership.[27] New academic frameworks for understanding community-based performance, such as those proposed in this thesis, can clarify its strengths and weaknesses and help to document and analyse a field of arts which is prone to being transient and difficult to properly archive. I see this sort of new community scholarship, which sits between ethnographic or participant research and critical philosophies of culture, as potentially

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[22] These include Kuppers and Robertson, eds, *Community Performance: A Reader*, Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, Haedicke and Nellhaus, eds, *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance* and Eugene Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives* (London and NY: Routledge, 2001).

[23] Proceedings of the *Citizen Artists: Theatre, Culture and Community - International Federation of Theatre Research Conference*, 2005 (The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, University of Maryland, Washington DC).

[24] Proceedings of the *Civic Centre: Reclaiming the Right to Performance Conference*, April 9 - April 16, 2003 (Roehampton University) and Alan Read, "On Civility," *Performance Research* 9, no. 4 (2004).

[25] Proceedings of the *Community/Performance Conference*, June 4 - June 6, 2004 (Rhode Island: Bryant University).

[26] For an excellent new summary of critical scholarship in community performance, see Kuppers and Robertson, eds, *Community Performance: A Reader*. For Australian examples see Gay Hawkins and Australia Council Community Arts Program., *From Nimbin to Mardi Gras: Constructing Community Arts*, *Australian Cultural Studies* (St Leonards, NSW.: Allen & Unwin, 1993), Ian Maxwell and Fiona Winning, "Towards a Critical Practice: A Model for Talking and Writing About Community Artworks," *Artwork Magazine*, no. 49 (2001), http://www.cansa.on.net/mainpage.html (accessed August 3, 2007).

[27] This desire for new theoretical work in the field of community-based performance is echoed by scholars in the US, UK, India and Australia. See Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, 6 and Rustom Bharucha, *The Politics of Cultural Practice: Thinking through Theatre in an Age of Globalization* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000), 7.

very useful, so long as it does not develop in isolation from artists. It can provide a much-needed bridge between the fields of theory and practice, allowing new philosophical insights into the structures of human identity and ethics to illuminate community artwork. Conversely, it can allow the insights of localised community-based artists and their participants to help inform philosophies of culture and politics. For this reason there are two sections to this thesis. Section One contains a sustained theoretical discussion, illuminated through concrete examples from performance practice. Section Two contains three case studies which show in detail how different artists work with the models of guerrilla tactics, politics, community and site which were explored in Section One.

Research Methodology

In response to what I see as the needs of an emerging field of community-based performance scholarship, I locate research methodology at the intersection of critical theory, popular culture and artistic practice. I use a combination of three main research techniques: the assessment of popular vocabularies and descriptions of popular practices and networks, drawn from online and local print sources; ethnographic tools such as formal and informal interviews with artists and participants and subsequent utilisation of autobiographical material; and the application of cultural theory to the development of critical frameworks for new guerrilla performance and guerrilla politics, community and site-specificity. Much of this latter theoretical work comes from the disciplines of philosophy, sociology, cultural studies and performance studies. I also utilise spatiality theory from the disciplines of architecture, geography and visual art theory. These critical perspectives aid in disentangling some of the complex ethical issues inherent in site-specific, community-based art. They also provide a focus and a new vocabulary for the politics of community-based guerrilla performance in Australia. An important aspect of this project has been to help counter the locally specific nature of community arts writing by contributing extensive new bibliographic references to the growing international bibliography of community-based theory in the field of community performance scholarship.

Writing about Performance

I have also chosen to embed short sections of first person, descriptive writing into the three thesis case studies located in Section Two of this thesis. My critical work is thus combined with first-person descriptive "walks" through my fragmented memories and experiences of the performance "events". Unfortunately there is not enough room for a full ethnographic inquiry of any of the events I describe. I do, however, draw on a number of ethnographic tools including performative writing and autoethnography in these sections. I use these pieces of writing to add phenomenological data to my analysis of the events, to evoke my experience of the performance in order to bring it to life for the reader who may be unfamiliar with these works, and to expose my place in the research project as both audience member and researcher. These sections are thus examples of what anthropologist Clifford Geertz famously calls "thick description", in that this writing includes descriptions of local context and local interpretations alongside description of the events.[28] Geertz suggests that it is vital to admit that doing "ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of "construct a reading of") a manuscript—foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior."[29] Rather than any attempt to scientifically and "objectively" catalogue a phenomenon using external frameworks, instead I describe the minutiae of my experience of these events; as well as describing my observation of the local details and contexts which made the performances meaningful to their communities and audiences.

These "walks" are composed using creative writing techniques which I draw from the fields of "performative writing" and "autoethnography". Della Pollack usefully describes the process of what has become known as "performative writing". Pollack calls this type of writing, "an important, dangerous and difficult intervention into routine representations of social/performative life".[30] Performative writing acknowledges that writing has its own potentially oppressive qualities and is never a neutral process. It attempts creative techniques that deliberately expose the hidden agendas, contexts and processes which inform any piece of writing and highlight the

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[28] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*; Selected Essays (New York,: Basic Books, 1973), 10.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Della Pollock, "Performing Writing," in *The Ends of Performance*, ed. Peggy Phelan and Jill Lane (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 73.

writer's own process, and indeed their identity itself, in order to allow critique and "perform" the writers's engagement with the world.

Pollack suggests six main features of this style of ethnographic writing. Firstly, this writing evokes rather than describes an experience. Secondly, it is symbolic and metaphoric, whilst also celebrating the differences and slippages between symbols and the thing they aim to represent. Thirdly, it is subjective and also encourages a sense of subjectivity as multiple and changeable. Fourthly, it is nervous, crossing many disciplines and unable to settle into a clear, linear course. Fifthly, it is citational, repeating and copying whilst showing up the slips and changes that occur in language as things repeat and develop. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, performative writing is writing that "does" something. In the case of my writing, I aim to use these features of performative writing to evoke my physical, emotional and mental experiences of the performance events, thus performing my interaction with these complex political works. I use these methods to slip between memories and my own mental processes, between then and now and poetically describe moments that became fractured symbols for my understanding of these artists.

Whilst just a small part of a wider critical theoretical project, these performative excerpts also form a type of autoethnographical response. Reed-Danahay names autoethnography, a "genre of writing that involves personalized accounts in which authors draw on their own lived experiences, connect the personal to the culture and place the self and others within a social context."[31] I incorporate autobiographical material in my description of my experience of the performances in order to explore how these performances affected me as both audience member and cultural researcher. These sections thus also explore my own identity and my difference from others. As Ellis clarifies, autoethnography produces portraits of the self which can aid in exploring the relationship between identity and difference. Autoethnography is "reflexive or narrative ethnography where authors focus on a group or culture and use their own experiences in the culture reflexively to bend back on themselves and look more deeply at interactions between self and other".[32] The consequence in my use of this type of writing is that I expose and perform my own agendas, my multiple selves, my own inadequacies and my own political struggles; at the same time as I explore the work of guerrilla artists and the communities they serve. I argue that this

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[31] Deborah Reed-Danahay, *Auto/Ethnography : Rewriting the Self and the Social, Explorations in Anthropology* (Oxford ; New York: Berg, 1997), 9.
[32] Carolyn Ellis, *The Ethnographic I : A Methodological Novel About Autoethnography*, Ethnographic Alternatives Book Series ; V. 13 (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004), 37.

approach is an ethical way to approach writing about community performance. This is because it is an open-ended methodology that does not attempt to represent the works studied, but rather to perform one experience of them in order to open that experience to inquiry. I argue that it is particularly appropriate to find these creative, self-reflexive ways to describe community-based guerrilla performance, as this work specifically aims to encourage audiences, communities and artists to question self and identity.

Case Study Material

The three case studies located in Section Two of this thesis were chosen to highlight different types of community-based, guerrilla performance. The case study material begins with guerrilla activity inside an established community-based company. It then moves on to explore emerging forms of guerrilla performance inside "traditional" ethnic and geographical communities and concludes by exploring the impact of community-based guerrilla performance on institutionalised art structures. The first case study examines the 1997 performance event *TrackWork* by established, community-based, Western Sydney company Urban Theatre Projects (UTP). This case study shows how this performance recreated and remapped a city through promoting difference. The second case study is of two community hip-hop works by Australian hip-hop and theatre artist Morganics and young Indigenous community artists. This case study explores emerging guerrilla artists who use new forms of performance to challenge entrenched stereotypical "traditional" images of a community by evoking and disturbing the spatial dimensions of site/concept/place. I then move on to examine Peter Sellars's problematic direction of the Adelaide Festival of the Arts in Australia in 2002. This final case study explores the social and artistic impact of site-specific, community-based performance work inside institutionalised and commercialised art fields. It shows how new guerrilla art not only disrupts the boundaries between community-based art and high art forms to allow community participants access to new avenues of social criticism, dialogue and debate, but also encourages the formation of localised networks of contact and communication. This final chapter also describes how guerrilla forms problematise traditional measurements of political or creative "success" and "failure" by promoting experimental artistic activity.

Thesis Structure

The first section in this thesis contains four chapters that outline new sustained theoretical positions that illuminate the politics of community-based guerrilla performance. Chapter One begins by historicising the idea of "guerrilla" performance by means of an examination of guerrilla art forms, conceptual frameworks and techniques from the 1960s to the present. Using playful, recent examples from art theory and popular culture, this chapter draws out the main characteristics of "new" twenty-first century guerrilla work. Chapter Two then argues that a new type of "guerrilla politics" emerges in what I refer to as "differential" guerrilla performance. I define differential to mean "created by and focussed on promoting difference". Using Foucaultian and feminist theory, I argue that rather than just opposing governments or institutions, this guerrilla politics works by disturbing relations of discursive power. This is a politics of intimacy, differentiation and the everyday.

Chapters Three and Four contribute new critical theory to the developing field of community-based performance by describing two emerging theoretical frameworks for community-based guerrilla politics. The first of these, discussed in Chapter Three, is the critical re-contextualisation of the notion of "community". I argue that many different community formations exist in twenty-first century society. Using post-structuralist theory, I argue for a "post-structured" definition of community which accepts that every version of community is incomplete and potentially oppressive and that it is always in the process of unravelling. This thesis argues that guerrilla artists, who accept communities as multiple and transient "post-structured" social networks can ethically support, create and foreground temporary, self-reflexive alliances to preserve difference without threat.

The second theoretical frame, discussed in Chapter Four, is a critical engagement with the concept of space and "site-specificity". By means of an examination of spatial theory and art practice, including the work of Lefebvrean scholars and theorists of place and of site-specific art, this thesis shows space to be simultaneously made up of dominating physical structures, conceptual strategies and images and experienced daily activity. The thesis renames these spatial dimensions "site", "conceptual space" and "place" and examines how each spatial dimension is both disciplinary and radical. By examining the interactive and relational qualities of site-specific art, this thesis proposes a vision of site/concept/place as open to

manipulation, destabilisation and change through the activity of new community-based, site-specific guerrilla artists.

Section Two of the thesis contains three case studies which I use to examine guerrilla politics in practice, applying the theoretical frameworks proposed in the first half of the thesis to new community-based practice in Australia. .Chapter Five examines UTP and the performance event *TrackWork*. Chapter 6 explores the work of Morganics on two community hip-hop projects "Down River" and "The Block". Chapter Seven discusses Peter Sellars and his work on the 2002 Adelaide Festival of the Arts. In conclusion I argue that more research needs to be done to further explore fascinating, troubling intersections of theoretical and practical understandings of site, community and politics, in order to better understand the power that these subversive creative acts have in promoting social justice in contemporary society.

SECTION ONE

THEORETICAL INVESTIGATIONS

CHAPTER ONE

Guerrillas in Our Midst: Examining "New" Guerrilla Performance Forms

There has been very little theoretical or historical work published which examines international trends across the field of late twentieth and early twenty-first century site-specific, community-based, political performance.[33] This may be because the field is so diverse and difficult to define, because theory in this area is necessarily locally specific, and because the artworks themselves are often deliberately transient and thus particularly difficult to document and archive. Nevertheless, I argue that this is a distinct field of practice and practitioners across the world have a lot to offer in terms of new political insights and new forms of political manoeuvring. This chapter places this type of performance into a theoretical and historical context. Its focus is works which utilise "guerrilla" tactics techniques and practices and which thus could be considered "new" guerrilla performance events. I argue these events are particularly interesting and useful for a study of emergent performance politics.

In order to examine the "guerrilla" features of this work, I begin by defining what constitutes "guerrilla" activity and then move on to historicise the "guerrilla" features of both cultural activism and related contemporary performance practices since the 1960s. Guerrilla characteristics drawn from the military and from the field of guerrilla theatre are shown to include site-specificity, street pedagogy, manipulation and civil disobedience, localisation and adaptability. I then move on to explore more recent manifestations of guerrilla art occurring in the field of "public art". These art works are shown to focus on new guerrilla tactics of social justice oriented and community-based problem solving. Part Two then examines usages of the term "guerrilla" in popular and online sources in order to draw out further characteristics of contemporary guerrilla action. The dominant qualities of 21st century guerrilla

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[33] Many publications on 21st century community-based, political performance focus on particular national trends, or concentrate on established political traditions, rather than focussing on the wider utilisation of site-specificity *and* community-based practices. For example see Arlene Goldbard and Don Adams, *New Creative Community : The Art of Cultural Development* (Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2006), Jan Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, Rutgers Series on the Public Life of the Arts (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005) and Jan Cohen-Cruz, ed., *Radical Street Performance: An International Anthology* (London; New York: Routledge, 1998). For an exception to this, see Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002).

practices are shown to be: camouflage and mobility; challenges to ideas of authorship, decentralisation and multi-disciplinarity.

The final section of this chapter suggests that sub-categories of new guerrilla performance are useful, due to the fact that the field is so broad. One category which has particularly interesting political applications in the twenty-first century could be called "differential" guerrilla performance. I define this category as encompassing those artists who are community-based and who promote and sustain difference through new visions of site and community. The final addendum on the field of "Community Cultural Development" places differential guerrilla art into an Australian context. I argue that differential guerrilla performance offers a new set of techniques for creating political performance and conclude that this field requires further analysis in order to understand how this performance politics operates.

PART ONE

HISTORICISING GUERRILLA PERFORMANCE

Finding a Place to Begin

Placing political, site-specific, community-based performance into any sort of historical context is particularly complicated. This type of art draws on traditions of "popular", "alternative" and "street theatre", "folk art", "community theatre", "community development and welfare" and the emerging genres of "public" or "citizen" art, all which involve space and community as central elements. Artists working with site, community and politics may also utilise vocabularies, strategies and techniques from the field that is called "contemporary performance" in Australia, "performance" in the US and "live art" in the UK and Europe.[34] Contemporary performance has its own contested history, which merges with that of other disciplines such as ethnography, visual and performance art, installation art, intercultural practices and multimedia art. Contemporary "performance" can in turn be linked to the historical avant-garde movements of the early twentieth-century and/or with the life/art experiments and radical politics of the 1960s and '70s, as both of

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[34] I define contemporary performance as performance works where "traditional" theatrical notions of aesthetics and form such as subject, narrative, character and setting are not as important as building new relationships between artist and audience in order to place all types of social norms and conventions under pressure. See Elinor Fuchs, *The Death of Character: Perspectives on Theater after Modernism, Drama and Performance Studies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).

these periods experimented with changing understandings of art and its relationship to society. With all of these interlinking histories, a detailed genealogy of community-based, site-specific political work is difficult and perhaps ultimately unhelpful. The field's diversity and multi-disciplinarity are part of its strength. I have chosen to narrow in on this field by focussing on one set of practices which can be identified as "new" guerrilla performance.

Defining "Guerrilla" Performance

The word *guerrilla* is Spanish, a mutation of the word *guerre*, meaning: "Small wars, small armies." Believed to have been first used in the Napoleonic wars to describe the Spanish army's tactics in dealing with the invading French, it has come to be associated with the "underdog" soldier, fighting with limited resources, mobility, camouflage and surprise. The two best-known military texts on the subject are Mao Tse-Tung's 1937 *Guerrilla Warfare,*[35] which draws on military knowledge from Sun Tze's *Art of War* and other philosophical tracts, to produce a practical handbook for guerrilla warfare techniques and tactics; and Che Guevara's 1961 treatise also titled *Guerrilla Warfare* which outlines the ways in which "small armies" can work a colonised countryside to oppose oppression and claim power.[36] Guevara states: "The guerrilla fighter needs full help from the people of the area. From the very beginning of the struggle he has the intention of destroying an unjust order and therefore an intention, more or less hidden, to replace the old with something new. "[37] These well-known, early descriptions of guerrilla warfare help to pin down a definition for "guerrilla" performance that includes a focus on radical social change.

Military groups considered guerrilla in the military texts on the subject include a dizzying array of armies. These include Guevara's Cuban revolutionaries of the 1950s and the tactics of Mao's armies in the 1940s in China, resistance movements in occupied Europe in World Wars I and II, and in Apartheid South Africa from 1948-1994. The term is also applied to the tactics employed in twentieth-century civil wars in the Americas, Africa and Asia, as well as recent sectarian conflicts in India, Pakistan and the Middle East. It is used in reference to the approach of armies such as the Viet Cong during the Vietnam war, the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka, the East

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[35] Zedong Mao, "Guerrilla Warfare", in *Guerrilla Warfare*, ed. Captain B.H. Liddell Hart (London and NY: Cassell Praeger, 1962).
[36] Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1961), 43.
[37] Ibid.

Timorese resistance against Indonesian occupation and the Zapista's conflicts with the governments of Mexico and the US.[38] It has also been used to describe the military tactics of Aboriginal warrior Pemulway, who led resistance to British colonists in Australia in the latter part of the 18th Century.[39] To this list we could probably add most twentieth-century conflicts restoring colonial nations back into postcolonial native control. Included here are obviously some of the most bloody but also the most romanticised victories and battles in modern warfare, historical "triumphs" of the small or less resourced guerrillas over the "dictator", the "invader", the "imperialist", the "aggressor", the "capitalist", the "colonialist", the racist "oppressor". Of course the guerrilla is not always a romantic figure. "Guerrilla" has also become increasingly analogous with "terrorist", disrupting heroic nomenclature of freedom fighters with the taint of the fanatic, the destroyer of innocent human life, the unknown, the terrifying outside of reason.[40] What is common to all of these military usages of the term is the idea that the guerrilla soldier is a localised resistance fighter and it is in this context that the term is applied to artistic practices such as theatre and performance.[41]

Examining Guerrilla Theatre

Examining guerrilla *theatre* can help to develop a historical context for guerrilla *performance* as the two fields share many common characteristics. It also allows one to acknowledge some of the problems that affect artists working in these fields. The term guerrilla theatre is attributed to Peter Berg,[42] playwright, author and some time member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe (SFMT) in reference to the work of

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[38] See Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla: A Historical and Critical Study*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1976), Walter Laqueur, ed., *The Guerrilla Reader: A Historical Anthology* (NY: New American Library, 1977), Kenneth W. Grundy, ed., *Guerrilla Struggle in Africa: An Analysis and Preview* (NY: Grossman, 1971) and Myron J. Smith, *The Secret Wars: A Guide to Sources in English*, 3 vols (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 1980).

[39] A. J. Grassby and Marji Hill, *Six Australian Battlefields : The Black Resistance to Invasion and the White Struggle against Colonial Oppression* (North Ryde, N.S.W.: Angus & Robertson, 1988).

[40] See Richard Clutterbuck, *Guerrillas and Terrorists* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977) and Robert Moss, *Urban Guerrillas: The New Face of Political Violence* (London: Temple Smith, 1972).

[41] The term "guerrilla" is often used to describe or critique the stereotype a certain type of political action as aggressive, "macho" behaviour by men See Alan Filewod, "Regiments of the Theatre: Reenactment in Theatre and Military Culture," *Theatre Research in Canada 25*, no. 1 & 2 (2006). This excludes tactics that have been stereotypically attributed to women, such as reconciliation, dialogue and compassion and ties politics to violence and aggression. The stereotypical image of a guerrilla fighter can thus be limited to angry young men. For this reason, many artists may not wish to name themselves "guerrilla" artists. I find the term useful, however, as it highlights the dangers associated with political work by alluding to military contexts which are historically both inspiring and liberationary *and* disconcertingly manipulative, one-sided and violent. Additionally, the term guerrilla may have masculine overtones, but it has also been successfully utilised by many feminist groups who wish to reclaim political territories from which they have been excluded. For this reason, I believe it is a useful trope for political action which subverts dominant paradigms. See Guerrilla Girls, *The Guerrilla Girls' Bedside Companion to the History of Western Art* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998).

[42] In conversation with Ron Davis. Cited in Michael William Doyle, "Staging the Revolution: Guerrilla Theater as a Countercultural Practice, 1965-1968," in *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s*, ed. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle (NY: Routledge, 2002), 17.

artistic director Ron Davis and the SFMT. Davis produced large-scale works which were performed in the San Francisco Bay area as well as on national and international tours. These works were based on commedia dell'arte and storytelling traditions. Performed in public places, they were issue-based and oppositional, dealing with topics such as the involvement of US troops in the Vietnam War, workers' rights, and institutionalised racism and sexism. Davis wrote prolifically about guerrilla theatre in the 1960s, and '70s and remains one of the main sources of the image of the guerrilla artist.[43] His work can further help to clarify the ways guerrilla performance can function in society.

It is, however, difficult to confirm the SFMT as the point of origin for the phrase 'guerrilla theatre', as during the late 1960s it became an extremely popular term across the world. *Comite d'action revolutionnaire*, while part of the famous occupation of the Parisian Odeon theatre in 1968, summed up the mood at the time when they issued a manifesto which read: "The only theatre is guerrilla theatre, REVOLUTIONARY ART IS MADE IN THE STREETS."[44] The term "guerrilla theatre" or a rough translation also turns up in the manifestos of artists in Ireland and in many Latin American countries during this time.[45] For all these artists guerrilla art was political and integrated with the public it served. For many artists working in the 1960s and 70s, art was part of a revolutionary project and guerrilla art was just one of many art forms that were co-opted in the struggle to radically reform government and society.[46]

"Guerrilla theatre" is a term which also appears in a variety of contexts. Since the 1880s when guerrilla warfare became recognized as a distinct military practice, so too, did subversive theatre inside military contexts. This type of military work is also called "guerrilla theatre". For example, Stephen Chifunyise notes a trend of theatre in

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[43] See R. G. Davis, "Guerrilla Theatre: 1965," *Tulane Drama Review* 10, no. 4 (1966), R. G. Davis, "Guerrilla Theatre: 1967," *Avatar*, August 18, 1967, R. G. Davis, *The San Francisco Mime Troupe: The First Ten Years*, (Palo Alto, California: Ramparts Press, 1975). In a reprint of an article from the 1975 book, published in 1987, Davis argued that US radical theatres were failing to live up to the promise of those groups operating in the 1960s, and that, "a few tiny protest theatre groups are acceptable as left culture-when they are so illiterate, unintelligent, hysterical, and, at best, naively agitprop." R. G. Davis, "Rethinking Guerrilla Theatre, 1971,1987," in *American Media and Mass Culture: A Left Perspective*, ed. Donald Lazere (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 7
[44] R. L. Farmer, "Fernando Arrabal's Guerrilla Theatre," *Yale French Studies*, no. 46 (1971): 154
[45] For Irish examples, John Arden and Margaretta D'Arcy, *Awkward Corners: Essays, Papers, Fragments* (London: Methuen, 1988) and Margaretta D'Arcy, *Loose Theatre: Memoirs of a Guerrilla Theatre Activist* (Victoria, Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2006). For Latin American examples Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, TCG ed. (NY: Theatre Communications Group, 1985).
[46] See Cohen-Cruz's eloquent description of the revolutionary spirit of the times in Jan Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, Rutgers Series on the Public Life of the Arts (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 11.

guerrilla camps and liberation struggles from 1890 in Zimbabwe. These practices included

> theatre that had its roots in the liberation struggle in the guerrilla
> camps in Mozambique and Zambia and inside the country's liberated
> zones. This is the theatre used by combatants to articulate the
> People's role and aspirations in waging a war of liberation.[47]

In this case the guerrilla theatre was enacted by soldiers and refugees as a form of protest and challenge. Other examples of military guerrilla theatre were documented during the Vietnam War.[48] This type of military-based guerrilla theatre is, however, not particularly well-known outside the nations it appeared in. The most common references to theatre named as "guerrilla" circle around the period of the 1960s and 1970s in the UK, Europe and the US, where the term was popular and attracted critical attention and debate between key political performance figures. These debates help to historicise guerrilla practice and highlight the common features and problems of guerrilla theatre, which also appear in contemporary guerrilla performance.

Guerrilla Theatre Characteristics

Street Pedagogy

Ron Davis named guerrilla theatre as militant, charged with anger, on a quest for social justice, and a solution to the unjust internal and foreign policies of the US government. His model was pedagogical and radical. In 1965, he claimed that "the motives, aspirations, and practice of U.S. theatre must be readapted," in order to "teach, direct toward change and be an example of change".[49] I argue that radical pedagogy is one of the defining characteristics of guerrilla performance.

Davis was famously committed to the idea that theatre must engage with social and political issues in a grounded and practical way.

> For those who like their art pure of social issues, I must say— F***
> ***U buddy, theatre IS a social entity. It can dull the minds of the
> citizens, it can wipe out guilt, it can teach all to accept the Great

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[47] Stephen Chifunyise, "Trends in Zimbabwean Theatre since 1890," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 16, no. 2, Special Issue: Performance and Popular Culture (1990): 276.
[48] See "Vietnam," *The Drama Review: TDR,* 13, no. 4, Politics and Performance (1969): 146-153
[49] Davis, "Guerrilla Theatre: 1965," 130.

Society and the Amaaaaarican way of life (just like the movies, Ma) or it can look to changing that society. . . and that's political.[50]

He hoped both to educate and entertain, as he believed that it is the obligation of guerrilla theatre to gather audiences and "excite them into being provoked and confronted, and into returning!"[51] In Davis' 1965 article he speaks about a SFMT model for low-budget participatory theatre, gathered into a handbook for the guerrilla theatre maker. The program was very particular:

> Find a low-rent space to be used for rehearsals and performances: loft, garage, abandoned church, or barn. If the director sleeps in, it's cheaper. Start with people, not actors. Find performers who have something unique and exciting about them when they are on stage. For material use anything to fit the performers. Allow the performers to squeeze the material to their own shape. Liberate the larger personalities and spirits.[52]

Michael William Doyle sums up the Davis formula. He sees the main staples of this program to be: a) a commitment to performing in new spaces, such as public parks, b) topical plays suffused with radical content, and enlivened by biting satire and repartee improvised to suit the occasion and c) funded primarily by free-will offerings; no admission fees would be charged.[53] Doyle maps the powerful influence Davis and SFMT had on the counter-cultural practice of the time: "Largely through the Mime Troupe's efforts, widely disseminated by means of national tours, the staging of improvisatory, didactic skits in public spaces became a staple of antiwar, women's liberation, and other social movement protests."[54] Australian theatres such as the New Theatre participated in performances in the late 1960s which were similar in format to Davis's guerrilla theatre and which embraced radical pedagogy from a Marxist perspective. [55]

Contemporary guerrilla performance can incorporate a wider range of artistic forms than the theatrical models suggested by Davis. This thesis, for example, refers to dance, music, installation, hip-hop and cultural performances of debate which all share aims of increasing social justice. I argue that the history of guerrilla theatre techniques, such as those employed by SMFT, can been identified as a forerunner of

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[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Doyle, "Staging the Revolution: Guerrilla Theater as a Countercultural Practice, 1965-1968," 16.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Frank Enright, "The Illustrious Life of Sydney's New Theatre," *Green Left Weekly*, no. 138 (1994), http://www.greenleft.org.au/1994/138/10003 (accessed April 12, 2003).

this modern practice, as many new guerrilla works engage with the central concern of Davis and his contemporaries. They all focus on radical pedagogy performed in public spaces, although, the methods they employ differ greatly, as will be shown in detail in Section Two of this thesis.

Manipulation

Richard Schechner, saw guerrilla theatre slightly differently from Davis, and in his article *Guerrilla Theatre: May 1970*, he named "guerrilla theatre as 'symbolic action'". He states that it is called "guerrilla" because "some of its structures have been adapted from guerrilla warfare—simplicity of tactics, mobility, small bands, pressure at the points of greatest weakness, surprise".[56] Schechner cites Davis' work but insisted that the work he was involved in was different, and more advanced. He links this 1970 guerrilla work to the symbolism and spontaneity of the "Happenings" and surprise tactics of "Yippies" such as Abbie Hoffman :

> The guerrilla theatre we are now involved in relates back to Davis' ideas—but also, and more strongly, to the things the Provos did in the mid-sixties, both here and abroad. And the things men like Abbie Hoffman …and, later, Jerry Rubin did. Like dropping dollar bills on the floor of the Stock Exchange; dumping a truck of soot and garbage on the brass of Con Ed; showing up at HUAC hearings dressed as a revolutionary war patriot. To make a swift action or image that gets to the heart of an issue or a feeling – to make people realize where they are living, and under what situation. It is primitive because many Americans still do not know (or believe) what is going down here.[57]

Often Schechner and his co-artists were engaged in an exercise of "trickery", attempting to create violent re-enactments or imagined situations that looked real, or unjust situations that did not appear to be staged, to prompt observers into action..The pieces he referred to were short, public and didactic. They then leafleted the observers in order to spread information, contacts and advice for further action. Marc Estrin describes this kind of work when he describes hypothetical situations in which scenarios are set up which manipulate an audience. One scenario he suggests is a classroom situation in which a speech by a radical to the class is interrupted and forced to stop by a staged government "censor", the situation being used to promote a discussion about free speech. Another scenario is to "invade" a conference by first promoting discussion about a radical issue and then staging a "fake" violent

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[56] Richard Schechner, "Guerrilla Theatre: May 1970". *The Drama Review: TDR,* 14, no. 3 (1970): 163.
[57] Ibid.

oppression of this discussion by "officials", in order to promote debate about free speech and political inaction. In his last example he describes a landscape painter who is positioned daily in a public park in front of a war monument; and whose work increasingly depicts the disturbing realities behind the scenes valorised in the memorial. [58]

In a letter to the editor of *TDR*, Martin Trueblood expressed concerns about the ethics of such strategies, stating:"Marc Estrin's guerrilla theatre pieces 'From the American Playground' seem in many ways an extreme corruption of radical thought, an introduction of manipulative techniques into a theatre which presumably is working against manipulation of human bodies and spirits." He concluded: "If duping school children-in their own interests, of course-is the means necessary to Mr. Estrin's ends, we're in trouble."[59] In defence of his guerrilla tactics, Estrin then responded:

> The practice of guerrilla theatre has been severely criticized by many who feel it is unethical to trick people, to misrepresent, to engage under false premises. Certainly there is manipulation involved in the Convention or the Classroom Piece. My position is simply this: although it is dangerous ground to tread, I feel we, as would-be movers of the status quo, must come up with a workable ethics of manipulation. At this point, American sensibilities are just too deadened to respond to objective presentation of 'the facts'. We must become artists in awakening, and this may require manipulation.[60]

Sean Scalmer notes many examples of Australian individuals and artistic groups inspired by international events in the late 1960s who also created what he calls public "education" through "popular dissent". One example described protester Nadine Jensen, 21, who attended a ceremonial march of 1st Battalion troops in Sydney, early June 1966. Abruptly she drenched herself in mix of kerosene, turpentine and red paint, pushed through the crowd and embraced Lt-Col Preece, the commanding officer in a long embrace. "She later claim[ed] that the paint [was] symbolic of the shedding of blood in Vietnam and urge[d] other Australians to develop moral as well as physical courage."[61] Scalmer notes that for many observers, Jensen appeared to be covered in blood and many believed they were under

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[58] Marc Estrin, "Four Guerrilla Theatre Pieces: From the American Playground," *The Drama Review: TDR*,13, no. 4, Politics and Performance (1969):72.

[59] Martin Trueblood and Marc Estrin, "Letter from Martin Trueblood," *The Drama Review: TDR,* 14, no. 1 (1969): 189.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Sean Scalmer, *Dissent Events : Protest, the Media and the Political Gimmick in Australia* (Kensington, N.S.W.: University of New South Wales Press, 2002), 31.

attack.[62] This could be considered unethical as it led to manipulation of the audience and unnecessary emotional trauma, particularly for those families already affected by the war.

Phillip Auslander calls the 1960s- '70s a particularly problematic period, marked by a "growing tendency to see political reality as theatre: 'spectacle managers' from all points on the ideological spectrum staged rallies and demonstrations; 'guerrilla theatre' events were designed in many cases to be indistinguishable from spontaneous behaviour". He goes on to note that, to an important extent, "the ideological battle became a battle for control of the means of persuasion.[63] Like Auslander, I question the political efficacy of these forms of protest as "[t]hose radicals who believed that the point of the upheaval was to substitute "peace scenarios" for repressive ones […] failed to see that to adopt the concept "scenario" is to construct the new ideology on the cornerstone of the old".[64]

Symbolic action that manipulates society is no different from the manipulation and oppression by government and media sources that was the initial point of protest.[65] Auslander's questions highlight the fact that there are a number of inherent benefits and problems when artists engage in "guerrilla" manipulation and what he himself calls techniques of "persuasion". I believe that manipulation, such as the examples noted by Estrin, both enable new guerrilla performance *and* cause problems in community relations. This argument is further supported by the case studies in Part Two of this thesis.

Radical Political Platforms

Two books on guerrilla theatre came out in the US during the period in which the work of Davis, Estrin and Schechner's was published. These remain the only thorough attempts to categorise or analyse this particular strand of US theatre history. The first, *Guerrilla Street Theater,* was edited by Henry Lesnick. In this anthology, Lesnick groups together university-based radical arts troupes across

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[62] Ibid.

[63] Philip Auslander, From *Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism* (London and NY: Routledge, 1997), 62.

[64] Ibid., 63.

[65] Auslander's criticisms of guerrilla art have been critiqued as "apolitical" by scholars such as Schechner and Bell, in letters to the editor of *The Drama Review.* In his own letter in *TDR*, Auslander reaffirmed that he found modern guerrilla theatre "naïve". While I disagree with Auslander's position that there are no important examples of Western contemporary, oppositional guerrilla performance, I agree that there are postmodern alternatives to this type of political performance that are important to explore. See Philip Auslander, "Auslander Wins Last Word," *The Drama Review: TDR,* 33, 2 (1989): 15-18.

America, such as those mentioned by Schechner, as well as theatre groups affiliated with workers' unions, such as El Teatro Campesino (California), and activist professional theatre groups such as the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and Bread and Puppet Theatre (New York and Vermont). He also highlights the work of feminist theatre groups including San Francisco Women's Street Theater and the Liberation News Service/WITCH. [66]

Lesnick links these companies as guerrilla theatre through their commitment to left-wing, often Marxist transient street art and to a "theater of statement".[67]. He describes guerrilla theatre as "performed in the streets, in the schools, in shopping centers, outside of plant gates – anywhere people gather".In his view guerrilla theatre groups consciously function as instruments of propaganda of the left/new left movement, and are a "response to the continuing decay of life in modern America". He tracks how

> a number of them meet regularly and become fairly well defined in terms of membership, political perspective and style, but most are more ephemeral; members get together to prepare a play which advances a specific struggle or helps build for a demonstration, they perform it for a while, and then disband to attend to other political tasks until the need for new material and performances brings them together again. [68]

Alan Filewod and David Watt call these types of international guerrilla theatres "worker student alliances […] with a romantic tendency towards Marxist analysis".[69] Lesnick's definition of guerrilla theatre seems far removed from contemporary site-specific, community-based practices as these have a range of radical platforms and do not always associate with Marxist social goals His work however, highlights the guerrilla strategies of manipulation, new pedagogy and manoeuvring for radical social change. [70] These are strategies that differentiate guerrilla theatre from other, less political street theatre forms.

The second book released on this topic was *Guerrilla Theater: Scenarios for a Revolution* by John Weisman, and it was also published in New York in 1973. In this anthology of observations, letters and play scripts, Weisman celebrates what he calls

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[66] See Henry Lesnick, ed., *Guerilla Street Theater* (NY: Avon, 1973).
[67] Ibid., 11.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Alan D. Filewod and David Watt, *Workers' Playtime: Theatre and the Labour Movement since 1970* (Sydney: Currency Press, 2001), 17.
[70] The New Theatre's production of *The Candy Store*, which was performed down the Glen Davis shale mine in NSW in 1952, could be seen as an excellent Australian example of early guerrilla theatre. The production, based on a story of a strike in a US department store was performed at a junction of five shafts on an improvised stage by the light of the miners' hardhat lamps. See Frank Enright, "The Illustrious Life of Sydney's New Theatre," *Green Left Weekly*, no. 138 (1994), http://www.greenleft.org.au/1994/138/10003 (accessed April 12, 2003).

the "growth of a new minority theatre in America […] where disenfranchised whites, reds, blacks, and *bronces* have discovered that theatre is a tool that not only entertains, but that can also be used to raise their culture's consciousness". He goes on to state that they "see that it can reflect, interpret, convey, record and sometimes even lead a revolution". He also sees a link between radical education and exposure of social issues with the transient foregrounding of culture and community. He states it "can be called guerrilla, radical, alternative, street or people's theatre […] in a sense it is all of these: guerrilla because it exists to do running battles with the establishment, then retreat into the invisibility of the community"[71] Weisman's definitions could certainly refer to contemporary community-based activism that shares a similar commitment to diversity and transience.

Weisman is however, wary of providing a single definition for this work, as these companies are, "by design, in a constant state of flux […] their movement is what keeps them close to the people and the revolution". He cites a large number of these theatres. "Three years ago", he asserts, "there were no more than fifty guerrilla companies in America [...] now there are closer to ten times that number". He concludes with the claim that "as the revolutionary movement in this country grows stronger, the need for and impact of radical people's theatre in ghettos, barrios, prisons, even in schools, will grow stronger along with it".[72] Weisman's methodology for studying guerrilla theatre seems preferable to Lesnick's. Rather than pinning down the politics of guerrilla theatre companies as "Marxist" etc, he celebrates their diversity and changeable nature. He also utilises the voices of a wide range of artists and the communities in his framing of the work. His work highlights the breadth of guerrilla practice in the US in the 1970s, the precursor to many twenty-first century community-based, site-specific performance practices.

Localisation

Guerrilla theatre allows artists to put social inequality under pressure by the immediacy of performance. There are, however, problems if this work is brought in to a community rather than responding to the immediate locality, or if local forms of protest are subjugated by artists importing "new" forms of work. Brazilian artist Augusto Boal was thirty years into his own political artistic practice by the time Richard Schechner's article on guerrilla theatre was published in 1970. Boal had his own views on what he saw as arrogance on the part of Schechner and his co-artists.

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[71] John Weisman, *Guerrilla Theater, Scenarios for Revolution* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1973), 2.
[72] Ibid., 5.

In 1970, Schechner produced a special issue of *TDR* on South American theatre. Boal responded to this issue with a letter critiquing what he perceived as US imperialism around the "new" form, "Guerrilla theatre". He cited these "guerrilla" activities as nothing new in theatre, linking them to Latin American work dating back to the 1940s and 50s.[73] He also attacked the ethnocentrism of American performance artists, criticising the ways American radicals claimed guerrilla theatre as a "new" practice without engaging with the local practices that were already occurring.

> Richard Schechner [on tour in Latin America] told us about his experiences with "guerrilla theatre" that he had done in Grand Central Station and other places in New York. He was very happy and excited because we showed a great deal of interest in his experiences. He thought he was revolutionizing the Brazilian theatre just by giving us the idea of doing theatre in the streets. He was so excited that he didn't even notice that many actors and directors who were there listening to him had been engaged since 1956 in all kinds of theatre in the streets: theatre during political meetings, theatre as political meetings, theatre for peasants in the open air, theatre in factories, etc. Even though we told him our experiences, he preferred to ignore them so that he could feel better as an innovator.[74]

Boal's response to Schechner's article highlights two important points about radical, transient street practice. The first problem is the dangerous problems of colonialism in radical political work. Cultural borders are difficult to negotiate and artists working with communities run the risk of either misunderstanding, and therefore underutilising the local art forms and strategies for resistance, or of "reinventing the wheel" by not being aware of the ways other cultures engage with protest. Contemporary guerrilla artists, however, have sophisticated means of communicating and networking with their global counterparts and many of the "new" community-based guerrilla artists in this thesis are making fascinating connections with each other across large distances, despite language and cultural differences and economic barriers.[75] Localisation has also become a vital guerrilla strategy, as artists/facilitators work carefully and collaboratively with participants to produce new forms of community-based protest that develop from the specificities of local life and history.

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[73] For examples of Latin American guerrilla theatre predating the 1970s, see Augusto Boal, "Invisible Theatre: Liege, Belgium, 1978," *The Drama Review: TDR,* 34 (1990) and Jonathan M. Gray, "Operation Mallfinger: Invisible Theatre in a Popular Context," *The Drama Review: TDR,* 37 (1993).
[74] Augusto Boal and Richard Schechner, "Letter from Augusto Boal," *The Drama Review: TDR,* 15, no. 1 (1970): 152.
[75] For example, see international links discussed in *Urban Theatre Projects Homepage* (2006), http://www.urbantheatre.com.au/ (accessed December 12, 2006), Morganics, "Morganics Homepage," (2006), http://www.morganics.info/ (accessed December 20, 2006) and, "Peter Sellars," *Department of World Arts and Cultures Faculty* University of California (LA) (2007), http://www.wac.ucla.edu/ (accessed July 12, 2007).

The second problem Boal's letter highlights is one of temporality. Boal makes it clear that guerrilla practice predates the period of US history to which it is often attributed . It was by no means "new" in the 1960s. It would be incorrect to claim guerrilla strategies as recent inventions of any particular artistic group or movement. While the term "guerrilla" gave artists such as Davis and Schechner a rallying, militant term for their US art work and protest, their idea of guerrilla theatre could be applied to international street and site-specific theatre practices across history. These could include, for instance, the subversive street performers of the European medieval carnival [76] or modern-day street performance in India, Bangladesh, China and Japan.[77] Guerrilla theatre can be observed in the examples of agitational propaganda of the 1917 Russian Revolution and subsequent Communist governments, as well as in its anti-authoritarian descendents.[78] It could also include Latin American trends in the 1950s or European, US and Australian workers' theatre movements of the 1930s.[79] There are also parallels between guerrilla theatre and the psycho-geographical practices of the Situationists in Paris in the 1960s-'70s, amongst many other examples. Wherever site, politics and theatre have engaged, guerrilla theatre may be observed and it is unhelpful to intimate that the practice is limited to any one period or nation. In naming community-based, site-specific performance as "new" guerrilla art I am deliberately being provocative. Firstly, as site-specific political art has occurred throughout history and probably predates many other forms of theatre and performance, it is hardly new. Secondly the artists I discuss in this thesis may not refer to their own work in these terms, although they would admit they use strategies to get around authorisation and have a political agenda. [80] I believe, however, that this is a useful provocation, as it foregrounds the political aspects of these performance forms and helps to historicise and draw connections between political arts practices.

Making Do

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[76] Bakhtin's well-known reading of the carnivalesque shows that society is in fact dependent upon such moments of excess, reversal and subversion. See M. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT. Press, 1965).

[77] Christina Nygren documents over fifty thousand such companies working in India, Bangladesh, Japan and China in the 1990s. See Christina Nygren, "A Breathing Space Where Anything Can Happen...: Travelling Theatre in Japan, China, India and Bangladesh in a Contextual Perspective," in *Ethnicity and Identity: Global Performance*, ed. Ravi Chaturvedi and Brian Singleton (New Delhi: Rawat, 2005).

[78] See Jan Cohen-Cruz, ed., *Radical Street Performance: An International Anthology* (London and NY: Routledge, 1998). For recent examples of agit-prop, see Benjamin Shepard and Ronald Hayduk, eds, *From Act-up to the W.T.O.: Urban Protest and Community Building in the Era of Globalization* (London: Verso, 2002).

[79] See Filewod and Watt, *Workers' Playtime: Theatre and the Labour Movement since 1970*.

[80] Morganics has been referred to as a guerrilla activist on many occasions. See Ted Nielsen, "Hip Hop: The Culture and the Activist Toolkit," *RealTime*, no. 55 (2003), http://www.realtimearts.net/rt55/nielson.html (accessed October 4, 2004).

Tracking international "guerrilla theatre" through the '80s and '90s and onwards is more difficult. There has been very little critical analysis of the contemporary forms of guerrilla art. Leslie Hill and Helen Paris' *Guerrilla Performance and Multimedia*,[81] which was published in 2001, seemed at first glance to offer a frame for "guerrilla" performance works from the 1980s onwards. It is based on interviews with thirty-five internationally respected contemporary performance artists who utilise multimedia in their work, including Rachel Rosenthal, Johannes Birringer, Martha Wilson, Bobby Baker, and Stelarc. In title and in the scope of artists interviewed, the book seemed to offer a possibility for a critical understanding of what happens when contemporary performance techniques and questions meet the politics and spatial sophistication of "the guerrilla".

Instead of surveying the field or engaging in critical analysis of contemporary guerrilla forms, as the title suggests, the book is structured as a handbook for emerging multimedia arts practitioners. The term "guerrilla" stands in for "alternative", or "unconventional" or "manipulative". This book does, however, highlight the qualities of resourcefulness and creative adaptability which remain important features of contemporary community-based, site-specific performance. The only interview question by the authors to artists that specifically mentioned guerrilla activity is, "Can fundraising be a creative or guerrilla act?" Artist Johannes Birringer replied:

> All independent art is disseminated in creative ways, using alternative channels and venues, and often one has to invent (conceptually) scenarios that are fictional or unconventional and daring, say if you want to get permission and funding from a city to perform a site-specific work in a public space. I am not sure I would call it a guerrilla strategy, but sometimes the fictions are elaborate and obscure, at other times you may use a 'public service' language to raise funding.[82]

Hill herself named all performance work as a guerrilla strategy, because "performance isn't a straightforward, defined or well funded art form, so even in the middle of a generously supported residency or commission it is possible to feel as though you are asking a big favour if you want to use the fax machine"[83] Hill and Paris's limited examination highlights the fact that modern guerrilla artists are adaptable, flexible and used to "making do" with limited resources.

"Disobedient" Forms of Protest

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[81] Leslie Hill and Helen Paris, eds, *Guerilla Performance and Multimedia* (London: Continuum, 2001).
[82] Ibid., 15.
[83] Ibid., 34.

The term "guerrilla performance" crops up sporadically in academic journals, theatre reviews and artist talks, usually in reference to either the transient nature of the artists' work, such as the case in demonstrations of graffiti and anonymous street art, or in reference to the works' public nature or its subversive or radical tendencies.[84] The term is also used to describe the work of companies like Critical Art Ensemble (CAE) and the Guerrilla Girls, or the public interactive website jamming techniques of online groups such as Electronic Disturbance Theatre who have all referred to their own work in these terms and who provide sophisticated new approaches to ideas of social protest.[85]

These usages of the term "guerrilla performance" are usually quite specific and refer to a single company or artist, rather than illuminating trends across a field. Those who use the term do, however, share an understanding of new guerrilla forms as engaging in new forms of civil disobedience. In the case of the companies mentioned above, authors cite examples of illegal activities performed live, anonymous media manipulation and the jamming of communication devices and online systems.

New York based CAE have produced multiple openmedia web books on the topic of guerrilla practice. They theorise their own guerrilla or nomadic practice as a tactical, contemporary form of social contestation.[86] In a *TDR* interview with Rebecca Schneider and John Mackenzie, CAE state that they "make a distinction between the political and the pedagogical". They claim that "some activities, though they are performed, are not performative [...] these are activities that directly intervene in the distribution of power on a macro level".[87] Using the theory of Michel de Certeau, CAE define these activities as micro tactics of disobedience and contrast their own work to

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[84] See Jeff Ferrell, "The World Politics of Wall Painting," *Social Justice: San Francisco*, 20, no. 3-4 (1993) and "Our Methods and Goals in the U.B. Graffiti Scandal," *Not Bored!*, no. 11 (1987), http://www.notbored.org/methods1.html (accessed August 11, 2001).
[85] The Guerrilla Girls stage protests challenging the masculine dominated professional art world. They do so anonymously, appearing in gorilla masks for press appearances. They produce posters and other public artworks that explosively expose structural inadequacies and they do so using insider information gathered through their own experiences as part of the professional art community. For examples see *Guerrilla Girls Homepage* (2002), http://www.guerrillagirls.com/ (accessed January 15, 2002). Electronic Disturbance Theatre link together computers from users all over the world in order to hack and disrupt corporate and government websites. They rely on local activists to give them permission to access their home computers in order to attack social injustices. For examples see Stefan Wray, "The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience," Electronic Civil Disobedience Homepage, www.thing.net (1998), http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ecd/EDTECD.html (accessed June 12, 2001). See also *Critical Art Ensemble Homepage* http://www.critical-art.net/ (accessed June 12, 2001)
[86] See Critical Art Ensemble's numerous e-books at *Critical Art Ensemble Homepage* http://www.critical-art.net/ (accessed August 1, 2007).
[87] Critical Art Ensemble, "Recombinant Theatre and Digital Resistance," *The Drama Review: TDR* 44, no. 4 (2000): 152.

the work of other artists who engage in those "macro" strategic attempts to affect government policy. In conclusion, they state:

> A strategic form is policy construction and reform; a tactical form is electronic civil disobedience. [...]. Tactical media practitioners initiate social processes that aid people in perceiving a social system and their roles within in it in a manner that is different from the normalized perception of these phenomena. This type of action is pedagogical, and performativity plays a key role in making these processes function.[88]

CAE's work is an alternative political strategy to traditional forms of government protest. This is also true of much of the work of site-specific, community-based performance artists. In this thesis I trace how people, with the help of professional artists, can be enabled to "disobediently" examine the systems of internalised oppression and control which limit them and which have contributed to problems of social injustice. By means of community-based, site-specific performance, participants can produce new challenges to unequal power structures without resorting to didactic protest against government policies.

Examining Public Art

A field of visual arts theory, called "new genre public art", or "citizen art", has gained some prominence in the last twelve years. Despite emerging out of the discipline of visual art theory, this field is one of very few which engages critically with the specific qualities of community-based, site-specific performance. "Public art" refers to all art in the public sphere.The term "public art" incorporates all artforms, but most often refers to memorial, sculpture, murals and mosaics, poster art, performance, video projection and multimedia installation. These artworks may be commissioned for inclusion in government spaces local parks, council chambers, foyers of government buildings etc, or made through community constructed arts projects and located in local areas. The term is also used to refer to subversive art including agit-prop and activism which is placed or performed in public without permission from authorities. Public art is placed in the public domain and is designed to be accessible by everyone."Public" is itself a contested term, and many artists working in this field aim to put the idea of "public" space, "public" knowledge and "public" good under critical pressure.[89] Many if not all of those named as "public" artists would fall into the category of "guerrilla art", indeed many could be categorized as "new" guerrilla

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[88] Jon McKenzie and Rebecca Schneider, "Critical Art Ensemble," *The Drama Review: TDR,* 44, no. 4 (2000): 136.
[89] See Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain*, ed. Suzanne Lacy (Seattle: Seattle: Bay Press, 1995).

performance. Chapter Three of this thesis will go on to examine further insights this field can offer to an exploration of the politics of site-specificity in community performance. For now it is useful to see how this art form relates to the growth of guerrilla practices. I argue this type of work also emphasises the focus on social justice that is increasingly important to artists working in the public domain.

In an anthology of contributions to the US *High Performance* magazine, Linda Frye Burnham and Steven Durland chart an interesting trajectory of twenty years of experimental art practice culminating in the "public art" of the 1990s and onwards.[90] They begin their trajectory of public art it in the art/life experimentation of the '70s. They then map a change in the mid-'80s into more issue-based activist art, where artists "had an overwhelming sense that they no longer had to separate the task of creating art from the social issues that had an impact on the rest of their lives, and for many, a sense that this content was the most important aspect of their art".[91]

Turning Towards Social Justice

The final example in Burnham and Durland's book is what they call "citizen art", and they date this as appearing from the 1990s. Using the artists who first appeared in the *High Performance* as examples, they note: "Artists who used to regularly appear in the pages of the magazine were regularly dropping out of sight. When we tracked them down we found they were now doing art with at-risk youth or in prisons or hospices or just in their neighbourhoods." According to Burnham and Durland these artists now believe that "the arbitrary separation of the artwork and the real world has made them less effective as artists and caused them to call into question their commitment to the public".[92] The authors cite the example of groups such as the LA Poverty Department, who work with US homeless, as well as groups who use contemporary variations of the "Theatre of the Oppressed" work of Augusto Boal and his followers, and community dance and arts practitioners working in prisons, shelters, ecologically devastated areas. They also refer to artists embedded in communities of all descriptions. In the many examples cited by the authors, social justice principles, including dedication to the provision of physical and social resources for all and the removal of barriers to equality are a central part of the artwork and show a changing sense of political "activism" which differs from earlier guerrilla theatre work with Marxist/Propaganda goals.

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[90] Linda Frye Burnham and Steve Durland, eds, The Citizen Artist: 20 Years of Art in the Public Arena, an Anthology from High Performance Magazine 1978-1998 (NY: Critical Press, 1998).
[91] Ibid., xxiii.
[92] Ibid.

As Burnham and Durland themselves acknowledge, drawing this progressive timeline is a little simplistic. They recognise that "history, as it is defined by events, influences and precedents is an exclusive and cyclical thing [as...] ideas are constantly being developed and then forgotten, only to be rediscovered by later generations".[93] They go on to say that: " The irony, of course, is that this is not really a new context for art at all, but really one of the oldest– the artist as an integral part of a whole community [...] It's a concept that seems so obvious that one can only wonder how it became so alien."[94] I would argue that critical attention has only recently been refocussing on the field of community-based "citizen" art, rather than such art making any sudden reappearance in the 1990s. The growth of this practice in the US, UK, Europe and Australia from the 1990s is, however, a positive sign that artists and community participants are joining together to address pressing social problems creatively and that these new goals are changing the way that art is made. Australian community dance companies such as Adelaide company Restless, [95] or community theatre companies engaged in cross-disciplinary social justice projects, such as Shopfront Youth Theatre in Southern Sydney[96] provide excellent examples of professional artists working with communities to recreate public art. Australia is also well known for innovative community-based social justice projects involving cooking and food that challenge notions of access and artistic excellence. [97]

Public Participation and Community Problem-Solving

Nina Felshin in her own anthology of "Public Art", *But is it Art?: The Spirit of Art as Activism* defines the sort of public art discussed by Durland and Burnham as

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[93] Ibid., xvii.
[94] Ibid., xxiii.
[95] Restless is a professional dance company whose mixed-ability ensemble is inspired by cultures of disability. Their 2000-2001 performance *Headlong* involved outreach across schools and resulted in performances with the company and disabled teenagers who were thinking about leaving school, allowing the two groups to explore the consequences of decisions together through the medium of dance *Restless Dance Homepage* (2008), http://www.restlessdance.org/ (accessed Jan 5, 2008).
[96] Australia has a history of cross-disciplinary youth theatre. In its long history Shopfront , for example, has built A City of Shadows and Ice in Kogarah town square; created an aerial urban ghetto with an integrated cast of young people with and without disabilities in Angels in the Architecture; trained with Y Space in Victoria and eRTH in NSW to create a three dimensional, multi-media pop up book; worked with residents of the Juvenile Justice system (Yasmar and Cobham) to create CODA; produced the amazing hit song Down River by The Wilcannia Mob and Morganics; collaborated with Kirinari Aboriginal hostel (Kareela) to create the beautiful installation Shifting Spirits; flown massive puppets off thirteen metre walls; hosted a live radio broadcast from Skid Row in a back lane at Rockdale; toured to the outback to explore Aboriginal spirituality in Mungo ; created the massive outdoor extravaganza - Seven Canoes and a Beatbox with Joe Hurst, featuring over 150 performers , amongst many other projects addressing social justice in Australia's youth with practical artist led solutions. *Shopfront Theatre for Young People Homepage* (2008), http://www.shopfront.org.au/ (accessed Jan 12, 2008).
[97] Edward Scheer, "Rituals of Incorporation: Food and Performance in Sydney, Australia," *Performance Research* 4, no. 1 (1999): 137.

"innovative use of public space to address issues of socio-political and cultural significance and to encourage community or public participation as a means of effecting social change".[98] Nancy Princenthal in her 1995 review of this book sums up Felshin's conceptualisation of public art. Public art is:

> Generally speaking, performative, participatory and driven by resolute, fully articulated ideas about social and environmental problems. It takes the form of posters, ecological projects, redesign of public facilities, art classes, street theater, park design, block parties. And most of the writers find that the effectiveness of this type of work depends on a willingness to trespass across professional lines.[99]

Princenthal highlights "an ongoing debate about whether "public art" is the right name for activities that look and act like community organizing, political protest, social programming and/or urban design".[100] Felshin, Burnham and Pricenthal amongst others claim this "new public art is one of the art world's few growth industries".[101] The genre's current ascendance is linked in Felshin's book "to a reaction against the rise of conservative values in the ''80s," and to "shifts in public funding policies which have favored educational, community-oriented programs over support for individual artists".[102] Community-based, site-specific performance, of the sort exemplified in both Durland and Burnham's and Nina Felshin's work, opens new visions for twenty-first century activism.

The kind of artists mentioned by- Felshin-and many of these turn up in more then one anthology of public art practice include individual performance artists such as Suzanne Lacy, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Peggy Diggs and Guillermo Gómez-Peňa. Public collaborative activist/gallery teams like ACT UP, Gran Fury, Group Material, American Festival Project, Artist and Homeless Collaborative, the Guerrilla Girls, WAC (Women's Action Coalition), Hye Sook and the Los Angeles Poverty Department are also considered, as well as ongoing community projects such as the Southern American town Colquitt's' performance project Swamp Gravy (now in its fifteenth year) and the cross-organizational Environmental Justice Project, working to restore toxic-waste devastated communities along the Mississippi River.[103] Australian examples include well-known arts projects to improve rural health by

[98] Ibid., 5.
[99] Nancy Princenthal, "But Is It Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism," Art in America, 83, no. 6 (1995): 35.
[100] Ibid.: 36.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] For analysis of "Swamp Gravy", see Richard Owen Geer, "Out of Control in Colquitt: Swamp Gravy Makes Stone Soup," The Drama Review;TDR, 40, no. 2 (1996).

health organisations such as the Australian Network for Arts and Health [104] and Beyond Empathy[105] and the work of local justice intervention performance groups such as NSW based company Big(h)Art. [106] These companies combine guerrilla strategies with long term dialogue to create subversive and efficacious works of art and activism.

These as well as a multitude of other "public" community performance companies fall outside genres of community art that require a cohesive, bounded geographical or ethnic community or celebratory and historical-based content. These artists all work with communities to encourage public participation and to establish community-based solutions to environmental, social and economic problems that have been ignored or worsened by governments and business interests.

PART TWO

CONTEMPORARY GUERRILLAS

Examining Popular Usages

In order to rework the concept of "guerrilla art" so as to make it relevant to recent political performance, it is important to link this historically-specific phenomenon to a contemporary set of located, political and site-specific practices. For this reason I turn now to popular usage of the term "guerrilla" in order to discover the main features of modern guerrilla activism. Searching for information on guerrilla activity using internet

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[104] The ANAH project, *Creative Democracy- Homelessness*, involved over 120 organisations that work with homeless people in Brisbane, Australia. It involved many different performance outcomes. These included new photography projected onto public buildings across Queensland, public debates with homeless people and politicians, high school art competitions and performance installations by homeless teenagers. See *Community Cultural Development Homepage*, Community Arts Network (South Australia) (2006), http://www.ccd.net/ (accessed January 12, 2006).

[105] Beyond Empathy's. Moree Indigenous young mother's program, *Mubali,* successfully encouraged young Indigenous mothers to make regular contact with the Gamilaroi Community Midwife service by conducting regular workshops to make and paint plaster casts of their growing bellies. Elder 'aunties' in the community were involved, helping to share important health messages about birth and infant care. The plaster casts made are now a popular exhibition at the Moree Plains Gallery, and the babies born to mothers in the group had higher birthweights than others in the area. The project used dialogue and gentle manipulation to bring money, people and organisations together, to find solutions to infant mortality. See *Beyond Empathy Homepage* (2007), http://www.beyondempathy.org.au/ (accessed January 10, 2008).

[106] Big(h)Art is well known for its work in communities, especially Aboriginal communities. They help young people and their communities find new radical solutions for social problems such as alcohol, drugs, Indigenous death in custody and isolation. Events such as *Ngapartji Ngapartji* running on Arrernte country in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) since early 2005 have many layers involving language learning, teaching and maintenance, community development, crime prevention, cross-cultural collaboration, creating new literacy training models; as well as film, art and theatre making.

searches also provided access to a host of "hidden" practices and vocabularies which connect with the work of community artists in surprising and delightful ways and help to confirm the main characteristics of twenty-first century guerrilla activism. Popular, non-authorised word usage can help in developing contemporary definitions. In this case, alternative usage is particularly helpful for defining "new guerrilla performance", as guerrilla art itself is often positioned as an alternative to "authority" and the "mainstream". Each group of guerrilla practices discovered in online sources assists with more clues regarding the main strategies of the "new" guerrilla artist.

Popular Guerrilla Characteristics

Camouflage, Mobility and Cutting Edge Credibility

Those groups wanting to put themselves at the cutting edge, the frontline of their practice, often use the word "guerrilla". This militant, but oppositional concept thus often applied to the marketing of products with "street cred". Online examples include Guerrilla Funk Records,[107] Guerrilla Entertainment (with the slogan, "You won't see us coming"),[108] Guerrilla Pro-Wrestling,[109] Guerrilla Paintball [110], etc. An internet search will also turn up many commercial bands using the word "guerrilla" in their titles, all signed with major labels. The most obvious is the US hip-hop band Gorrillaz, whose artists are never seen in publicity, but are disguised behind a fully animated cartoon band.[111] Here the idea of camouflaged jungle or urban warrior is used as a commercially viable tag that, by linking the music to urban street credibility, creates a lucrative brand.

Naomi Klein's cultural history of branding, *No Logo,* claims that "[c]ool, alternative, young, hip whatever you want to call it was the perfect identity for product driven companies looking to become transcendent image based brands,"[112] and cites marketing company Sputnik, who tell their clients in appropriately militant terminology, "that if a cool trend is visible in your neighbourhood or crowding your

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[107] See *Guerrilla Funk Homepage* http://www.guerrillafunk.com/ (accessed October 12, 2005).
[108] See *Guerrilla Entertainment Homepage* http://www.guerrilla-entertainment.com/ (accessed October 12, 2005).
[109] See *Prowrestling Guerrilla Homepage* http://www.prowrestlingguerrilla.com/ (accessed October 12, 2005).
[110] See *Paintball Guerrilla Homepage* http://www.paintball.hr/ (accessed October 12, 2005).
[111] See *Gorillaz Homepage* (2006), http://www.gorillaz.com/flash.html (accessed May 12, 2006).
[112] Naomi Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2000), 77.

nearest mall, the learning is over, it's too late". Sputnik warn that "you need to get down with the streets, to be in the trenches everyday".[113]

 In community-based, site-specific performance, there may not be the same urge to claim the cutting edge by using terms like "guerrilla", but these artists do often use camouflage, manipulation and disguise to build their projects. For many artists and groups, such as those discussed in the case studies in this thesis, their "street" reputation helped to draw participants and allowed artists to pursue their aims with a wider network of popular and institutional support. This is particularly true in the case of musicians, such as community hip-hop artists who rely on their credibility as part of an almost mythical, underground, subversive hip-hop "scene" to help fund and publicise their hip-hop projects [114]This is also true of visual and performance artists who use the camouflage of their professional and commercial reputations to create new opportunities and artistic hybrids in the community arts sphere which work between "authorised" activity and spontaneous or "camouflaged" practices. [115]

Challenging Authorship and Control

Most often, the term "guerrilla" is used in popular sources to refer to practices that provide some sort of an alternative to the mainstream. The term shows up, for example, across multiple internet search engines in reference to alternative or "indymedia" journalism and publishing and alternative sources of journalism and distribution which are not owned by massive media moguls or corporations. Many of these "guerrilla" media sources use "openmedia" platforms. The term "openmedia" usually refers to print and documentary journalism that aims to have a transparent process and to be inclusive. It is therefore relevant to the work of community-based performance that shares similar aims.

Mathew Arnison summarises this notion in a commentary on the Sydney underground openmedia site, Indymedia, defining open publishing as the "process of creating news [which] is transparent to the readers". He states that readers can "contribute a story and see it instantly appear in the pool of stories publicly available". Openmedia means those stories are filtered as little as possible to help the readers find the stories they want. Importantly,

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[113] Ibid., 80.
[114] For a description of the Australian hip-hop "scene" see Ian Maxwell, *Phat Beats, Dope Rhymes: Hip Hop Down under Comin' Upper*, Music/Culture. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2003).
[115] Linda Frye Burnham and Steve Durland, eds, *The Citizen Artist: 20 Years of Art in the Public Arena, an Anthology from High Performance Magazine 1978-1998* (NY: Critical Press, 1998), xxiii.

> readers can see editorial decisions being made by others [...] they can see how to get involved and help make editorial decisions [...] and if they can think of a better way for the software to help shape editorial decisions, they can copy the software because it is free and change it and start their own site. If they want to redistribute the news, they can.

Arnison claims that, unlike other news sources, "the working parts of journalism are exposed".[116] This is an excellent image of ethical, collaborative process and in this way the goals of "guerrilla" openmedia can be aligned with community-based, site-specific performance.

The parallel between community performance and "guerrilla" media goes further than them both utilising open and inclusive sources of information making. Openmedia sites like www.indiemedia.org also publish stories that will not be seen on TV or read in the newspapers, either because they are deemed poorly constructed, do not seem to have adequate information backing them, or contain material that is subversive, unpublishable or politically outside the domain of the network or distributor, or else contradict other articles in the publication. These characteristics, however, are considered positive traits by many supporters of openmedia. Openmedia can be a seen as a guerrilla tool for exposing media hypocrisy, spreading knowledge that has been censored and producing new paths for information, as well as creating new vocabularies and advertising alternative ways of speaking and living. Hence on the internet we have open media source Suburban Guerrilla, an "ex-journalist [who] keeps a jaundiced eye on the corporate media,"[117] or the Italian informationguerrilla, who are "independent people against media hypocrisy"[118] These openmedia sites represent a common tenet of community-based guerrilla practice: the provision of alternative sources of information, distribution, pedagogy, language and the idea that everyone has something to contribute to public knowledge. These websites suggest new understandings of authorship and challenge the control of information and knowledge.

The political work of the guerrilla artist is not always focussed on massive social change, but rather on a more subtle spread of new ideas. Deirdre Boyle says that Paul Ryan was the originator of the term, "cybernetic guerrilla warfare", from which the popular term "guerrilla TV" originated. She states that

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[116] Matthew Arnison, "Open Publishing is the Same as Free Software," http://sydney.indymedia.org/ (accessed March 5, 2001).
[117] See Susie Madrak, *Suburban Guerrilla Weblog,* http://www.susiemadrak.com/ (accessed October 12, 2005).
[118] See *Information Guerrilla Homepage*, http://www.informationguerrilla.org/ (accessed October 12, 2005).

Ryan believed that 'traditional' guerrilla activity (such as bombings, snipings, and kidnappings) was ecologically risky compared with the "real" possibilities of 'portable video, maverick databanks, acid metaprogramming, cable TV satellites, cybernetic craft industries, and alternative lifestyles'. For Ryan, portable video "was 'guerrilla warfare', insofar as it enabled you to fight the 'perceptual imperialism' [...] on a small scale in what was then an irregular war.[119]

This idea of an "irregular war" of a "small scale" is perhaps also useful, as it is a reminder that while guerrillas like those mentioned in Boyle's book may approach large "targets", often the political work is occurring in the minutiae and grounded in the realities of ongoing conflict. Another feature of site-specific, community-based performance is the slow spread of new ideas rather than demands for immediate revolution.

Decentralisation

Guerrilla also appears on online sources as a reference to those whose individual anti-authoritarian practices aim to "infiltrate" and "spread" through decentralised systems. These diverse guerrillas all share a desire to insidiously "infect" society, although many are surprising in the type of activities they wish to disseminate. Hence we have delightful and practical groups engaging and spreading "Guerrilla Solar Energy", ("making energy without permission")[120], "Guerrilla Gardening", "armed with trowels, seeds and vision, the idea is to garden everywhere [...] digging a revolution"[121], "Guerrilla Teaching", "interested in silently transforming the public education system from within"[122] or "Guerrilla Home Building", "building homes without authorisation"[123]. There is also the wonderful satire of the growing movement of "Guerrilla Gay Bars" across the US. This is where large groups of queer partygoers invade and reclaim "straight" premises. The Detroit Guerrilla Gay Bar slogan perhaps best sums up this strand of resistant, infiltrating guerrilla practice when it states, "[d]on't clone, darling, colonize!"[124] These popular groups have many members and their activity is practical and subtle. Perhaps what best links this feature of "guerrilla" practice to community-based performance is the fact that,

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[119] Paul Ryan, *Cybernetics of the Sacred* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1974) quoted in Deirdre Boyle, *Subject to Change: Guerrilla Television Revisited* (London and NY: Oxford University Press, 1997), 31.
[120] See "Guerrilla Solar Manifesto", *Homepower Magazine Online* (1987), http://www.homepower.com/magazine/guerrilla.cfm (accessed June 5, 2006).
[121] See *Guerrilla Gardening Homepage* (2005), http://www.guerrillagardening.org/ (accessed August 2, 2005). For Australian examples, see "Market Gardens for Urban Guerrillas," *AustraliaWide*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Adelaide).
[122] See *Guerrilla Teachers Homepage,* Online Education Directory (1995), http://www.guerrillateachers.com/ (accessed May 8, 2001).
[123] See "Guerrilla Homes," BBC Three (United Kingdom: September 6, 2004).
[124] See *Detroit Guerrilla Queer Bar Homepage* (2003), http://www.detroitguerrillas.com/news/2003/ (accessed March 4, 2003).

despite oppressive realities, these people are getting on with the business of making their lives better at the level of everyday daily practice. Later in this chapter examples of "public" and "citizen" artists who share this practical, daily, decentralised approach to social change will be discussed.

Multi-disciplinarity, New Technologies and Hybrid Activism

Searches for "Guerrilla PLUS art" on internet search engines such as Google and Yahoo [125] produce descriptions of art practices such as graffiti, billboard liberation (the production and altering to create politically-conscious billboards), culture-jamming and adbusting (the use of advertising branding to expose globalised corporations in social and ethical injustices),[126] flash mobbing (the sudden appearance of groups of people engaged in an activity not usual to the public space, who then disappear back into the crowds), postering (and poster defacing), hoax creators, freeway and road "bloggers"/banner hangers, and a range of impersonators (including "fake" election campaigners, those involved in the impersonation of officials and experts and the creation of mock or shadow websites and stolen domain names).[127] Also mentioned as "guerrilla art" is the sudden appearance of guerrilla decoration or art in deserted shop windows, factory premises and empty warehouses and the activities of political, anonymous street art groups.[128] These subversive practices utilise cutting-edge technological advances or online communication tools to create new multi-disciplinary artistic practices and all of them exist as a hybrid of art and activism.[129]

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[125] See *Guerrilla Art,* Thematic Arts (2005),
http://dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Visual_Arts/Thematic/Guerrilla_Art/.
[126] See Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (accessed May 5, 2005).
[127] For a clear example of guerrilla media manipulation, see the work of US duo "The Yes Men", who have posed as World Trade Organisation officials on CNN and at international conferences and who produce multiple fake web pages. Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonanno *The Yes Men Homepage,* (2005), http://www.theyesmen.org/. (accessed June 5, 2007).
[128] See *The Graffiti Research Lab Homepage* (2007), http://graffitiresearchlab.com/ (accessed May 11, 2002).
[129] L.M Bogad suggests that contemporary guerrilla art can be found in the electoral sphere, aimed at the actions of politicians. Bogad's examination of satirical 1990s drag artist/performer Pauline Pantsdown, who controversially critiqued and impersonated rightwing politician Pauline Hansen, remains an excellent Australian example of contemporary guerrilla art. See Lawrence M. Bogad, "Electoral Guerrilla Theatre in Australia: Pauline Hanson Vs. Pauline Pantsdown," *The Drama Review: TDR* 45, no. 2 (2001) and L. M. Bogad, *Electoral Guerrilla Theatre : Radical Ridicule and Social Movements* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

Guerrilla practices, as shown on the *Guerrilla Innovations* website, run by Amsterdam artist Sebastian Campion, are also innovative and inventive.[130] Campion's site tracks arts activities and new inventions, ranging from radical street installations, new patents, and reviews of political public video jockeys (VJs), to discussions on graffiti and reviews of new online blogs. New interventions, like those on Campion's site, have also been catalogued recently in *The Interventionists: User's Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life,* a publication by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Massachusetts.[131] Publicity for the catalogue states:

> Art made to attach to buildings or to be given away? Wearable art for street demonstrations or art that sets up a booth at a trade show? This is the art of the interventionists, who trespass into the everyday world to raise our awareness of injustice and other social problems. These artists don't preach or proselytize; they give us the tools to form our own opinions and create our own political actions. It is [...] art that is exciting, provocative, unexpected, inspiring (artistically and politically), and fun.[132]

It lists everything from Michael Rakowitz's Inflatable Homeless Shelter and William Pope's Black Factory truck (with pulverizer, gift shop, and giant inflatable igloo), to the Biotic Baking Brigade's political pie-throwing; and states that interventionists represent a "growing genre [...] of radical social action".[133] The press release for the original exhibition, *The Interventionists,* which prompted the book, cites a developing "interventionist" movement, perhaps a signal that "guerrilla" practices are reappearing in greater prominence in the 1990s and early twenty-first century. The editors believe that

> [o]ver the course of the 1990s, the term "intervention" was increasingly used by politically engaged artists to describe their multi-disciplinary approaches, which nearly always took place outside the realm of museums, galleries and studios. A decade later, these "interventionists" continue to create an impressive body of work that trespasses into the everyday world, art that critiques, lampoons, interrupts, and co-opts, art that acts subtlety or with riotous fanfare, and art that agitates for social change using magic tricks, faux fashion and jacked-up lawn mowers.[134]

This combination of new "guerrilla" innovation, humour and hybrid activism is a feature of community-based, site-specific performance. Australian community artist

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[130] See Sebastian Campion *Guerrilla Innovation Homepage,* http://www.guerrilla-innovation.com/ (accessed October 12, 2005).
[131] See Nato Thompson et al., eds, *The Interventionists: Users' Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life* (Cambridge, Mass.: Mass M.O.C.A; MIT Press, 2004).
[132] "The Interventionists: User's Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life", Amazon Books (2005), http://www.amazon.com (accessed January 4, 2006).
[133] Ibid.
[134] Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, "Mass. M.O.C.A. Surveys the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life with New Exhibition the Interventionists May 30, 2004 through Spring 2005," 2004, http://www.massmoCaliforniaorg/press_releases (accessed June 5, 2004)

and scholar David Watt suggests that community art has had no choice but to respond innovatively to social problems, because of the manifestly different needs, languages, cultures, age ranges and experience levels of community arts participants. He sees community and development as artists "at least temporarily occup[y] someone else's cultural space and using their skills, experience, sensitivity and ability to think laterally [...] produce a myriad of new cultural forms" He goes on to suggest that "under these circumstances 'artistic innovation' is not so much possible as it is mandatory".[135] I would suggest that this is even more the case when the art being produced is site-specific.

Narrowing the Field

Sub-Categorising Guerrilla Performance

This chapter refers to a large array of social activities as "guerrilla" practice and has sketched out a very broad area of "new" guerrilla performance. Guerrilla characteristics drawn from the military and from the field of guerrilla theatre have been shown to include site-specificity, street pedagogy, manipulation and civil disobedience, localisation and adaptability. Recent manifestations of guerrilla art occurring in the field of "public art" include guerrilla tactics of social justice and community-based problem solving. Usages of the term "guerrilla" in popular and online sources highlighted further characteristics of contemporary guerrilla action. The dominant qualities of twenty-first century guerrilla practices have been shown to be: camouflage and mobility; challenges to ideas of authorship, decentralisation and multi-disciplinarity. All of these "guerrilla" tactics will be further explored in Part Two of this thesis; where I show in practice how site-specific, community-based, political artists are using guerrilla techniques to create a new type of performance politics.

The next step in an in-depth study of guerrilla performance would be to subcategorise this array of practices. For example, it could be possible to separate contemporary guerrilla performance with *welfare and social work aim*s, such as the long running, subversive, rural health art projects by groups like Beyond Empathy, mentioned earlier in this chapter, from that which aims to *protest and raise consciousness* over social issues or government policies, such as the performance

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[135] David Watt and Graham Pitts, "The Imaginary Conference," *Artwork Magazine*, no. 50 (2001): 8.

work of radical, protest groups such as Greenpeace. [136] These are obviously two organisations that have very different aims and processes, although it could be argued that they both utilise the guerrilla techniques such as radical pedagogy, site-specificity, camouflage and transience and both have been involved in community-based performance projects. There could also be a separate category for those who see their work as part of the field of *identity politics,* which performance studies scholar Marvin Carlson refers to as "performance involved with the concerns, desires, and even the visibility of those normally excluded by race, class, or gender"[137] For feminist, disabled or multicultural groups, positive identity positioning can be achieved through utilisation of guerrilla techniques. [138] For the purposes of this study, however, I shall focus on exploring just one of the many sub-categories of "new" guerrilla performance.

Differential Guerrilla Performance

I argue that there is a particularly interesting category of performance emerging in Australia that exhibits the guerrilla characteristics named above, but is distinct from a politics of welfare, protest or identity, although it overlaps with all of these aims. This is "differential guerrilla performance" its defining characteristic being that it responds to and produces difference on every level. All the case studies in this thesis can be placed into this category. Differential guerrilla performance is site-specific, community-based and relies on a new understanding of politics which offers important alternatives to "traditional" definitions of politics in performance.

I would place works in this category that are community-based, but which actively promote difference and multiple, at times contradictory, representations of identity and self, by deliberately questioning definitions of community. These artists do this work in public spaces, using place, site and location strategically. These performances are not community "theatre" as they are not necessarily based on the theatrical tradition, or on the premises of narrative (although both of these are at times involved). To better understand this sub-category of "new" political performance, it is important to find new theoretical frameworks for defining "politics" which exceed categories of opposition, identity or social welfare. The following

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[136] Baz Kershaw, "Ecoactivist Performance: The Environment as Partner in Protest?," *The Drama Review: TDR* 46, no. 1 (2002): 108.

[137] Marvin A. Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (London and NY: Routledge, 1996), 144.

[138] See Mary Ann Hunter, "No Safety Gear: Skate Girl Space and the Regeneration of Australian Community-Based Performance," in *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance*, ed. Susan C. Haedicke and Tobin Nellhaus (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

chapter will sketch out a possible framework for differential "guerrilla" politics. The thesis will then focus on the particular political implications of questioning "community" and "site" through contemporary differential guerrilla performance events.

Community Cultural Development (CCD)

Before turning to new models for understanding "guerrilla politics" in differential guerrilla art, it is important to place what I have defined as "new" guerrilla performance in an Australian context. Australia is unique in its approach to community–based, political performance in that there are both consistent dedicated funding strategies for this work, at state and national levels and related embedded community cultural development (CCD) workers in many local governments, resource centres and welfare agencies. Some CCD projects exhibit the characteristics discussed above and could be considered differential "new" guerrilla performance. Others aim for more didactic protest or celebration outcomes, although obviously there are overlaps between all community-based practices.

In summary, CCD is guided by principles such as of democratisation of the arts, cultural pluralism and radical welfare. Peak body Community Arts Network, on their website, ccd.net, names this work as "a unique practice that works creatively with communities on their own ground, on their own issues through cultural practice".[139] It labels CCD as being concerned with cultural democracy, in terms of equity in thought, communication, action and resources and self-determination, to enable people to empower and create their own futures. It aims to achieve these goals through collaborative art and cultural production, in which artists and communities work with local government and non-government organisations and social networks to create projects. In this way Australian CCD overlaps with the aims of community-based performance-makers worldwide.[140]

There are two main criticisms that can be levelled at CCD work in Australia. The first is that it could be affected in its form, focus and content by its reliance on multiple government sources of funding and conservative models of social welfare. Government funding demands concrete, measurable outcomes which fit certain

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[139] See *Community Cultural Development Homepage.*

[140] For a summary of current CCD research, see Australian research cluster summary, "The Community Cultural Development Research Cluster List of Research Projects," *The live events research network homepage,* (2003), http://www.adsa.edu.au/lerncontentpagemod.jsp?xcid=188 (accessed November 1, 2006).

criteria. These criteria promote the government's values, currently those of "social cohesion", "productive citizens", "self moderating communities", "cost efficient activity" and "trust in governments".[141] These values can take precedence over other goals, such as "disruption", "subversion", "illegal activity" and grassroots "restructuring" which could in fact be more politically efficacious, if more risky and unstable. One does have to acknowledge, however, that art making has its own guerrilla strategies and that grant proposal and audits do not accurately document the fascinating creative and subversive practices which actually occur inside and despite this funding rubric.

The second major concern around CCD is that it is delivered like a government service by managers, middlemen and bureaucrats, who, even though they are supportive of community work, undervalue the powerful role of the creative artist and encourage ideas of art as simply a useful welfare service. David Watt suggests, if "we remain committed to the notion that work in the field needs to produce some identifiable social benefit, whatever else it may produce" then "artistic excellence or artistic innovation should not be the only, or even the central, criterion by which the worth of a project should be judged".[142] The problem with this idea is that artistic innovation may in fact be the only way to create alternative solutions to social problems and is itself a powerful form of personal development. All of the guerrilla artists discussed in this thesis aim to produce artistic "excellence" in collaboration with their community participants as *part* of their pursuit of social justice solutions.

These criticisms and tensions in the field of CCD informed US director Peter Sellars's decisions to not involve major CCD networks in his program for the major Australian arts festival on community he curated in Australia in 2002. This festival and related concerns are discussed further in Chapter Seven. In outlining the field, however, David Watt and Graham Pitt celebrate the multiplicity of CCD practice, a place where endless debates and arguments over what community work should entail have led to a vitality, represented by the wide range of processes and cultural forms the field has produced, which "is not created by easy consensus or failure to continually examine and question what is done, how it is done and why it is done".[143] Watt and Pitt, both long term practitioners and theorists in the field, deny the idea put forward by Gay

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[141] These are the main values currently supported by Australian Federal Government funding structures. See Deborah Mills and Paul Brown, *Art and Wellbeing* (The Australia Council for the Arts, 2004), http://www.ozco.gov.au/arts_resources (accessed October 12, 2005).
[142] Watt and Pitts, "The Imaginary Conference," 14.
[143] Ibid.: 13.

Hawkins that "community arts is an official invention of government policy",[144] or critics that emphasise community arts as a heavily legislated and politically questionable arts practice. While it is certainly possible to criticise the models of community used by CCD as "both conservative and nostalgic with [their] emphasis on harmony and social integration,"[145] critics like Hawkins "*slide over the ways in which [community] has served as a mobilising concept [...] at the level of the creation of invisible networks, identifications and circulations between people [...] representing the fluid identifications of social beings".[146]

All the works studied in depth this thesis have received some funding from CCD sources in Australia at a local, state or federal level and all could be discussed within the complex history of Australian CCD practice. Instead I am interested in looking at how these practices exhibit guerrilla qualities that work outside CCD models of "stability", "cohesion", "safety" or "celebration". While bringing in necessary CCD background and context, I do not examine in detail the specific problems and benefits of working in this tradition in Australia. I do acknowledge, however, that an interesting future project could examine connections between the ideas currently being explored by people identifying as CCD workers across Australia and the developing international trends in "new" guerrilla performance. But such a project lies outside the scope of the present thesis.

Conclusions

This chapter has sketched one possible history and context for twenty-first century political site-specific, community-based performance. Any number of other frameworks could be invoked to link the practices of these site-specific, community artists together. Examining the guerrilla characteristics of this form, however, has allowed me to explore common insights across a number of fields including guerrilla theatre, public art, popular activism and contemporary performance, fields which often exist in isolation from each other. This process also provided the necessary examples to draw together an image of the "new" guerrilla performance artist. The chapter drew out the main characteristics of this form of practice. These included strategies arising from the fields of guerrilla theatre and guerrilla art, including new

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[144] Rachel Fensham, "(Post) Community Arts," *Continuum: The Australian Journal of Media and Culture*, 8, no. 2 (1994), http://wwwmcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/continuum2.html (accessed July 12, 2001).
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid.

pedagogy, manipulation, localisation, flexibility and new forms of civil disobedience. It has also highlighted the importance of popular "alternative" guerrilla tactics such as camouflage, mobility, decentralisation, multi-disciplinarity and challenges to ideas of authorship and the control of information. All of these strategies and characteristics are present in the three case studies in the second part of this thesis Community-based guerrilla artists achieve both relationship and transience, though creating dialogue based process which results in transient, subversive public performance. These case studies will further examine how these guerrilla tactics allow the "new" guerrilla artist to create artworks which sit outside traditional notions of "political theatre", while still challenging the status quo. The next chapter will sketch out a broad definition for the "guerrilla politics" of this field of art practice.

CHAPTER TWO

"New" Guerrilla Politics

> What [...] is meant by the highly subjective term 'politics'? North American and British approaches to the term 'politics' [...]. differ enormously. We do not always understand each other or indeed speak the same language, though our shared language is English. When the net of contributions is cast wider to include European, African, Asian, Australasian and Latin American approaches to politics and performance, the notion of a shard or 'safe' setting for debate is shattered altogether.[147]
>
> Liz Goodman, Routledge Reader in Politics and Performance (2003)

This chapter searches for a definition for political participation which could be applied to the particular "differential" Australian community-based guerrilla performance events discussed in this thesis. I argue that, in order to understand the politics of new guerrilla performance, an "unsafe" framework is needed, which can bridge many different images of political participation, rather than claiming one model as superior to all others. I argue that a potential framework can be usefully constructed using the theories of Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau and the work of 1990s post-modern feminists. The model I suggest is based on theories of intimate power, everyday subversive practices and the multiplication of difference in place of social binaries. This chapter provides necessary theoretical background and new definitions for "politics" in order to assist in my broader examination of the political tactics of the community-based guerrilla performer. This brief examination of twenty-first century performance politics will underpin the next two chapters, which examine in detail how artists can approach this "guerrilla" politics through their engagement with site and community. This new philosophical work contributes to the growing body of theoretical work which explores and is inspired by new visions for politics, site and community in contemporary performance.

The chapter begins by acknowledging that the types of practices examined in this thesis are not easily defined as political. I argue that these works cannot be usefully examined as exercises in opposition or consciousness-raising, welfare or even

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[147] Lizbeth Goodman and Jane De Gay, eds, *The Routledge Reader in Politics and Performance* (London and NY: Routledge, 2000), 3.

identity- positioning, but as a form which combines and exceeds all three of these areas of politics. For this reason I propose a wider basis for defining political performance. Using the work of Michel Foucault I claim guerrilla artists engage with power relations at an "intimate" level. I then combine this work with that of Michel de Certeau, who has famously shown how humble, surprising practices take place in the terrain of everyday life. I argue that these two theorists, although often placed in opposition to each other, can be helpful when understood together. In the final part of the chapter I argue that community-based, guerrilla artists who do not fit into other models of politics can help to fulfil the project set out by post-modern feminists in the 1990s, multiplying difference and working to remove binary logic systems that privilege some people over others and which enforce oppression. I call this work "differential guerrilla performance" as it is based in the promotion of difference and multiplicity.

Categories of "Political" Performance

Protest

According to Graham Holderness,

> [p]olitics is normally understood to be concerned with systems of government, the process by means of which such systems are changed, and the nature of social participation in thesechanges; with relations between those systems of government, in cooperation and competition, peace and war; and with the individual parties and ideas which sustain, develop, defend and overthrow governments and the ideological formations by which their power is maintained.[148]

Scholars such as Baz Kershaw have recently shown that contemporary political theatre companies, as well as modern groups involved in mediatised political protest activities, contest government and corporation abuses of power through new methods including the sophisticated utilisation of performance semiotics. However, Kershaw's work still links recent performance practices into a tradition of opposition and issue-based political participation which defines politics in terms of "normal" definitions of politics as relating to governments and ideological systems.[149] Established definitions of politics thus lead to political performance work that challenges these governments and ideological systems through opposition, protest or consciousness raising. An obvious example would be the work of performance

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[148] Graham Holderness, ed., *The Politics of Theatre and Drama* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 2.
[149] Holderness goes on to explore other types of political performance in his work, concluding that artists questioning identity politics offer the clearest alternative to this "traditional model".

groups with particular political party preferences, anti-war themes or environmental protection agendas, such as those described by Kershaw.[150] The contemporary community-based, site-specific performance events referred to in the first chapter, however, do not just engage with oppositional or consciousness- raising methodologies, despite dealing with the social justice problems which affect their community participants. I argue that new frameworks are required to expand this "normal" definition of politics and political participation so as to encompass activities which occur at a much more intimate level.

Development

In the field referred to as "theatre-in-development", political participation is based on achieving either welfare, or pedagogical results.[151] Many Australian community cultural development companies share these two goals. Examples of this would include work that helps to educate people with little access to information and resources in order to combat social problems or provide clear welfare outcomes. A good example of this type of work would be groups that use theatre to spread information on HIV Aids in developing countries, or those that combine theatre making with self-development training or access to shelter, food and other basic resources".[152] Guerrilla art cannot, however, be understood entirely through welfare or social development models which valorise sustained, legal processes over unauthorised transgression and artistic experimentation. The case studies I want to consider, for instance, are all deliberately transient, manipulative and artistically innovative. The community-based artists named in this thesis do, however, all have some development goals and, like artist Augusto Boal, their work "starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with the people, it serves to introduce the pedagogy of the oppressed, in the elaboration of which the oppressed must participate".[153] In my view, measuring performance politics in terms of sustained cultural development places the emphasis too much on either the methodology or on the results of projects, and not enough on the powerful moment of creative expression.

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[150] See Baz Kershaw, "Fighting in the Streets: Dramaturgies of Popular Protest, 1968-1989," *New Theatre Quarterly* 13, no. 51 (1997) and Baz Kershaw, "Ecoactivist Performance: The Environment as Partner in Protest?," *The Drama Review: TDR* 46, no. 1 (2002).
[151] See Tim Prentki and Claire Lacey, "Using Theatre in Development " *Footsteps (TEAR International Learning Zone)* 58 (2005), http://tilz.tearfund.org/Publications (accessed 13 July, 2007).
[152] Eugene Van Erven, "Community Theatre in Kenya," in *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*, ed. Eugene Van Erven (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), 168.
[153] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th anniversary ed. (NY: Continuum, 2000), 124.

Identity Positioning

"Differential" guerrilla work could be seen to involve a type of identity politics but this political model is not entirely satisfactory. Performance scholars note that "performance involved with the concerns, desires, and even the visibility of those normally excluded by race, class, or gender [...]" takes advantage of the fact that claiming and questioning an identity category can be a form of political positioning.[154] In Australia, in the 1980s, as Richard Fotheringham notes, many Australian community-theatre groups based their work on claiming unique identity positions and thus challenged homogenous visions of Australian society.[155]

For performance and art scholars such as Carlson, Auslander and Hal Foster, recent identity-based performance work is becoming increasingly "resistant" by exploring identity through experimental performance practices. Foster claims that the "political artist of today might be urged not to represent given representations and generic forms, but to investigate the processes and apparatuses which control them".[156] Carlson documents many examples of "resistant" contemporary performance, celebrating the fact that "clear-cut examples of an essentialist performance of identity or a [...] process dealing with identity construction, are neither one so common as a kind of negotiated space between these positions [...] slipping back and forth between claiming an identity position and ironically questioning the cultural assumptions that legitimate it".[157]

There are, however, a number of problems with identity politics in performance. As Carlson observes, there is a "dangerous game" all identity-based performance plays as a "double agent, recognizing that in the post-modern world complicity and subversion are inextricably intertwined".[158] By repeating and mimicking conventions of identity, it is possible to reinforce the power they hold over us. This point will be further examined in the next chapter on ideas of community in performance. I argue that contemporary artworks which use experimental performance practices to

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[154] Marvin A. Carlson, "Performance and Identity," in *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (London and NY: Routledge, 1996), 144.
[155] For example Australian Performing Group, Death Defying Theatre, Melbourne Workers Theatre and Doppio Teatro. See Richard Fotheringham, ed., *Community Theatre in Australia*, *Methuen Australian Drama Series* (North Ryde, NSW.: Methuen Australia, 1987).
[156] Hal Foster quoted in Philip Auslander, "Toward a Concept of the Political in Postmodern Theatre," in *From Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism* (London and NY: Routledge, 1997), 61.
[157] Marvin A. Carlson, "Resistant Performance," in *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (London and NY: Routledge, 1996), 183.
[158] Ibid.

destabilise identity representation can also run the risk of losing clarity or of alienating community audiences who gain support and strength from identity narratives and who do not always have access to the complex critical analysis which informs this type of work. As I will show in the following two chapters, community-based, guerrilla performance cannot therefore be seen as an exercise in identity positioning. These artists negotiate problems of identity and representation by allowing community participants to both question and celebrate multiple, distinct identity positions simultaneously across new visions of community and site. These works are self-reflexive without losing all faith in identity representation.

Searching for Differential Politics

I argue that new guerrilla work includes and exceeds different understandings of politics as engaging with opposition, welfare or identity politics. The guerrilla performance artists I discuss disrupt hierarchies of power by working to dissolve cultural injustices as they occur at the level of everyday practice. These works often seem to be implicated in the systems they aim to deconstruct and this makes binaries like alternative/mainstream and conservative/radical difficult to sustain. For this reason I propose that guerrilla differential politics is usefully understood using a tripartite politics of *intimacy*, *difference* and *the everyday*. This is a broad framework which provides context for my more specific examinations of how artists use community and site as political strategies; work which takes place in Chapters Three and Four.

Framing Guerrilla Politics

A Micropolitics of Intimacy

Describing how a "post-modern" condition of contemporary society requires flexible definitions for terms such as "politics", Jessica Kulynych suggests:

> To say that the world is now "post-modern" is to highlight fundamental changes in both the condition of the contemporary world [...] The unique political and economic configuration of advanced, welfare state capitalism, the subtlety and ubiquity of disciplinary power, the simultaneous solidification and fracture of personal and collective identity, and the advance of technology and bureaucracy combine with an increasing philosophical skepticism toward truth and subjectivity to produce a world that is often incompatible with our traditional understandings of democracy. These fundamental changes inevitably

alter the meaning of basic democratic concepts such as political participation.[159]

Kulynych bases her work on a series of influential studies by Foucault, in which he famously characterises society as implicated in a series of networks of dispersed and ubiquitous power.[160] Foucaultian work is useful for clarifying how the activity of community-based guerrilla artists can be defined as a type of post-modern, political participation. I shall discuss other important features of post-modernism and its connections to other political projects such as feminism, later in this chapter.

Foucault's research exposes the power relationships which work at the most intimate levels of life, identity and the body. Following Foucault, politics can be defined as an exercise of confirming, challenging or manoeuvring these relations of power. According to Foucault, power relations are shaped by diffuse and interactive governmental codes and discourses, played out at the body of the individual.

> Let us ask [...]how things work at the level of on-going subjugation, at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours, etc [...].we should try to discover how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts, etc. We should try to grasp subjection in its material instance as a constitution of subjects.[161]

The work of Foucault and Foucaultian theorists highlights the ways that the forces that shape our lives are not sovereign or placed easily in a hierarchical progression, but rather are made up of subtle, producing strategies and systems of knowledge or "discourses" that shape the language we understand as rational, the actions we understand as possible, the knowledge we count as expert fact and the choices we believe are desirable. Discourses are systems of ideas or knowledge, inscribed in a specific vocabulary, which divide and categorise individuals. As Foucault notes, in a society such as ours, "there are manifold relations of power that permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse".[162] He describes how individuals playing out internalised systems of power subconsciously and how all

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[159] Jessica J. Kulynych, "Performing Politics: Foucault, Habermas and Postmodern Participation. (Political Thinkers Michel Foucault and Jurgen Habermas)," *Polity*, 30, no. 2 (1997): 315.
[160] See Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (London: Routledge, 1973), Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 1st American ed. (NY: Pantheon Books, 1977), Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1 (London: Allen Lane, 1979) and Michel Foucault and Colin Gordon, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980).
[161] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 97.
[162] Foucault and Gordon, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, 1972-1977, 93.

people contribute to the establishment and support of oppressive and uneven relations of power.

Kulynych discusses how this discursive power is located at the most intimate of levels, the body and the intimate social networks it inhabits. She summarises:

> As Foucault explains, what was formerly considered apolitical, or social rather than political, is revealed as the foundation of technologies of state control. Contests over identity and everyday social life are not merely additions to the realm of the political, but actually create the very character of those things traditionally considered political. The state itself is [as Foucault notes] 'superstructural in relation to a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth.'

Kulynych then outlines a new understanding of political participation which can extend from Foucaultian definitions of ubiquitous power.

> Thus it is contestations at the micro-level, over the intricacies of everyday life, that provide the raw material for global domination, and the key to disrupting global strategies of domination. Therefore, the location of political participation extends way beyond the formal apparatus of government, or the formal organization of the workplace, to the intimacy of daily actions and iterations.[163]

I argue that new guerrilla artists are involved in these "contestations at the micro-level". This is a very different type of politics, which works from the micro towards the macro.

By acknowledging that our identities are shaped by many discourses and relations of power, occurring and shaping the "intimate" activities of our lives, one has to also admit that these internal and subconscious governing strategies affect any attempt to challenge inequitable social structures. I do not, however, believe that this subjective position is one of weakness. Foucault's work has been critiqued as apolitical by some scholars, because he sees no "binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and those ruled at the root of power relations".[164] Without a single entity to blame, some feel disempowered to fight for social change. Instead Foucault suggests there are "manifold relationships of force that take shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups and institutions," and that this multiple sources of force and control are the "basis for wide ranging effects of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole".[165] Control occurs in so many

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[163] Kulynych, "Performing Politics: Foucault, Habermas and Postmodern Participation. (Political Thinkers Michel Foucault and Jurgen Habermas)," 315.
[164] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 94.
[165] Ibid.

places and by so many external and internal forces that it can seem impossible to pin down.

Yet Foucault does not ignore the inequities of power, or the fact that many individuals and entities have great power while others have none. In fact it is quite the opposite: he maps many "lines of force" that "bring about redistributions, realignments, homogenizations, serial arrangement and convergences of the force relations". He goes on to state that "[m]ajor dominations are the hegemonic effects that are sustained by all these confrontations".[166] By exposing how power relations are repeated and performed and by admitting that everyone is complicit in reproducing these power relations every day, Foucault shows that it is possible to see all power as constructed and thus able to be reconstructed. I argue this is where guerrilla performance politics begins.

Critiques of Foucault often focus on the dual nature of power and resistance he describes. He once stated famously, "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority to this power".[167] Power requires resistance to exist, and both are bound tightly together, as power uses resistance as "target, support or handle in power relations".[168] This idea does not mean, however, that resistance is always passive or doomed to defeat. Foucault continues: "Just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localized in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverse social stratifications and individual unities. And it is doubtless the strategic codification of these points of resistance that make a revolution possible"[169] Foucault's understanding of power and resistance is liberating, because it exposes the accidents, appropriations and manipulations which have developed into networks of power and resistance. Rather than natural or eternal, power is specific, constructed and changeable.

These points of resistance can be seen as the political focus for the guerrilla performer. It is the moment that these intimate power relations are placed under contestation that is the political moment, not how well predefined goals for ideological or government change or welfare outcomes are met. Twenty-first century guerrilla artists help community participants to understand how their lives are shaped by these

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[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid., 93.
[169] Ibid., 96.

internalised power structures by examining and foregrounding the ways they engage with daily life and by placing intimate power relations under contestation at the moment of performance. The results of this activity cannot be decided before this moment, and the "results" are often surprising, as will be shown in the three case studies. Guerrilla artists offer this critique both through ethical, dialogue driven rehearsal and creative processes, and by making room for the moment of performance to expose the ways intimate power shapes individuals. This version of political participation can bring to light serious social problems, but it does so by exposing the ways these problems operate on a quotidian level.

The Everyday

For scholars such as Michel de Certeau, exploring the terrain of daily practice also exposes a whole range of other hidden, subversive practices which occur inside and despite oppressive power structures. This is a politics of the everyday. De Certeau's work, despite often being used in counterpoint to that of Foucault, can help to show how foregrounding humble, subversive everyday practices is a political action for the new guerrilla artist.

De Certeau's famous description of "tactics", described in his 1984 book, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* assumes that, despite being made by and enmeshed in a system of power relations outside our control, humans undergo "unheroic" but subversive disruptions through the idiosyncrasies of personality, body and community, working inside the cracks and fissures of institutionalized power at the level of everyday activity and experience. His oft-quoted metaphor of indigenous responses to colonisation in South America stands as a clear description of resistance inside domination:

> Submissive, and even consenting to their subjection, the Indians nevertheless often made of the rituals, representations, and laws imposed on them something quite different from what their conquerors had in mind; they subverted them not by rejecting or altering them, but by using them with respect to ends and references foreign to the system they had no choice but to accept. They were other within the very colonization that outwardly assimilated them; their use of the dominant social order deflected its power, which they lacked the means to challenge; they escaped it without leaving it. The strength of their difference lay in procedures of 'consumption'. To a lesser degree, a similar ambiguity creeps into our societies through the use made by the 'common people' of the culture disseminated and imposed by the 'elites' producing the language.[170]

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[170] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), xiii.

De Certeau saw his work as a direct response to Foucault's work, particularly his 1977 book, *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault's research in this particular book examines the role surveillance plays in creating internalised structures of control.[171] De Certeau summarises the way in which

> Foucault analyzes the mechanisms (dispositifs) that have sapped the strength of these institutions and surreptitiously reorganized the functioning of power: 'miniscule' technical procedures acting on and with details, redistributing a discursive space in order to make it the means of a generalized 'discipline' (surveillance) [and] this approach raises a new and different set of problems to be investigated.

De Certeau critiques this approach however, as he believes that "this 'microphysics of power' privileges the productive apparatus (which produces the 'discipline'), even though it discerns in 'education' a system of 'repression' and shows how, from the wings as it were, silent technologies determine or short-circuit institutional stage directions.[172] Suggesting the possibility of disrupting these disciplinary powers, he states:

> If it is true that the grid of 'discipline' is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also 'miniscule' and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them, and finally, what 'ways of operating' form the counterpart, on the consumer's [...] side, of the mute processes that organize the establishment of socio-economic order.[173]

Alan Read summarises the differences between de Certeau's and Foucault's approaches to politics in his 1993 book *Theatre and Everyday Life.* He contrasts Foucault's "pervasiveness of power" to de Certeau's. "polytheism of scattered practices, working in the blind spots of political governing".[174] Read cites Wlad Godsich's view that:

> de Certeau's conception of discourse, so different from Foucault's hegemonic one, recovers an agential dimension for us in as much as it recognizes that discursive activity is a form of social activity, an activity in which we attempt to apply the rules of the discourses we assume. These may not be heroic roles, but they place us much more squarely in front of our responsibility as historical actors.[175]

An understanding of the pervasive productive nature of power does not, however, preclude belief in the political potential of hidden tactics occurring at the level of

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[171] See Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.
[172] de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, xiv.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Read, *Theatre and Everyday Life: An Ethics of Performance*, 4.
[175] Ibid., 130.

everyday practice. De Certeau's work does not supersede Foucault's. The two positions are not mutually exclusive and are both useful when understood together. The tactics that de Certeau observes are *part* of power relations, as they are laid out by Foucault, since power and resistance can never be separated, but they are also those points of resistance which allow people to recreate their lives, slowly and subtly. As people find hidden, small ways to survive inside oppressive systems, they change the way they understand their identity and their relationship to power. This is a political activity. I argue that community-based, guerrilla artists accept and foreground the ways ubiquitous hegemonic power operates insidiously at the level of the everyday, as well as engaging with the humble, surprising ways people exist within these systems of domination. This is an understanding of political participation which encompasses both hegemony and everyday creativity.

The work of Australian disability studies scholar Rosemary Galvin can help illuminate how these two ideas of politics can work together. [176] Galvin combines a Foucaultian analysis of disability with interviews of over ninety participants who suffered physical or mental impairments later in life. She discovered that her research participants, while constrained by difficult and "disabling" internalised power structures, were still engaging with everyday activities which challenge dominant ways of seeing their appearance, engaging in work and experiencing sexuality. The participants in her study were forced by painful circumstance to examine the inequities of the multiple internalised power structures which produced their identity and learnt how to subvert these structures in the everyday ways they move, think and act. In this way their political positioning can be understood inside both a Foucaultian model of ubiquitous networks of power and resistance and as fulfilling de Certeau's vision of scattered, transient microgestures constructed out of the amazing survival tactics of everyday people. In a similar way, community-based guerrilla artists and their participants together are discovering and promoting new ways to understand, negotiate and celebrate everyday life and this is a form of political participation and social development work.

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[176] See R. Galvin, "Disturbing Notions of Chronic Illness and Individual Responsibility: Towards a Genealogy of Morals," *Health*, 6, no. 2 (2002) and R. Galvin, "Can Welfare Reform Make Disability Disappear?," *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 39, no. 3 (2004).

Multiplicity in Place of Binary Division

Many of the power structures which shape our bodies and identities are based on what Pisters and Lord call the "productive line on which the world is divided into binary oppositions: man/woman, adult/child, public/private, white/black."[177] To this list we could add dichotomies such as us/them or same/other. Foucault's research on sexuality, prisons and modern medicine have clearly shown how these binary social norms produce individual identity and are inherently uneven, oppressive and exclusive, and yet it is very difficult to envision how political manoeuvring can avoid reproducing these binaries.[178]

Feminist scholars such as Anna Yeatman, Elizabeth Grosz, Honifern Haber, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Donna Haraway, along with their colleagues from queer and postcolonial theory, aim to envision how binaries might be infiltrated and broken down while preserving practical strategies which combat isolation and social injustice. Working with new versions of the new-wave maxim that the "personal is always political", [179] these scholars have created new strategies for claiming intimate connections as a realm of power and control while embracing "post-modern" criticisms of metanarratives.[180] While the work of these theorists has been critiqued and these critiques will be dealt with in Chapter Three, the theoretical terrain of "post-modern feminism", dating from the early 1990s is useful for further imagining how a temporary, contingent "guerrilla" politics could operate in community-based, site-specific performance events.

These women are feminists because they are committed to a political project of social change to produce more justice for women and they are post-modern because they do not claim there is a single way in which to achieve this project. Politically, the feminist post-modernist emphasis on revealing the situatedness and contestability of any particular claim or system "serves both critical and liberatory functions".

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[177] Patricia Pisters and Catherine M. Lord, eds, *Micropolitics of Media Culture: Reading the Rhizomes of Deleuze and Guattari, Film Culture in Transition* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2001), 11.

[178] Philosophers Deleuze and Guattari have explored binaries and potential alternative cultural formations in some depth. There is useful future work to be done in order to examine the links between these philosophical theories and the practices of new community art. See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983).

[179] The phrase is attributed to Carol Hanisch, "The Personal Is Political," in *Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation*, ed. Shulamith Firestone and Anne Koedt (NY: The NY Radical Women, 1968).

[180] See Jean Franõcois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, Theory and History of Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) and Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London and NY: Routledge, 1989).

Feminism coupled with post-modernity "embodies a sceptical sensibility that questions attempts to transcend our situatedness by appeal to such ideas as universality, necessity, objectivity, rationality, essence, unity, totality, foundations, and ultimate Truth and Reality".[181] Post-modern feminism stresses the "locality, partiality, contingency, instability, uncertainty, ambiguity and essential contestability of any particular account of the world, the self, and the good."[182] This field accepts the existence of the "post-modern condition", made famous by the theories of scholars such as Lyotard, and Jameson, but insists that accepting the world as post-modern does not preclude involvement in political contestation in order to achieve changes to ideological and physical systems which oppress women.[183]

Self-declared post-modernist feminists often name their work part of a "politics of difference," which for Honifern Haber means an acceptance of the wariness of "grand narratives" and critical acceptance of the validity of theorists such as Lyotard, Rorty and Foucault, while demanding the possibility of "oppositional politics [...] anti-individualistic bourgeois liberalism within post structural thought".[184] Iris Marion Young's "politics of difference" is one that "values unassimilated otherness" over "impossible communal association."[185] Anna Yeatman focuses on her own ideas of difference, in which "feminist/post-modern models of differentiation tend to dispense with binary hierarchical models of difference [...] and [...] substitute complex, multiple hierarchies of differentiation where ethnicity, race, gender and class mediate each other in specific, historically conjunctural modes"[186] I believe that it is useful to see "differential" guerrilla performance as part of this politics of difference which helpfully disrupts all social systems that depend on binary logic, and in doing so contests the roots of some of the most persistent social justice problems including bigotry, ignorance and fear of the other. This politics of difference will be further explored in the following two chapters as I engage with the political implications of contemporary notions of site and community.

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[181] *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* Spring 2003 edition, ed. Edward N. Zalta (2003), s.v. "Feminist Postmodernism"; Available from http://plato.stanford.edu (accessed June 5, 2003).
[182] Ibid.
[183] For an anthology of seminal post-modern theory see Charles Jencks, *The Post-Modern Reader* (London and NY: St. Martin's Press, 1992).
[184] Honi Fern Haber, *Beyond Postmodern Politics: Lyotard, Rorty, Foucault* (NY: Routledge, 1994), 114.
[185] Iris Marion Young's quoted in Peter Brooker, *A Concise Glossary of Cultural Theory* (London and NY: Oxford University Press, 1999), 39.
[186] Anna Yeatman, *Postmodern Revisionings of the Political, Thinking Gender* (NY: Routledge, 1994), 18.

Trinh Minh-Ha, seeks to locate this post-modern politics at the borders between binaries. She asks: "You said this Other [in the same/other binary] doesn't have to be far away, it can be very close? Why not include the Other within the self?" She names those who can acknowledge difference and multiplicity within themselves while "unsettling every definition of difference arrived at" as "not quite the same, not quite the other [...] undercutting that inside/outside opposition", and claims the" intervention is [...] [to become] this inappropriate other or same who moves about."[187] In Trinh's vision, those who critique boundaries and divisions can also acknowledge the inequities they participate in and become open to difference within themselves as well as between people. The practices of guerrilla performance artists can be seen to embrace Trinh's model for difference. Utilising the "guerrilla" strategies mentioned in the previous chapter, including challenges to authorship and control, multi-disciplinarity, manipulation and camouflage, community-based guerrilla artists work "inappropriately" both inside and outside power structures, simultaneously camouflaged and visible, transient and embedded, complicit and radical.

This vision of politics is thus based on the "multiplication of the grounds of difference" and "permits difference to emerge; it is not swallowed up in the monological politics of inversion which binary political contest requires".[188] Donna Haraway asks us what kind of types of political activities "could embrace partial, contradictory, permanently unclosed constructions of personal and collective selves and still be faithful, effective? "[189] Elizabeth Grosz, utilising Giyatri Spivak's well-known work with the Subaltern Studies Group, summarises this political position well.

> For Spivak [...] it is no longer a matter of maintaining a theoretical purity at the cost of political principles; nor is it simply a matter of ad hoc adaptation of theoretical principles according to momentary needs or whims: it is a question of negotiating a path between always impure positions [italics mine], seeing that politics is always bound up with what it contests (including theories) and that theories are always implicated in various political struggles (whether this is acknowledged or not.)" [190]

Donna Haraway names her well-known "Cyborg Citizen" metaphor of humans merging into hybrids as one part of this ongoing" impure" political project. Haraway looks for ways in which people can claim "pleasure in the confusion of boundaries

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[187] Trinh T. Minh-Ha, *When the Moon Waxes Red: Representation, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (NY: Routledge, 1991) quoted in Yeatman*, Postmodern Revisionings of the Political*, 18.
[188] Yeatman, *Postmodern Revisionings of the Political*, 18.
[189] Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs," in *Feminism/Postmodernism*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson (NY: Routledge, 1990), 86.
[190] E. A. Grosz, "A Note of Essentialism and Difference," in *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct*, ed. Sneja Gunew (London and NY: Routledge, 1990), 342.

and for responsibility in their construction."[191] This is a politics in which one can commit to "partiality, irony, intimacy and perversity,"[192] and "transgressed boundaries, potent fusions and dangerous possibilities which progressive people might explore as one part of needed political work."[193] This sort of political model requires strategies and practices which are formed in the present, based on the intimate specificities of each situation and which deliberately destabilise hierarchical oppression. The following two chapters will argue that new understandings of community and site can offer guerrilla artists new political strategies that are appropriately multiplicitous, specific and self-reflexive. Differential guerrilla artists engage with many different political strategies, including protest, welfare and identity positioning, but they are constantly changing tactics based on the particular needs of their communities and no one strategy takes dominance. The only constant in this model of political participation is a commitment to challenge intimate relations of power by engaging, supporting and developing creative, everyday solutions to problems of social justice.

Conclusions

Political participation can be understood in a much broader framework than one of opposition, development, or identity positioning. Through the work of Foucaultian scholars and theories of everyday life, definitions for politics can be extended to encompass the ways in which guerrilla artists and their participants shift intimate relations of power at the level of everyday life and imagine themselves outside the binaries that define modern society. While the artists and participants may not use these theoretical terms to describe their own activity, this framework points to the places where these artworks have the most potential for efficacious intervention. This chapter has sketched out one possible framework for understanding politics. It is a broad view which is clarified further in the next two chapters. These will examine the specific ways that guerrilla artists utilise contemporary ideas of site and community as political tools which disturb and highlight power relations based in intimacy, difference and the everyday.

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[191] Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs," 193.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Ibid., 196.

CHAPTER THREE

Post-Structuring Community:

The Politics of Contemporary Community in

New Guerrilla Art

> It is not a question of claiming that the old ways have been erased, consigned to history, but of identifying something new taking shape within and alongside the old arrangements, something different threatening or promising to be born. Its birth is slow, complex; it is conceived out of the intersection of heterogeneous, social, political, discursive, and technological shifts, often in apparently unconnected fields. But in this process, and despite its family resemblance to now deceased relatives, a novel sense of community is emerging both as a means of problematisation and as a means of solution.[194]

> Nikolas Rose- Powers of Freedom (1999)

Community-based guerrilla artists and companies utilise two main political strategies. They engage with contemporary "community" and they work with the complexities of "site-specificity". This chapter examines the nature of the contemporary community. I argue that what I will define as "post-structured" communities are being explored and foregrounded in community-based art, critical theory and popular culture. Guerrilla artists who foreground post-structured community in their work open new paths for political challenge, debate and change. As Nikolas Rose suggests in the evocative quote above, this is a process of acknowledging and working within both old and new visions of community, in order to imagine new ways of engaging with difference and intimate relations of power. This chapter builds on the new philosophical work on guerrilla politics in earlier chapters. It is inspired and shaped by insights from artists, even as it offers new theoretical frames and vocabularies to examine the political tactics of guerrilla performance groups.

This chapter begins with the term "community", as defined by critical theorists and community-based artists. This section examines why community remains an important concept despite the fact that it is so often used without a clear definition. I examine the problematic nature of communities when defined as systems of

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[194] Nikolas S. Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge [United Kingdom]; NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 205.

"affective contact" or a basis of "commonality", as tools of "representation", as political "coalitions", or as systems of "exclusion". By examining these different communities I argue that every definition of community is problematic when applied in performance by the guerrilla artist, as every definition has negative implications when aiming for universal social justice. By examining examples of community, and analysing the "return to community" in recent philosophy and art theory, this chapter demonstrates that there are many types of community formation occurring simultaneously in contemporary society. It then proposes a "post-structured" explanation of community which accepts all of these definitions of community while admitting they are all political, partial and problematic. I define contemporary communities as "post-structured" that is "always under contestation", because they provide means for connection at the same time as they intrinsically expose all social groups, however powerful, as vulnerable to unravelling and destabilisation. Acknowledging and highlighting the "post-structured" nature of the term "community" unveils the power structures inherent within the notion.

Part Two of this chapter argues that contemporary artists who engage with post-structured community negotiate a changed sense of presence, boundary, political positioning and ethics. Using recent post-structural theory and feminist theory, this chapter shows how post-structured community can have an ethical base and allow guerrilla artists to work with temporary alliances to preserve difference. I argue that post-structuring community in this way allows artists to work for universal social justice while acknowledging the problematic and performative nature of community formations. By preserving what I call "difference without threat", it is possible to engage with a self-reflexive sustaining and questioning of the community formations which are so important to so many. I conclude by summarising how engaging with post-structured community is a political strategy that can allow for the creation and preservation of multiple social narratives in place of the singular and encourage the creation of alternative networks of contact and support. Community-based guerrilla artists foregrounding this post-structured sense of community over more traditional models of performance politics return to hidden and subjugated knowledges and community-based pedagogies to find new answers to problems of social justice in the twenty-first century.

PART ONE

DESTABILISING COMMUNITY

"Defining" Community

> Despite our desperate, eternal attempt to separate, contain, and
> mend, categories always leak.
>
> Trinh Minh Ha, "Women, Native", from Other: Writing Postcoloniality
> and Feminism (1989)[195]

The concept of "community" is extremely difficult to contain. It leaks from every
category. Obviously, the word describes intimate networks of social interrelations, but
examining where humans play out these relations, is a slippery subject.[196] Despite
the many theories around the concept of community in sociology, psychology,
political sciences and philosophy, community still remains a problematic notion when
studying political performance. Even attempting to trace a genealogy of community in
performance is complex, as it has been simultaneously used to describe
geographical locations, historical connections and memories, genetic and cultural
locations, political affiliation, economic constraints and psychological imperatives.
Many community artists accept a commonsense definition of community as a
repository of "common characteristics" or "shared symbols" without examining the
political implications of the notion of commonality. How is it possible to reconcile such
radically different understandings of community in order to understand how this
concept might be useful in studying new community-based guerrilla performance
which, as shown in the previous chapter, is grounded in ideas of difference, everyday
specificities and dispersed and ubiquitous discourses of power? I argue that
community-based guerrilla artists engage with community not just because it is an
important notion to so many people, but also because it allows for the destabilisation
of oppressive social structures. They work with definitions of community which utilise
and exceed notions of commonality. In order to understand these new

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[195] Trinh T. Minh-Ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington:
Indiana University Press, 1989), 94.
[196] Sociologists Bell and Newby for instance note over ninety definitions for community in formal
sociology alone. See Colin Bell and Howard Newby, *Community Studies; an Introduction to the
Sociology of the Local Community* (NY,: Praeger Publishers, 1972). Effrat sees definitions of community
in political science, economics and social work as " like trying to scoop up jello with your fingers. You
can get hold of some, but there's always more slipping away from you". Marcia Pelly Effrat, ed., *The
Community: Approaches and Applications* (NY,: Free Press, 1974), 12.

understandings of community which feed the work of the community-based guerrilla artist, it is necessary to understand that not all types of community formation can be separated from relations of power.

The Politics of Community Formation

Community is full of contradictions. Overall it seems to be connected inherently with "identity", yet identity categories are themselves complex and difficult to define. On an "experiential" level, for example, my body knows community as what anthropologist Victor Turner famously called "communitas",[197] or an affective feeling of closeness and relational interplay with others and this phenomenological experience has been successfully examined by anthropologists, and psychologists.[198] However the personal phenomenology of community is not capable of completely explaining its political implications. Cultural studies scholar Raymond Williams coined the phrase "structures of feeling",[199] which Bruce McConachie summarises as "the emotional binding generated by values and practices shared by a specific group, class or culture".[200] In a 1998 article on redefining what he calls grassroots theatre, McConachie reminds the reader that, in the case of community performances, these "structures of feeling" are too often discussed in isolation from the social and political structures which engendered them.[201]

Affective senses of community are useful ways to combat isolation and initialise structures of communication, support and contact, and this is an important part of all community performance work.[202] It is, however, difficult to completely accept communion impulses as truly "communal" or to understand emotional bonds as the primary bonds of community formation. I may feel a sense of connection, warmth or commonality with certain groups of people initialised, for example, by my experience in ritualised group behaviour, by my ongoing daily interactions or sensations of

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[197] See Victor Witter Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*, vol. 1, Performance Studies Series (NY City: PAJ Publications, 1982).

[198] See Anthony P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (Chichester [London]; NY: Tavistock Publications, 1985) and D.W. McMillan and D.M. Chavis, "Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory," *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 14, no. 1 (1986).

[199] Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1965), 64.

[200] Bruce McConachie, "Approaching The "Structure of Feeling" In Grassroots Theater," in *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance*, ed. Susan C. Haedicke and Tobin Nellhaus (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 35.

[201] Ibid., 36.

[202] See Kuppers' poignant analysis of two Welsh performances which were both networks of support and creativity and spaces for "engaged citizenry". Petra Kuppers, "Community Arts Practices: Improvising Being-Together," *Culture Machine*, 8 (2006), http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk (accessed November 1, 2007).

oppression that took place with others, or by "sharing" emotion laden or spiritual or religious experiences, but this is not necessarily reciprocated, articulated or imagined in the same terms by the other members of this group. Indeed, my perceived sense of connectedness may be masking important conflicts, forcing the group to fit my own expectations and desires. When there are very different relations of power between community members, this perceived feeling of commonality may in fact become a dangerous way to justify judgment or control. It may also lead me to sentimentalize interpersonal connections, masking the negative impact the community may be having on my own life or on the wider culture. It seems dangerous when defining community politics to ignore the ways in which "communitas" can contribute to a loss of personal and social power.

In my performance work with young people in Bellingen in the 1990s, for example, sentimental perceptions of small-town living or of "alternative" life on communes and multiple occupancy properties near to the town often masked significant social problems. For many young people the cognitive dissonance between their distinctive, inherited sentimentalized connection to the concept of the warm, loving "alternative" community of Bellingen and their own unacknowledged experiences of neglect, sexual exploitation, isolation, poverty, drug problems and dysfunctional family lives left them confused and bitter and, it could be argued, thus contributed to further social problems including the high teenage-suicide rate in the area.[203] They were encouraged by their families and local government to privilege the everyday experiences of communion over other, less explored connections with other young people. [204] The sentimentalized experiences of Bellingen life promoted inside communes and by local townspeople denied the existence of other entrenched social problems and left young people alienated from each other, from their families and from any decision-making process in local cultural development. In this case it was important that community art work could give these young people the resources to examine their structures of feeling critically, to examine the problems with their sense of community, and to explore other types of networks of interrelation. As Sonia

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[203] Youth suicide statistics in rural Australia, available from State Government of New South Wales, NSW Health Department, Centre for Mental Health, *The NSW Suicide Data Report: Suicide in NSW - We Need to Know More* (2004.) Available from http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/ (accessed May 12, 2005).
[204] Young people in Greymantle workshops named affective experiences with communal living arrangements, group creative processes and rituals and sustainable living practices which encourage harmony with the natural environment as important to them and yet unable to make up for other serious social problems. There were conflicts with parents, communes and council members when Greymantle, alongside local youth centres and counselling services attempted to get young people to find support networks outside dysfunctional family and living situations.

Kuftinec suggests, when discussing US community performance group Cornerstone, communal commonality is a "mythology" which can "conceal very real difference" in the "unstable and temporary nature of community".[205]

Community also acts as a tool for people to mutually "represent", celebrate, expose and exchange their "common" social characteristics,[206] historical specificities,[207] geographical locations.[208] Community can be a shared repository for local specificities, languages, oral histories and cultural signifiers and community performance can aid in the process of community representation and preservation. Self-representation, however, proves a notion both flawed and necessarily incomplete. Is my experience as a young woman, as a resident of a small country town, as a child brought up without electricity, or as a lover of hip-hop or a member of Generation-X or Y somehow meant to define my essential characteristics? [209] How could it be expected to stand in for other people's experience of the same sexuality, geography, economic status, interests or history? Who decides how to "represent" a community and whose experiences and voices are being valued, covered up or denied in this representation process? How am I being labelled and constrained by the "shared" symbols and signifiers created by my community on my behalf? This problem of representation has been one of the strongest criticisms of the field of "identity politics".[210]

 Community "representation" is also, as Richard Schechner reminded us, an activity of "restored behaviour" where "independent of the causal systems (social,

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[205] Sonja Kuftinec, "A Cornerstone for Rethinking Community Theatre," *Theatre Topics*, 6, no. 1 (1996): 95.
[206] Examples of ethnic community as cultural resource in Susan Cahan and Zoya Kocur, eds, *Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education* (NY: Routledge, 1995) and Bano Murtuja, "The Bubble of Diaspora: Perpetuating "Us" Through Sacred Ideals," in *Returning (to) Communities: Theory, Culture and Political Practice of the Communal.*, ed. Stefan Herbrechter and Michael Higgins (Amsterdam and NY: Rodopi, 2006). My understanding of sexuality as a community identifier is informed by Tammy Grimshaw, "The Gay "Community:" Stabilising Political Construct or Oppressive Regulatory Regime?," in *Returning (to) Communities: Theory, Culture and Political Practice of the Communal.*, ed. Stefan Herbrechter and Michael Higgins (Amsterdam and NY: Rodopi, 2006).
[207] Examples of history, memory and identity stored and explored through community-based performance and writing in Ann Jellicoe, *Community Plays: How to Put Them On*, *Methuen Dramabook.* (London and NY: Methuen, 1987) and Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory* (London and NY: Verso, 1994).
[208] Rose and Popke show new configurations of geographical community. Gillian Rose, "Spatialities of 'Community', Power and Change: The Imagined Geographies of Community Arts Projects," *Cultural Studies*, 11, no. 1 (1997) and E. Jeffrey Popke, "Poststructuralist Ethics: Subjectivity, Responsibility and the Space of Community," *Progress in Human Geography; London*, 27, no. 3 (2003).
[209] For a useful examination of Generation X as both a media posture and an identity referent see Jim Finnegan, "Theoretical Tailspins: Reading "Alternative" Performance in Spin Magazine " *Postmodern Culture,* 10, no. 1 (1999). .http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern_culture/index.html (accessed September 10, 2004).
[210] For a history of the problems with identity politics in performance, see Carlson, "Performance and Identity."

psychological, technological) that brought them into existence, the original 'truth' or 'source' of the behaviours may be lost, ignored or contradicted even while this truth or source is apparently being honoured and observed".[211] Alan Filewod suggests that artwork based on unproblematised representations of communal structures "enacts and exposes the social formations that create communities, but it can more often does replay essentializing and totalizing fictions of sentimentalized communities of geography, ethnicity, class and gender"[212] Filewod suggests this perceived "community representation" in theatre work can, in fact, "dehistoricise political resistance", leading to performances which fail the participants by creating artworks unconnected to the specific daily realities and oppressions facing the people it claims to serve.[213] This problem of representation as dangerous generalisation is faced by all community-based guerrilla artists who are committed to a politics of intimacy and difference.

Many artists believe that positive communal representation is the best way to help a community develop as it helps to celebrate community ties. UK-based community-theatre director Ann Jellicoe, for example, famously suggested that the work she advocated in the 1970s by her company the Colway Theatre Trust and her extremely influential book, *Community Plays and How to Put Them On*, was an attempt to focus on the "positives" and "reconcile the community".[214] In the face of widespread economic or social disadvantage in small towns across the UK, Jellicoe successfully promoted a model which listed the ways in which an artistic group could go into a town to create a "community play". This is often referred to in Australia as "the Colway model". For Jellicoe, process deliberately ignored difference "to give [people] something to celebrate together."[215] This model is still being used by community performance artists across Australia and internationally.[216] Richard Barr notes of Jellicoe, that, despite the undeniable benefits of her work, "[h]ers is a frankly idealistic, totalizing ambition to embrace all involved by accessing one common core."[217] The Colway model presents difficulties for practitioners as it presumes that it

[211] Richard Schechner, *Between Theater & Anthropology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 38.
[212] Alan Filewod, "Coalitions of Resistance: Ground Zero's Community Mobilization," in *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance*, ed. Susan C. Haedicke and Tobin Nellhaus (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 89.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Jellicoe, Community Plays: How to Put Them On, 122.
[215] Ibid.
[216] For examples of Australian community performance that could be seen to respond to the Colway Model, see Neil Cameron, *Fire on the Water: A Personal View of Theatre in the Community*, *Currency Dramatists Series.* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1993).
[217] Barr, *Rooms with a View: The Stages of Community in the Modern Theater*, 21.

is possible and helpful to ignore all community politics.[218] The definition of community as communal and representational, however warm for those who feel included, cannot completely embrace the many who do not fit any representation of the "common vision" and yet who still connect with each other through other, more tenuous frameworks. Australian community-based artist and scholar Mary-Ann Hunter also reminds us, in reference to recent feminist site-specific work in Australia, that community representation cannot always be "completely celebratory".[219] Community performance may urgently need to engage in "collision or confrontation" to honestly interrogate local experience. Hunter argues that this confrontation and collision by what I have defined as community-based guerrilla artists can still "make for effective community cultural development".[220]

"Exclusion" can also work at the heart of a community. Anthropologist Anthony P. Cohen suggests that people mark the borders of a community symbolically and physically as part of the formation process.[221] Those who are "not of the community" are used to define those who are accepted and these borders are strictly (sometimes violently) patrolled and defended and are defined by a series of semiotic markers and rituals. For some, being born into a certain community places them inside an economic, emotional and physical boundary which is extremely difficult to cross. For them, as John Baylis suggests, community can become something they "desperately want to escape from".[222] Vulnerable communities understandably often seek to reinforce community "borders" in order to ensure the survival of certain social structures, historical perspectives or cultural signifiers in the face of colonisation by powerful outside influences. This is particularly evident in diasporic communities in Australia where communities carefully patrol ethnic norms to conserve culture and tradition.[223] Exclusion can however contribute to problems of social justice. The problems of exclusion in diasporic communities has been explored by many community-based performance companies.

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[218] Hawkins maps the history and problems with the growth of "affirmation" and "celebration" as key terms in Australian CCD practice. See Hawkins and Australia Council Community Arts Program., *From Nimbin to Mardi Gras: Constructing Community Arts.*
[219] Mary Ann Hunter, "No Safety Gear: Skate Girl Space and the Regeneration of Australian Community-Based Performance," in *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance,* ed. Susan C. Haedicke and Tobin Nellhaus (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 338.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, 12.
[222] John Baylis (Artistic Director of Urban Theatre Projects, 1997-2001), interview by the author, Urban Theatre Projects Company Office, Bankstown, Sydney, September, 2000. See Appendix A.
[223] For an analysis of border control in Indian and Pakistani diasporas, see Vinay Lal and Ahmar Mahboob, "The Politics of Identity among Diasporic Communities Along the Pacific Rim: Indians in the United States and Pakistanis in Australia," *APRU Fellows Program Collaborative Research Paper Award Submissions* (2005), http://www.apru.org/activities/afp/LalMahboob.doc (accessed June 5, 2007).

Consciously or unconsciously community artists contribute to the process of helping communities mark these borders, but this political manoeuvring can also be a deterrent to social justice. It is not just the obvious example of powerful national, ethnic or religious groups who patrol community "borders" for their own political agendas. Subculture Studies have shown that there can be equally violent confrontations over belonging in communities based on urban tribal markers, mutual disadvantage, alternative lifestyles or "common" interests.[224] In my own experience, my gender, my race, my age, my bodyweight, my nationality, my clothing, my public schooling, my accent, my "credentials" in "lifestyle" or "interest" communities and my regional home address have at various times opened doors to new communities and at other times provided insurmountable and, on occasion, dangerous barriers to my ability to connect with others. This is compounded when these barriers have affected my artwork. Community performance scholar Sonja Kuftinec reminds us through her work in the war-torn Balkans that there are many places in the world where crossing these community borders can actually become a violent act, where "difference can mean life or death"[225] In these cases, basing a definition of community on exclusion can negate the aims of artists aiming for universal social justice and limit the scope of the "community" artist. Many contemporary artists such as Kuftinec see their art work as an attempt to bridge these dangerous borders between communities and look for new ways to understand community without the need for a politics of violent exclusion.[226]

Post-structural philosophers of community such as Nancy, Agamben and Levinas remind us that basing community on any type of group exclusion even if this exclusion helps preserve culture works against the fact that in some ways a sense of universal community is basic to the formation any sense of self.[227] Rather then attempting to remove, renegotiate or bridge differences in order to promote commonality, they encourage a sense of community which is based on foregrounding what I call "difference without threat", thus enabling communities with much more

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[224] See Dick Hebdige, *Subculture, the Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen, 1979).
[225] Sonja Kuftinec, "The Art of Bridge Building in Mostar," in *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance*, ed. Susan C. Haedicke and Tobin Nellhaus (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 65.
[226] Ibid.
[227] See Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, trans. Peter Connor, et al., vol. 76, *Theory and History of Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, vol. 1, *Theory out of Bounds* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) and Emmanuel Levinas, "Meaning and Sense," in *Collected Philosophical Papers* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands; Boston Hingham, MA: Nijhoff; Kluwer Academic, 1987).

shifting and porous borders. This point will be discussed further later in the chapter, as it explains how contemporary community-based artists can work with difference as an essential human quality rather than a problem to be negotiated.

Community is also a process where meaning is continually being made through the group creation of symbols and signs. Anthony P. Cohen suggests that people "construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity."[228] Baz Kershaw has showed that when performers use or challenge important community symbols in a performance, the performers and audience can successfully and democratically renegotiate the borders of the community together.[229] In my view, however, "shared" symbols, however democratically established, can always be used to alienate and exclude, and they should not be valorized as the unproblematic heart of community. Community signification needs to be understood as temporary, compromised and politically charged; only then can it be useful to community artists focused on social justice. I will return to this point later in this chapter as I discuss what Judith Butler has famously established as "performativity" and its place in a post-structured definition of community.

Even when one does read community as inherently "constitutive" to the formation of social identity, the concept still seems to exceed its boundaries. While communitarian philosophers such as Charles Taylor, for example, might insist that a sense of community is an inherent human quality and tied to a "natural" sense of citizenship, they also argue that community depends upon shared equal and "rational" dialogue and what Taylor calls "mutual recognition".[230] Community artists who base their understanding of community on the premise that all humans can interact with these sorts of equal relations of power risk erasing the very real inequalities and subject positions which shape social interrelation and identity. This ties social participation to

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[228] Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, 118.
[229] Baz Kershaw*, The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention* (London and NY: Routledge, 1992), 15-41.
[230] Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann and Charles Taylor (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 1994). Taylor can be read alongside other "communitarian" scholars of this period including Michael J. Sandel, "The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self," *Political Theory* 12, no. 1 (1984), Michael Walzer, "The Concept of Civil Society," in *Toward a Global Civil Society* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1995) and Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd corr. ed., *Paperduck.* (London: Duckworth, 1985). These sociologists critique neo-liberal identity positions such as those seen in John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971) and attempt to reconstruct ideas of self as constituted by relationship to other people. These debates often elided the difference between genders, cultures etc. and were subsequently critiqued post-modern feminists in the 1990s.

shared language structures and the universal ability to enter into dialogue, a conflation which has been critiqued by both post-structural cultural theorists and by postcolonial and feminist scholars.

Many cultural studies scholars deny that rational notions of a "shared language" or "communal structures of thinking" are somehow unpoliticised or "natural" encounters and their work can further illuminate the problems of basing community on the assumption that mutual recognition is possible or desirable. Post-structural scholars such as Alphonso Lingis argue that this supposition often results in the oppression or denial of the important differences which do not fit into "rational" definitions of culture and communication.[231] Lingis clarifies how any inherent human qualities of mutual recognition as a basis for community is problematic.[232] He sees this 'rational community' as one based on rational forms of knowledge producing a common discourse. This common discourse arises with rational speech acts, pledges that accept strangers as the judge. Every rational insight or utterance becomes part of the anonymous discourse of universal reason, each individual facing the imperative to formulate speech in universal terms. In the human community one finds a work closed in itself and representative of its own thought. He notes that in this process of searching for inherent rational community, as "the individual finds his own thought is representative of the whole system of rational thought, he will find in his fellow man but the reflection of his own rational nature".[233]

Lingis suggests that the production of rational discourse transforms action as

> actions driven by mute drives and cravings of one's own are transformed into actions motivated by reasons, which as reasons are not one's own and solicit the assent of others. [...][s]uch initiatives can enlist the efforts of others in common motivations and become collective actions.[234]

"Rational" community thus absorbs and denies that which is not common. Lingis shows throughout his work that in our "rational collective enterprises" we find, "in principle, nothing alien to us, foreign, and impervious to our understudying; we find only ourselves". [235] For Lingis, basing community on assumed mutual recognition thus denies difference and reduces community relations to enterprises which suit preconceived notions of what is rational and possible. I find these kinds of

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[231] Alphonso Lingis, *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common*, Studies in Continental Thought. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 5-25.
[232] Ibid., 5.
[233] Ibid., 6.
[234] Ibid., 7.
[235] Ibid.

preconceptions particularly problematic when negotiating the multiple community languages, identities, pedagogies and subjugated knowledges which are the subject matter of the contemporary guerrilla performance artist.

In seeing mutual recognition and communication as the basis of identity, communitarians such as Taylor also ignored postcolonial scholar Gayatri Spivak's famous question: Can a subaltern "Other" actually speak at all? In the light of the colonising force of language, judgement and representation, Spivak reminds us that there are occasions when the "Other" may not be able to communicate and know its own conditions and that, for "the 'true' subaltern group, whose identity is its difference, there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself".[236] Dialogue is thus impossible. While it is important to recognise that human beings are dialogue-based and always dependent on each other for survival, Taylor's community as "mutual recognition" ignores the fact that differences between people cannot and should not always be ignored or negotiated. Community artists who understand community as based in the creation of a "shared language" must be aware of the power relations inherent in the production of rational, mutual systems of communication and understanding.

As discussed in Chapter Two, in the 1990s many feminist scholars rejected the communitarian position as incomplete, and called for political "coalitions" in place of communities.[237] While scholars disagreed over the application of concepts such as "difference" and "recognition", this turn to coalition politics and difference was a response to the communitarian debate and to the growing acknowledgement that second-wave feminism needed ways to recognise and support the radical differences between women, while still promoting social groups which created a platform for agitating for social change. Iris Marion Young, for example, advocated for social groups which are what she calls "cities of strangers", people articulating shared social bonds based purely on "the relations in which they stand to others", rather than any shared identity.[238] She uses this "city" to position these "city" dwellers based on the structural challenges they face, seeing them as those who can potentially strategically attack and challenge "structural difference and inequality" in society.

[236] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, ed. Helen; Griffiths Tiffin, Gareth; Ashcroft, Bill (London and NY: Routledge, 1995), 40.
[237] See Bernice Reagon, "Coalition Politics: Turning the Century," in *Changing Our Power: An Introduction to Women's Studies*, ed. Jo Whitehorse, Donna Langston Cochran, and Woodward Carolyn (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 1991).
[238] See Iris Marion Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*, *Oxford Political Theory*. (Oxford; NY: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Scholars like Young, Haber and Yeatman argued that contemporary groups should be based on a "politics of difference."[239]

For many theorists and artistic practitioners "coalition" remains a better word than "community" to describe groups that are very diverse. Filewod defines "coalition theatre" as theatre which "identifies not with particularized communities but, rather, with emergent coalitions of resistance, communities activated by the political moment".[240] In community-arts practice, many differentiate between what Haedicke and Nellhaus call "community in the ordinary sense (which generally assumes commonality) and coalition (which generally assumes difference)."[241] I find this differentiation problematic, as many contemporary self-defined "communities" are connected in ways which question commonality, and many political alliances are bound by closer ties and less acts of choice than are indicated by the word "coalition". For this reason I prefer a definition of "community" which can accommodate the many different ways we form social networks of interrelation *and* the parts of our identities which take shape without our conscious choice or agency. Community as political coalition is not itself a completely satisfactory explanation for the diversity of community relations in the twenty-first century and needs to be further examined if it is to be useful to understanding the work of contemporary community-based guerrilla artists.

Nor can one forget the relentless use of community as an economic focus and as a government strategy. US economy and sociology theorist, Miranda Joseph, for example, sees communities as groups which enforce the logic of capitalism as "community legitimates the social hierarchies of gender, race, nation, and sexuality that capitalism implicitly requires".[242] She uses case studies which attack the "romance of community" and ties many different types of "community" groups, which may consider themselves "alternative groups", to the forces of production and consumption.[243] Nikolas Rose, amongst other governmentality theorists, reminds us that community can be very useful to governments, as it allows for self-regulating

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[239] Iris Marion Young, "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," in *Feminism/Postmodernism*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson (NY: Routledge, 1990), Haber, *Beyond Postmodern Politics: Lyotard, Rorty, Foucault* and Yeatman, *Postmodern Revisionings of the Political*.
[240] Filewod, "Coalitions of Resistance: Ground Zero's Community Mobilization," 101-02.
[241] Haedicke and Nellhaus, eds, *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance*, 26.
[242] Miranda Joseph, *Against the Romance of Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), viii.
[243] Ibid. See also Miranda Joseph, "Performing Community: An Analysis of Discourses of Community in the Late Twentieth-Century United States" (PhD Thesis, Stanford University, 1996).

bodies that invisibly and unthinkingly reproduce government values at a local level.[244] John Baylis suggests that in Australia the most likely place to hear the word "community" is in the mouth of a conservative politician, determined to enforce their own moral platform as "community values" without any recourse to quantitative studies of opinion.[245] Distressing historical examples of the rubric of community being appropriated for political gain can be found in the speeches of fascist politicians. Hitler, for example, infamously used the word "community" (*Gemeinschaft*) as an exclusive category to refer to ideals of race and blood "purity" which violently excluded entire social groups and justified torture and genocide.[246] In these cases community from the outside seems to refer to networks which focus on affective contact, mutual representation, identity development and preservation of local specificities, while in fact it is a generalisation which is reinforcing systems of oppression and social inequity, ultimately benefiting the rich and powerful.

In the face of these appropriations, the notion of community seems to become a dangerously non-specific term for the contemporary guerrilla artist. Baz Kershaw suggests that cultural theorists in the 1980s and '90s avoided the term, as the "history of community finally has been dislocated".[247] He claims that it is not just the problems with what Barr calls community's "embarrassing richness of semantic possibilities"[248] which deter critical theorists from using the word "community". Kershaw maintains that anything "that smacks of collectivism, whether in the 'traditions' of conservative thinking, or in the 'communes' of left-wing Utopias, is treated with suspicion, so that sometimes even the slightest hint of 'community' becomes a disease of the imagination, a nostalgic hankering after a shared sense of the human that never actually existed."[249] He cites Foucaultian scholar Steven K. White, who suggests that "[a]ny project that claims to act on behalf of common good 'may easily be [...] extended in ways that so tighten the bonds of community as to

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[244] Rose also argues that community has the potential to provide heterogeneity in the face of homogenous power structures. See Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, 329-30.
[245] Baylis, interview. See Appendix A.
[246] Adolf Hitler repeatedly referred to "community" in his speeches justifying Jewish genocide. He described a National Socialist program to, "abolish the liberalistic concept of the individual and the Marxist concept of humanity and to substitute therefore the folk community, [Gemeinschaft] rooted in the soil and bound together by the bond of its common blood." Adolf Hitler, "On National Socialism and World Relations Speech Delivered in the German Reichstag on January 30th 1937," *German Propaganda Archive*, Trans. Randall Bytwerk, Grand Rapids, MI, Calvin College (2004), http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/ (accessed February 14, 2008).
[247] Kershaw, *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention*, 192.
[248] Barr, *Rooms with a View: The Stages of Community in the Modern Theater*, 5.
[249] Kershaw, *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention*, 192.

suffocate diversity".[250] For Kershaw, community art must thus "provide radical responses to this crisis of community in post-modernity"[251] by encouraging "new forms of collective action".[252] In order to understand twenty-first century communities and the artworks which engage with them, a new understanding of community is required. I argue that rather than reclaiming the collective as an unproblematic notion, we need a way to identify community which acknowledges the very real problems of claiming "collectivism" while understanding how ethical intimate social structures could be created and sustained.

Returning to Community

In the last five years there has been a rejection of what Kershaw saw as the post-modern denial of group formation and a subsequent "return to communities" in philosophical and cultural theory. [253] This is marked by new scholarly work negotiating the seeming contradictions of community and difference through post-structural theory, particularly that of Jean-Luc Nancy and Jacques Derrida.[254] There has also been a simultaneous surge in publications which acknowledge the work of new community artists across the world.[255] This upsurge in critical interest in community has been explained by the editors of new volumes of critical theory on the subject as occurring due to a number of cultural changes. Some discuss cultural anxiety and attempts to reclaim the possibility for close-knit social formations in this "age of [economic and environmental] uncertainties."[256] It is true that technological innovation and industrialisation, environmental and social disasters and globalised manufacturing have rapidly changed the way people visualise their connections to notions such as "society", "culture" and "nation". This may be affecting citizens, scholars and artists who have all returned to community as a way to visualise

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[250] Stephen K. White, *Political Theory and Postmodernism*, *Modern European Philosophy* (Cambridge ; NY: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 125, quoted in Baz Kershaw, *The Radical in Performance: Between Brecht and Baudrillard* (London: Routledge, 1999), 192.

[251] Kershaw, *The Radical in Performance: Between Brecht and Baudrillard*, 193.

[252] Ibid.

[253] See Stefan Herbrechter and Michael Higgins, eds, *Returning (to) Communities: Theory, Culture and Political Practice of the Communal*, vol. 28, Critical Studies (Amsterdam and NY: Rodopi, 2006).

[254] Dorota Glowacka, "Editorial- Community: Comme-Un?," *Culture Machine* 8 (2006), http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk/frm_f1.htm (accessed December 5, 2006)

[255] For example, Haedicke and Nellhaus, eds, *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance* and Kuppers and Robertson, eds, Community Performance: A Reader.

[256] Stefan Herbrechter and Michael Higgins, "Introduction: Returning (to) Communities," in *Returning (to) Communities: Theory, Culture and Political Practice of the Communal*, ed. Stefan Herbrechter and Michael Higgins (Amsterdam and NY: Rodopi, 2006), 9.

solutions to massive social problems and to social isolation, particularly in urban areas.[257]

There are also calls to turn to new ideas of community in order to respond to "continued global violence" with some sort of collective agency.[258] While it is difficult to assert that the world is more violent than it was in the past, it is certainly true that the scope of global violence across a growing population is terrifying and much more visible than ever before. This has resulted in new, globalised forms of protest. New media and communication strategies have encouraged social movements to proliferate across the developed and developing world and the international social groupings that result exceed traditional Marxist theories of class and production and inspire new definitions of globalised community and politics.[259]

Others attribute this growing body of community research and artistic practice to the proliferation of "alternative formations and collectives that have emerged in place of traditional community and that have been bound together by a different nexus of belonging,"[260] such as "phantom communities, deterritorialized communities, virtual communities, communities without unity, communities of strangers, imagined or imaginary communities."[261] I argue that new virtual communities, such as those found inside Massively Multiplayer Online computer-gaming environments (MMOs), Multi-User Domains (MUDs), or Online Digital Worlds, for example, are connecting through new alignments, allegiances and body/machine interfaces which require new types of vocabularies and new understandings of notions such as communication, interaction, geography and duration.[262] These networks interfere with traditional ideas of community as based on embodied interaction. Online communities are

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[257] See Burnham and Durland, eds, *The Citizen Artist: 20 Years of Art in the Public Arena, an Anthology from High Performance Magazine 1978-1998.*

[258] Michael Strysick, comment on "Call for Papers: The Politics of Community," Calls for Papers-University of Pennsylvania Listserve, 2000, http://cfp.english.upenn.edu (accessed March 20, 2001).

[259] See "New Social Movement" theory, such as Verity Burgmann, *Power, Profit and Protest: Australian Social Movements and Globalisation* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2003) and Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

[260] Glowacka, "Editorial- Community: Comme-Un?".

[261] Herbrechter and Higgins, "Introduction: Returning (to) Communities," 10.

[262] Online role-playing MMOs such as "EverQuest" and "World of Warcraft" are very popular. World of Warcraft has over 8.5 million players and has complex class systems, geography and economics which are manipulated and recreated by the players. While some have argued that virtual gaming worlds, commercial online digital communities and MUDs simply reproduce "real-world" identity markers such as gender and sexuality norms, others argue that the virtual environment allows for new types of subject position, identity and community. See Brett Rolfe, "In-Game Performance and the Player-Avatar Assemblage" (paper presented at the *e-Performance and Plugins: A Mediatised Performance Conference*, School of Media, Film and Theatre, University of NSW, Kensington, Sydney, December 1, 2005).

rediscovering new ways to form affective bonds through virtual engagement.[263] Artists have responded to a host of "alternative formations" with new community-based artistic forms and multi-disciplinary work, resulting in a surge of community-based installation, new media art and site-specific practices, some of which will be discussed in the following chapter. This new artistic work may also have affected the recent return to community within theatre and performance theory.

Other new types of communities are becoming visible which do not fit into traditional models of community as "commonality" or affective communication. Some types of twenty-first century social groups, for example, are deliberately anarchist or parodic.[264] Many community groups cannot be clearly identified as exploitative consumer environments, radical political protest arenas or new communities of interest because they slip uneasily in between all three. One clear example is the proliferation of communities and sub-cultures connected by new technologies and new consumer/producer alignments.[265] Popular technological advances such as video sharing and archiving devices YouTube and DIY online social sites like MySpace, Facebook and Care2Connect, [266] not to mention new mobile phone technologies, are also being utilised by non-commercial and commercial interests simultaneously, creating hybrid networks of consumption, communication and transient interaction that might be defined as new types of communities. [267]

It is clear that in the twenty-first century contemporary communities may have many visible internal inconsistencies and a person may unapologetically and simultaneously exist in multiple communities, all of which form in very different ways

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[263] Ibid. Rolfe, amongst others, argues that embodiment and virtuality are interlinked in increasingly complex fashions in online communities such as online world *Second Life.*

[264] For examples of communities based in parody, see YouTube video sharing website and the attached group discussion boards. See *YouTube Homepage,* Google Inc. http://www.youtube.com/ (accessed August 12, 2007).

[265] See for example NikeTalk, a website forum dedicated to discussion about Nike shoes which has 61163 registered members and included both advertising and poorly disguised viral marketing for Nike products as well as subversive political and personal discussion. It also includes a gallery of new paintings and sculptures created around the Nike brand. *Niketalk: The Ultimate Sneaker Community Homepage* (2002), http://www.niketalk.com/ (accessed June 5, 2007).

[266] "Text mobbing" and "flash mobbing" are terms used to describe how group text messaging and email can bring people together with very little notice for protests, parties, commercial events or spontaneous artworks.

[267] Facebook according to trendcatching.com has 25 million users, growing 3% per week, which is 100,000 new users per day (up from 7.5m users in July 2007), projected to reach fifty million by end of 2007. MySpace has, in addition, to the 80 million (and counting) profiles on the site there are: Two million groups, 1.4 million band profiles, 15 million blogs, 7.3 million classified listings and 6.3 million forum posts. With these statistics it is hardly surprising that *both* commercial interests and social welfare groups are placing profiles onto these sites to attract attention and form new markets or coalitions that I would argue are 21st century communities. Trendcatching Homepage (2007), trendcatching.com (accessed July 3, 2007). See for example the Nestle coffee "persona" Salvatore or the Family Planning Association profile, both at *MySpace Homepage* www.myspace.com (accessed August 12, 2007).

and some of which directly contradict each other. New community art and new philosophical theories of community appearing in the 1990s and the early twenty-first century can be seen as a response to these new social groupings and both current theory and practice demand a more flexible understanding of community, belonging and difference. Understanding how guerrilla artists engage with all of these contemporary ideas of community inside the sphere of performance, however, requires a new place to start, a provisional point, a definition of community which can accommodate these contrasting elements, perhaps by itself remaining perforated and deliberately unsettled; a category which accepts that it will "leak". Such a "post-structured" definition of community, which acknowledges that community is useful both as a network of unity and a tool for destabilisation, would perhaps help to negotiate the ethical problems of understanding community's political power while simultaneously acknowledging the ways in which people value and understand their worlds by many different types of intimate social networks of interrelation.

Community-performance scholars such as Jan Cohen-Cruz look for a way to acknowledge "meaningful identification" while "being open to membership in a number of communities based on multiple identity markers".[268] Haedicke and Nellhaus argue that we need to understand how community can be a "polymorphic concept precisely because it is the product of ever changing social alliances [...] and not hold out hopes for a singular fixed concept of community". [269] If "community" is to mean anything to guerrilla artists, it must be able to accommodate this multiplicity and be tied to the reasons why it remains an important focus for so many people, as well as to the ways it constrains identity and makes political manoeuvring possible. The artists studied in this thesis show community to be an important but multiple notion open to reconstruction. While they may not use this terminology, in practice they utilise a "post-structured" understanding of community formation in their performance work.

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[268] Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, 3.
[269] Haedicke and Nellhaus, eds, *Performing Democracy: International Perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance*, 12.

PART TWO

POST-STRUCTURED COMMUNITY

Definitions of Post-structured Community

Because humans exist in so many different, and at times contradictory, communities, there can never be a single definition of community and the idea of community is always under pressure and prone to destabilisation. All the above types of community formation exist in twenty-first century society and they are all are problematic. A definition of community that presents it as a "post-structured" linguistic and cultural entity requires, however, the admission that all community structures are oppressive and they all need to be challenged. This can be a useful realisation. This builds off my earlier definition of the term "post-structured" as referring to concepts and cultural phenomenon that are "essentially contested and open to reconstruction". I argue, however, that post-structured community, as I define it, is not just multiple and partial, it is also inextricably tied to relations of power.[270]

Marvin Carlson encourages a soluble idea of all contemporary performance as a post-structured cultural activity,[271] an "essentially contested" concept.[272] He suggests, through a juxtaposition of quotes from radical ethnographer Michael Jackson, that the activity of performance negotiates

> a peculiar doubleness [...] that 'encompasses both the rage for order and the impulse that drives us to unsettle or confound the fixed order of things', that accommodates 'our shifting sense of ourselves as subjects and objects, as acting upon and being acted upon by the world, of living with and without certainty, of belonging and being estranged'.[273]

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[270] See detailed definition of the term "post-structured" in the introduction to this thesis, pages 5-6.

[271] Marvin A. Carlson, "What Is Performance?," in *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (London and NY: Routledge, 1996), 1. Carlson takes this term "post-structured" from Erik MacDonald, *Theater at the Margins: Text and the Post-Structured Stage*, *Theater-Theory/Text/Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993).

[272] Carlson, "What Is Performance?" 1. Carlson takes this term "essentially contested" from Mary S Strine, Beverly Whitaker Long, and Mary Frances Hopkins, "Research in Interpretation and Performance Studies: Trends, Issues, Priorities," in *Speech Communication: Essays to Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Speech Communication Association*, ed. Gerald M. Phillips and Julia T. Wood (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990).

[273] Carlson, "What Is Performance?," 192 Carlson's quotes are from Michael Jackson, *Paths toward a Clearing: Radical Empiricism and Ethnographical Inquiry* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

Performances as both "fake" and "real", both "embodied" and "imagined", both "constrained" and "liberating" offer what Carlson calls "a pedagogically inflected field of play at which culture is liminal or liminoid and available for intervention".[274]

I argue that community can also be considered similarly post-structured and that it is similarly able to create a field of play where culture and power are shown to be both important and appropriated, both oppressive and constructed and thus open to interrogation.[275] This image of post-structured community accepts, as Petra Kuppers suggests that community is "a tactical lever, utopian hope and oppressive regime [...] both given *and* longed for, exclusionary *and* inclusive, tradition *and* innovation, located in stories, spaces and habitus."[276] This is the way community is realised in the work of the community-based guerrilla artist.

Australian cultural theorist Linnell Secomb has suggested that new definitions of community can allow it to be seen as "not a common work or project" but a "sharing which is never completed […] this incompletion does not imply lack but suggests the ongoing, never completed, activity of sharing". She concludes,"Community is an incompletion always in process; an unworking, unravelling, unbecoming."[277] In her view understanding community as "fractured" and "unravelling" makes room to challenge oppressive facets of community as it acknowledges that people are always in the process of community formation.[278] The community-based guerrilla artists in this thesis understand community as unravelling and unfinished.

It is my contention that this understanding of community as an "unravelling" concept, that inherently exposes the unfinished, constructed and potentially oppressive nature of any social network, is very useful to understanding twenty-first century communities. When all communities are understood to be post-structured, vitally important to individuals and yet always in the process of unravelling, new ideas of "trace," "boundary," "positioning", and "performativity" emerge. New types of political

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[274] Jill Dolan, "Geographies of Learning: Theatre Studies, Performance, and The "Performative" " *Disciplinary Disruptions* 45, no. 4 (1993).
[275] Indeed, in other articles I have suggested that community can itself be seen as a type of performance. See Rebecca Caines, "Haunted Voices in Everyday Spaces: The Community Based Hip-Hop of Australian "Guerrilla" Artist Morganics," in *Community Performance: A Reader*, ed. Petra Kuppers and Gwen Robertson (London and NY: Routledge, 2007), 27.
[276] Kuppers, "Community Arts Practices: Improvising Being-Together".
[277] Linnell Secomb, "Fractured Community," *Hypatia* 15, no. 2 (2000): 133. Secomb is responding to Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*.
[278] Secomb basis this assertion on her understanding of the work of post-structural theories of scholars, *and* on her understanding of the complex community structures necessary in postcolonial Indigenous Australian cultures.

intervention then become possible and the guerrilla artist can accept and work with the pluralist, temporary and transient nature of contemporary community.

The Elements of Post-Structured Community

Presence

If we accept all the above types of interaction as community, then post-structured community never exists in isolation. Communities multiply and merge. Personal interactions necessarily occur in a social space that always bears "traces" of social networks that have themselves previously dissipated and dissolved. The trace as discussed by Levinas and Derrida, "exposes and threatens the phantasm of a unified self",[279] as it describes a state where the closer one looks for meaning or presence in any "text" the more one discovers that each sign bears the shadows of another previous sign inside itself; each text showing through to the traces of the one that was written before it. As Levinas says, this "occurs by overprinting [...] a trace is a presence of that which properly speaking has never been there, of what is always past,"[280] and as Derrida observes, "[t]here are only everywhere, differences and traces of traces".[281] The post-structured community is a palimpsest, a re-written text (with all the slipperiness which deconstruction exposes in "writing"), where the "trace disturbs the order of the world."[282] These traces effect and challenge the nature of social interaction and presence. There can be no new, separate or ideal social formations: all communities help create, affect and disturb each other and all are haunted by those who have come before. Post-structured communities unsettle the idea that communities can ever be unique or isolated from each other.

Post-structured community is also a living palimpsest, where the traces we identify inside it are not just signs or the echoes of other social networks, but live and re remembered complex "bodies", interacting with each other in intimate social networks. This is a palimpsest of bodies and ghostlike memories invigorated through bodies. In Linnell Secomb's "Haunted Communities", an analysis of Derrida's work on mourning, she suggests that the actively remembered "spectres" of people no longer

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[279] As summarised by Secomb in Linnell Secomb, "Haunted Community," in *The Politics of Community*, ed. Michael Strysick and ebrary Inc. (Aurora, CO: Davies Group, Publishers, 2002), 150.
[280] Levinas, "Meaning and Sense," 104-05.
[281] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International* (NY: Routledge, 1994), xix.
[282] Levinas, "Meaning and Sense," 104.

physically present can haunt society forming "haunted communities" where the re-remembered bodies of the past interact with the physical present, their presence constantly demanding response.[283] This is especially true on the occasion when massive injustices of the past form a lineage that can never ethically be laid to rest. While Secomb was directly referring to the historical and present interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, this model of a community haunted by the trace of the body is a fascinating one and applies to the work of the twenty-first century community-based guerrilla artist.

By taking Secomb's reading a little further, the "bodies" in this understanding of community could be seen as both the present bodies interacting now, by a multitude of face-to-face interactions and more dispersed communications and interrelations, and the live, haunting "spectres" of absent bodies. These spectres could be both those deceased as well as those who have been present and are now separated by time, space or involuntary exclusion, but who are actively reconstituted in the constantly reiterated memories and the "bodies" of those who do make up the community. This type of spectral interaction disturbs linear understandings of time and self-contained ideas of "presence" in potentially useful ways. The demands, desires and specificities of these absent bodies interact with the reactions of those corporeal entities. Post-structured community is the openly "haunted community" and rather than denying these hauntings, contemporary guerrilla artists place these palimpsest-driven narratives, activities, presence, ethical demands and past injustices at the foreground of their work.

Welsh guerrilla performance group Brith Gof, for example, seem particularly "haunted" as they consciously aim to foreground "a complex overlaying of narratives, historical and contemporary",[284] where "history, location, political and industrial ownership, all resonated through the work."[285] In works such as *Goddodin*, set in a closed Rover car factory in Cardiff, [286] Brith Gof worked with bodies and traces of bodies in what co-director Pearson described as "the latest occupation of a location

[283] Secomb, "Haunted Community".
[284] Mike Pearson quoted in Nick Kaye, ed., *Art into Theatre: Performance Interviews and Documents*, vol. 16, *Contemporary Theatre Studies* (Australia: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996), 214.
[285] *Y Llyfyr Glas* by C. McLucas, R. Morgan, and Mike Pearson, Cardiff, 1995 quoted in Nick Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation* (NY: Routledge, 2000), 54.
[286] Their work can be seen as differential guerrilla performance as it is both community-based, site-specific and aimed to rupture and confront cohesive historical or social narratives about places and people.. For specific examples of their work and the Welsh communities it served, see *Brith Gof Homepage* (2007), http://www.brithgof.org/ (accessed June 2, 2008).

where occupations are still apparent and cognitively active."[287] In the following chapter I go on to describe how haunted communities inform the site-specific nature of new guerrilla work. I argue that guerrilla artists who focus on post-structured community deliberately engage with "haunted communities" in fascinating ways. Chapter Five of this thesis shows how young Aboriginal hip-hop artists in Australia perform a community haunted by absent Indigenous and non-Indigenous bodies and histories, sometimes with quite tragic results.

Boundary

One of the thorniest aspects of community philosophy is the role of the "Other" in the formation of community. Where does the boundary of the community enact itself? What is the place of the "Other" in the formation of community? How can community exist without erasing the "Other"? The potential self-reflexivity of a post-structured definition opens up the notion of community to include formations of the "Other" that are both strategic and affective, both social and personal. The "Other" in post-structured community does not have to be a threat, or indeed an alternative identity to some sort of social norm. Instead the "Other" makes it possible for one to have a unique identity. Recent post-structural theory enables one to understand how this is possible. Emmanuel Levinas, Jean-Luc Nancy and Giorgio Agamben all see the formation of a type of community based on difference as a priori to any formation of social groups, each theorist, differently demanding that it is the very acknowledgement of the alterity of the "Other" which makes our identity both possible and ethical. This theory helps to clarify how community-based art, such as those case studies examined in this thesis, can work with community ethically to preserve and sustain what I call "difference without threat".

Levinas and Nancy both map a terrain where, in order to have individuality at all, one first has to acknowledge the existence of the mass "Other" from which we are separate. The difference and inexplicability of that "Other" is vital to being able to define any sense of self. As Secomb summarises:

> The human being is not, for Nancy, an already existing individual who would subsequently form a community with others. Rather, the human existence emerges from the community of others. Community is not produced by the agreement of individuals; rather, human singularities are produced by community. Community does not, therefore, involve

[287] Kaye, ed., *Art into Theatre: Performance Interviews and Documents*, 214.

intentionality, agreement or commonality. We do not make it happen——it enables our becoming.[288]

Nancy defines "community [...] [as] an experience—not, perhaps, an experience that we have, but an experience that makes us be."[289] When we accept that it is difference that makes our identity, community becomes based on a process of differentiation. If the "Other" to me becomes knowable, it has lost its otherness and I have lost my sense of self. We are linked into the experience of community and difference in the creation of our identity.

The significance of Nancy to the post-structuring of community goes further than just accepting the "Other" as constitutive of self. Nancy regards this contact as a point of *exposure* to the extremes of difference, its absolute unknowingness. This continual exposure to difference is vital. He uses examples of extreme difference like birth and death experiences which cannot be shared. As Heesok Chang reminds us:

> The experience of this sharing should not be understood as a selfless fusion into a group (both Nancy and Agamben write continuously against the unsurpassed danger of our political modernity: fascism, Nazism). Rather, our shared singularity takes the form of an exposure. We are exposed to the absence of any substantial identity to which we could belong.[290]

She goes on to claim that the focus of both Nancy and Agamben's philosophy is "exposure to singularity: that means to be scattered together, like strangers on a train, not quite face-to-face, oscillating between the poles of communion and disaggregation."[291] If we are all in this position, of universal community and formative difference, then we are all linked by this ongoing process.

She concludes that it is "this banal relation without relation that exposes our pre-identical singularity, our being-in-common".[292] Linnell Secomb also describes how Nancy's *Inoperative Community* unworks to "[...] engender singularities i[n] the experience of sociality and sharing."[293] Community, for these scholars is not a common identity or common goal, but an activity of interrelation. However as Chang states: "It is the creation of social ties, interaction, and engagement [...] it is this

[288] Secomb, "Fractured Community," 134.
[289] Nancy, The Inoperative Community, 133.
[290] Heesok Chang, "Postmodern Communities: The Politics of Oscillation," *Postmodern Culture* 4, no. 1 (1993), http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern_culture/index.html (accessed September 10, 2004).
[291] Ibid.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid.

sharing that is the basis of freedom and not the autonomy and non-interference that liberal freedom assumes."[294]

Emmanuel Levinas sees an ethical responsibility inherent in this difference, because relation to the absolute "Other" forms our subjectivity, we are then *responsible* to it. He rejects the assimilation of the "Other" into a mutual sharing, instead suggesting in that "the absolute Other cannot be reduced to a relationship to me."[295] Drucilla Cornell neatly summarises Levinas' position on the "Other" when she states: "The alterity of the Other is displayed in her separateness or asymmetry in her stance toward me. She is the stranger; yet as the orphan, the widow and the hungry, she is also the one who judges me on the basis of my responsibility to her."[296] However, this intersubjective relation is for Levinas a non-symmetrical relation. He states: "In this sense I am responsible to the Other without waiting for reciprocity, were I to die for it. Reciprocity is his [sic] affair."[297] While Levinas' description of the face-to-face relation which forms this ethical bond does not necessarily explain how we are to move as social groups in the world in fact, he deliberately separates ethics from any such political manoeuvring it still exposes a much more open formative, interpersonal connection than one of presumed commonality.[298] When the "Other" is necessarily completely different from me in ways I can never understand or rationalise, I am equally different and yet tied together by the formative nature of this difference. I thus have an innate ethical duty to preserve this difference.

For Levinas this is a journey toward the absolute "Other" with no expectation of return. This is not a communication which reduces the "Other" to the "Same", nor an interaction which leaves the self untouched and unchanged from the encounter, but instead is an open-handed work which has no expectation of return, of personal gain, or indeed any result. It is simply an ethics of patience and generosity, "a relationship with the other who is reached without showing itself touched."[299] Community under Levinas is a post-structured activity that could not exist without its unknowable "Other", based on interaction which can never be predicted and the knowledge that if the "Other" were to be completely transparent, the community would wither and cease to exist.

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[294] Ibid.
[295] Emmanuel Levinas and Philippe Nemo, *Ethics and Infinity*, (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985) quoted in Drucilla Cornell, *The Philosophy of the Limit* (NY: Routledge, 1992), 53.
[296] Cornell, *The Philosophy of the Limit*, 53.
[297] Levinas and Nemo, *Ethics and Infinity* quoted in Cornell, *The Philosophy of the Limit*, 53.
[298] Levinas, "Meaning and Sense," 90.
[299] Ibid., 92.

Giorgio Agamben defines a similar, open community, what he calls a "becoming community" based on difference. This is not a work with a predefined purpose, but a state of loving acknowledgement of the specificity of the "Other". In his "elaboration of singularity",[300] named the "whatever singularity", human identity is not mediated by its belonging to some set or class. Heesok Chang draws together Agamben's central themes when she states:

> Nor does [this elaboration of the whatever singularity] consist in the simple negation of all belonging [...] Rather, whatever names a sort of radical generosity with respect to belonging. The singular being is not the being who belongs only here or there, but nor is it the being who belongs everywhere and nowhere [...] This other being always matters to me not because I am drawn to this or that trait, nor because I identify him or her with a favoured race, class, or gender. And certainly not because he or she belongs to a putatively universal set like humanity or the human race [...]. The other always matters to me only when I am taken with all of his/her traits, such as they are.[301]

Agamben found generosity and hope in the specificities and differences between people and a political potential in imagining how differences must be able to coexist without a need for completion and closure. He warns, however, that this generous vision of community without identity is an anathema to ideas of the State and notions of hierarchical power, stating: "Wherever these singularities peacefully demonstrate their being in common there will be Tiananmen, and, sooner or later, the tanks will appear."[302] It is certainly true that communities that cannot be clearly marked by identity characteristics or didactic causes do disturb authorities, as will be shown in the case studies that follow.

Derrida looks for a dream of community, [303] where, as Drucilla Cornell summarises "reconciliation is no longer conceived as unity [...] and [...] the protection and care of difference is not carried out to the detriment of the possibility of mutual self recognition [...] but in its name."[304] This community that acknowledges itself as a continually refashioned dream, "a threatened community",[305] is thus based on both an understanding of inescapable alterity, and an openness to possible, future, unknowable reconciliations. Derrida's dream of community could be called post-structured, as it admits the impossibility and problematics of community while

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[300] Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 10.
[301] Chang, "Postmodern Communities: The Politics of Oscillation".
[302] Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 86.
[303] Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (London: Routledge, 1978), 80.
[304] Cornell, *The Philosophy of the Limit*, 57.
[305] Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 80.

claiming it as an important dream that must be preserved. This relationship is one, which penetrates the "skins" of bodies and self, suggesting we form and care for each other's identities through "networks of reciprocally constituted subjects."[306] Our "contaminated" selves perform to each other without expectation, and in this performance our fragile constructions of self become open to contagion, mutation and growth. In Derrida's vision, we acknowledge the "dream" that is community, while still allowing it to change us and bind us together. This community is post-structured, fragile and constantly changing.

Positioning

In such a move towards essential difference, one has to ask whether it is possible to simultaneously accept community bonds based on the other as radically different and undetermined *and* argue for the deliberate political use of the post-structured community. Perhaps this is the question asked by contemporary performance practitioners who wonder how to work with the tension between the desire to "provide grounding for effective political action by affirming a specific identity and subject position, and the desire to undermine the essentialist assumptions of all cultural constructions."[307] This is an action, as performance studies scholar Elin Diamond suggests, of "slipping back and forth between claiming an identity position and ironically questioning the cultural assumptions that legitimate it".[308] The community-based guerrilla artist, by helping participants repeat and question their communities, works in this helpful resistant position.

Feminist, queer and postcolonial theorists have been particularly forward in demanding that community might be able to exist without erasure or denial of the absolute difference of the "Othered' body while still providing a focus for social change. Their arguments help illuminate how guerrilla artists can help communities to claim temporary political alliances. Many of these feminist arguments lead to defence of social networks formed not by commonality, but by what could be summarised as "positioning" a more strategic deployment of identity and community based on the recognition and celebration of difference, often agitating for political change. Feminist performance studies scholar Jill Dolan states that in feminist studies and activism, for example, "positionality is a strategy that locates one's personal and political

[306] Charles Levin, "La Greffe De Zele: Derrida and the Cupidity of the Text," in *The Structural Allegory: Reconstructive Encounters with the New French Thought*, ed. John Fekete (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 210.
[307] Carlson, "Resistant Performance," 182.
[308] Elin Diamond, "Mimesis, Mimicry, and the 'True-Real'," *Modern Drama,* 32 (1989) quoted in Carlson, "Resistant Performance," 183.

investments and perspectives across an argument, a gesture toward placing oneself within a critique of objectivity, but at the same time stopping the spin of post-structuralist or post-modernist instabilities long enough to advance a politically effective action."[309] A "position" is thus an unstable but effective point of departure. Yeatman calls this "a mode of interaction that works with and invites conflict and confrontation [...] [by means of] the ongoing negotiation of different perspectives and the provisional settlements they achieve".[310] This criticism of community asks for a "politics of difference" based on this positionality.

Iris Marion Young's "politics of difference" is one that, as noted earlier, "values unassimilated otherness" over "impossible communal association".[311] This type of political positioning could also be compared with projects such as that of Diana Fuss and Gayatri Spivak, who have both analysed the "strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest."[312] However, there has been much critique of the notion of any sort of essentialism as an oppositional political device as it can be seen to deny radical difference and ignore the social construction of identity positions. Indeed, Spivak herself has abandoned the term "positivist essentialism" if not the practice.[313] Community art practitioners who unproblematically utilise community as a resistant position are not acknowledging the ubiquitous nature of power and politics at every level of group formation.

However, feminist Foucaultian scholars such as Honi Fern Haber refuse to accept criticism of all community "narratives", like Young's as "presum[ing] subjects that understand one another as they understand themselves [...] thus deny[ing] difference between subjects".[314] She insists that "there is no reason to believe that community understanding or the recognition of similarity does foreclose on the recognition of genuine difference." She goes on to state: "So long as I recognise the many narratives I am I can also recognise that any story about another, or about myself, is

[309] Dolan, "Geographies of Learning: Theatre Studies, Performance, and the "Performative": 420.
[310] Yeatman, Postmodern *Revisionings of the Political* quoted in Barr, *Rooms with a View: The Stages of Community in the Modern Theater*, 186.
[311] Young, "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," quoted in Brooker, *A Concise Glossary of Cultural Theory*, 39.
[312] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (NY; London: Methuen, 1987) quoted in Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature & Difference* (NY: Routledge, 1989), 31.
[313] Spivak claims that misuse of this idea has caused her to abandon the term, 'strategic essentialism', if not the practice. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak Interviewed by Sara Danius and Stefan Jonsson," *Boundary, 2* 20, no. 2 (1993), 24.
[314] Haber*, Beyond Postmodern Politics: Lyotard, Rorty, Foucault*, 121.

necessarily incomplete."[315] Haber's overall summary of a politics of difference is helpful here:

> In making us aware of the artificiality of closure, the law of difference makes politics radically plural, and this can make us more sensitive to and tolerant of difference, if we come to view closures about ourselves as likewise artificial or temporary; each one of us too participates in many different communities.[316]

Strategic positioning, while certainly "a dangerous game",[317] as Haber shows, does not necessarily negate the bond with the "Other" that Nancy and Levinas reminds us has formed us into being. In fact, the politics of difference, as laid out by Haber, admits the partiality of all identity formations while allowing for the creation of temporary and shifting alliances. According to both post-structural community theorists and post-modern feminists like Haber, these shifting temporary alliances can be used to preserve the difference which is so essential to human identity, so long as one understands that any alliance is partial and accept that all utilise potentially oppressive relations of power. This is the way community is used by the guerrilla artists in the case studies in this thesis. Despite inherent problems with strategic essentialism, post-structuring community can allow these shifting temporary alliances to sustain an ethical base.

The Politics and Ethics of Post-Structured Community

By showing radical difference as vitally necessary *and* allowing for positioning for structural change, I would argue, understanding community as post-structured could perhaps ethically negotiate the interpersonal and political nature of community. In the repeated shifting, partial positions we take, the ethical presence of the "Other" actually has an integral place, just as, conversely, inside the generous, ethical bond we initially form with the 'Other we can never know', we may have an implicit duty to actively put strategies in place to protect and cherish this otherness. This is a political duty to our ethical responsibility. If we accept that our only ethical certainty is this inclination to acknowledge the priority of difference in ourselves and others while simultaneously creating new strategies to protect this difference, then post-structured communities have a place as both a qualities of being and as strategic formations of reflection, of refuge and disclosure. They are political and personal simultaneously. Difference is not a threat, it is vital and sustaining and it is our ethical duty and survival priority to preserve this difference. Without it we have no sustainable sense

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[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid.
[317] Carlson, "Resistant Performance," 172.

of self. This is the heart of the post-structured community. While community practitioners may not discuss their own work in these theoretical terms, I believe that many of the most exciting community-based guerrilla artists are using community in this way, to ethically and politically preserve difference by means of temporary and deliberately partial networks of intimate interrelation.

Negotiating Performativity

Unfortunately, it does seem difficult to sustain a belief in community as a position for political change towards social justice in the face of recent post-structural philosophy on identity and psychoanalysis. Work such as that of Judith Butler on the concept of "performativity" has shown that many of the social norms and codes which form identity in contemporary society operate without any agency on behalf of the individual subject. This seems to further weaken the idea that strategic positions such as community, however post-structured and self-reflexive, could help to combat inherent structural inequality in society. [318]

Butler defines performativity as "*that aspect of discourse that has the capacity to produce what it names*", [319] (italics in the original) and she suggests "that this production actually always happens through a certain kind of repetition and recitation".[320] Performativity, in Butler's terms, analysed through her interweaving of the work of Austin, Althusser, Foucault and Derrida (amongst others), works with the linguistic idea of the "performative utterance", an utterance which acts at the same time as it is spoken.[321] She takes this idea further and uses it to examine how speech utterances are played out through the body and also how a critical understanding of performativity could work to undermine the logic of previously assumed "natural" and closed hierarchies, such as language and identity. Political agency becomes contingent in this process because for Butler, "'there is no subject who proceeds or

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[318] Butler's work can be used to understand what she calls the inner "psychic life" of performativity and power. See Judith P. Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power : Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997). Her work, however, also examines the resulting bodily actions of individuals who perform and resist social norms and codes. Clear case studies examining how performativity plays out in the action and lives of homosexual soldiers, victims of racial abuse and artists facing censorship can be found in Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997). Butler also deals directly with the formation of social groups in more recent work on moral philosophy. She argues that moral action can only result from understanding and taking into account the performative social conditions under which one's identity emerges. Judith Butler, "Giving an Account of Oneself," *diacritics* 31, no. 4 (2004).
[319] Judith Butler, "Interview with Peter Osborne and Lynne Segal," *Radical Philosophy,* (1994), http://www.radicalphilosophy.com (accessed June 12, 2007).
[320] Ibid.
[321] See Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (NY: Routledge, 1997).

enacts this repetition of norms' Performativity, in this sense, is a performance by the codes themselves, not of the performer who repeats them."[322]

In my view, if our bodies are formed through the performance of norms, exclusions, and forces beneath our sight, then the formation of any intimate social networks of meaning like community are likewise going to be controlled and mediated through actions and desires shaped by these governed, performative bodies. The intimate social networks the word "community" describes, however resistant, will always be shaped by the hierarchies of language and the multiple lines of performative force which territorialise the bodies of its members. Community becomes another performative which, by citing and repeating identity markers, performs them into being.

The idea of temporary alliances, however, can still help inform a post-structured definition of community, so long as one accepts the problematised performative and post-structured nature of community. Butler herself argued that performative structures have an inbuilt instability. She argued that even as performatives such as sexual norms are reiterated, these performatives are liable to slip as each repetition and reiteration helpfully exposes the constructed and inconsistent qualities of social codes and opens paths for resistance. As Ewa Ziarek notes when discussing Butler's focus on the performativity of sex and gender:

> For Butler, like for Derrida, the possibility of failure and impurity afflicting the repetition of sexual norms (like all performative acts) is not only an unfortunate predicament of "trauma," but also a positive condition of possibility. By opening the possibility of intervention and redescription of sexual norms, reiteration not only stresses the historicity of the law but also opens an "incalculable" future, no longer submitted to its jurisdiction.[323]

Community may be a performative, but by repeating community codes and hierarchies self-reflexively, one puts them under contestation. Performatives by themselves have no inbuilt agency, as "performativity [...] consists in a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer's "will" or "choice;" further, what is "performed" works to conceal, if not disavow, what remains opaque, unconscious,

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[322] Judith Butler, "Critically Queer," *GLQ: A journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies,* 1, no. 1 (1993), 30.
[323] Ewa Plonowska Ziarek, "From Euthanasia to the Other of Reason," in *Derrida and Feminism: Recasting the Question of Woman*, ed. Ellen K. Feder, Mary C. Rawlinson, and Emily Zakin (NY: Routledge, 1997), 114.

un-performable."[324] However artists who foreground post-structured community in the contemporary performance event work at the self-reflexive juncture of "performance" and "performativity". Butler acknowledges that performance has resistant potential as performance events are potentially the citation of a norm that "mimes and renders [it] hyperbolic."[325] Elin Diamond regards the intersection of performatives with performance as a particularly rich moment for resistance:

> When performativity materializes as performance in that risky and dangerous negotiation between a doing (a reiteration of norms) and a thing done (discursive conventions that frame our interpretations), between someone's body and the conventions of embodiment, we have access to cultural meanings and critique.[326]

Community-based performances open the notion of community to critique and allow participants to become active in repeating, exposing and questioning what Giroux calls "the dreams, desires and subject positions they inhabit."[327] The combination of the temporary nature of post-structured community and the flexibility of contemporary performance practice creates a particularly interesting set of challenges to power relations which are being utilised and sustained by the community-based guerrilla artist. Like community itself, these challenges have constantly shifting parameters and are always local and specific and sometimes easy to miss from the outside. This does not take away from the impact they have on audiences and participants, as will be shown in the case studies in Part Two of this thesis.

The Political Potential of the Post-structured Community

Accepting that community is post-structured and foregrounding it ethically inside guerrilla performance work has the potential to shift power relations at an intimate level. As multiple, contradictory and unsettled communities are supported and challenged by community-based performance work, single social narratives are necessarily replaced by multiple, temporary narratives. In the case studies that follow, it will be shown that challenging oppressive, singular perspectives, social norms and binaries can have a significant positive effect on the lives of the audiences and participants. This thesis aims to examine some of the ways in which this occurs

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[324] Butler, "Critically Queer," 30.
[325] Butler, "Critically Queer," 32.
[326] Elin Diamond, *Performance and Cultural Politics* (London and NY: Routledge, 1996), 5.
[327] Henry A. Giroux, "Democracy and the Discourse of Cultural Difference: Towards a Politics of Border Pedagogy " *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 12, no. 4 (1991): 501.

by examining the work of performance practitioners who work with post-structured communities in site-specific performance events in Australia. This was particularly evident in the case studies to be examined in Chapter Five, which show how the performance work of Urban Theatre Projects contested visions of threatening "otherness" by allowing post-structured communities to recreate the spaces of Western Sydney.

As the present chapter has demonstrated, contemporary community is both multiple and partial. By accepting that people gain strength and support from many interwoven and at times contradictory communities, artists who work with post-structured community can also privilege, restore and support hidden or subjugated community narratives, knowledges and pedagogies. In all three case studies in this thesis, community-based artists are returning to local, suppressed or hidden community languages, spaces and practices to help combat social inequity and alienation.

While it is natural to fear that which is alien, post-structured communities teach us to value the unknowable "Other", as they allow us to preserve our own sense of being unique while binding us into reciprocal bonds of relation. By promoting the idea that difference does not have to be a threat, community work can make temporary alliances to preserve this difference and produce new networks of creativity and support to combat increasing problems of social alienation and violence. In my case studies, a politics of difference without threat enables the artists to engage with the performative nature of community, while still creating new networks of intimate interrelation.

Foregrounding post-structured community in performance work also exposes all social structures previously considered "natural" as open to deconstruction and challenge. As Paulo Friere suggests, this process allows people to "develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves. "They can "then come to see the world not as a static reality but as a reality in process, in transformation."[328] Community-based guerrilla artists across the world are helping to create, support and challenge community formations to allow them to reach this "post-structured" potential. By understanding that communities are simultaneously experiential, representational, symbolic and

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[328] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 83.

constitutive, as well as a means of creating political coalitions to preserve difference, community can be acknowledged as an important concept in modern life. By understanding that all communities are performative and open to appropriation, and indeed are in a constant state of unravelling, it becomes possible to understand how they can both reproduce power relations and also put them under pressure. This makes post-structured community an important political tool for the community-based guerrilla artist.

Conclusions

Twenty-first century community-based artists often utilise temporary community structures and strategies to deal with social inequities. Cohen-Cruz marks the shift in the 1990s in the social change agenda of the community-based artist, from the protest driven community structures of the 1960s and '70s towards a "change in tone from opposition to partnership".[329] Cohen-Cruz uses the work of long-standing US community-based practitioners John O'Neal and Suzanne Lacy to argue that community-based companies and artists are still seeking the best way to "seek broad social change".[330] Cohen-Cruz argues that these artists are also looking for an ethical base to these encounters and searching for new formations of relationship, organization and difference that are local and relational. Following post-structural philosophy of the "Other" and feminist reclamations of the politics of difference, this chapter has shown that one sort of ethical base to community work lies in an acceptance of the fallibility and partiality of community structures and the utilisation of community to preserve radical difference rather than to enforce the dream of unproblematic commonality. When artists and theorists understand community in this ethical, post-structured way, foregrounding community becomes a powerful tool to promote social justice.

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[329] Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States*, 72.
[330] Ibid., 73.

CHAPTER FOUR

Creating Site/Concept/Place:

The Site-specificity of the Guerrilla Performance

Community-based guerrilla artists work with new post-structured models of community, which can provide the focus for political contestation. The following three chapters, containing case studies of guerrilla art in Australia, aim to show that foregrounding, creating and challenging post-structured communities through art is a political approach which allows for new voices to be heard and creates new ways of understanding and manoeuvring relations of power. Twenty-first century guerrilla artists, however, have a second major political approach, the manipulation of space. This chapter examines this "site-specificity" of the community guerrilla artist. This philosophical discussion engages new ways of looking at site-specificity that helps to illuminate the political tactics of the differential guerrilla artist.

How does site-specificity aid the political aims of the guerrilla artist? What are the characteristics of this site-specificity? Community-based guerrilla performance is rarely made for purpose-built theatres. Rather, it occurs in public and private spaces such as streets, kitchens, public transport sites, squares, malls, living rooms, churches, community centres, factories, corporate and media spaces. It also occurs in virtual spaces, websites, e-groups, multi-user domains etc. Yet somehow lists of locations do not begin to encompass the variety of ways that "site" interacts with "community" inside guerrilla performances, or the many different ways that ideas such as "site", "place", "space" are being thought of and challenged by guerrilla artists.

As was discussed in Chapter Three communities have often been defined as geographical or ethnic groupings. This has tied community historically to ideas such as nation, locality and territory. Even identity or interest groupings have often been ontologically linked by sociologists to the locations where they appear. Community, it has commonly thought, is shaped by the physical spaces around it. As definitions of community have shifted, however, so have ideas about the relationship of community to space and site. In these shifting theories about spatiality are clues to the politicised site-specificity of the twenty-first century community guerrilla artist. This chapter will

map some of these changing theories about community and spatiality, and examine the characteristics of twenty-first century site-specific guerrilla art, in order to offer a vision of space as open to change by site-specific community-based artistic activity.

Social spaces can appear to be stable entities, owned and controlled by those with power and money. This chapter begins by examining, through the work of Foucaultian scholars, the ways in which architecture and landscape dominate and control bodies. This "spatial discipline" can result in the exclusion of difference, the exploitation of the vulnerable and widespread social inequity. Guerrilla performance, offers some resistance to this spatial domination by appearing in populated spaces in unexpected ways, thus disrupting the ways in which these physical spaces operate. Yet guerrilla artists do not just *occur* in physical space, their spatial activity is much more complex.

Contestations of this spatial domination, such as visual and performative "culture-jamming", begin to show spatiality as consisting of much more than tangible physical environments. A leading scholar of spatiality, the French Marxist Henri Lefebvre saw space as made up of the physical locations around people and the related economic and disciplinary elements of these spaces, but he also saw this physical dimension as linked to other very important dimensions of space. These are the *conceptual* and imagined territories and also the everyday *lived practices* people use to engage with space. According to Lefebvre, these three spatialities, "physical", "conceived" and "lived" are interconnected and interactive and they cannot be studied separately. This chapter examines each of these Lefebvrean conceptions of space in detail, linking them to other texts in cultural theory from human geography, architecture, art theory and philosophy, which all discuss the importance of space and place and seek to describe some of their characteristics. I relate physical, perceived space to theories of "site", conceived space to recent challenges to "conceptual space" and lived space to new theories of "place". I then draw these terms together, as *site/concept/place,* and I contend that this is the focus of the guerrilla performance artist.

When one looks at space in this way, it is not longer quite so stable an entity. The history of installation art shows that site works through fluid interaction and that differing sites can be evoked and challenged by artistic practice. Imagined and conceptual spaces are never able to be completely controlled by power, discipline and governmentality. Lived places are personalised, shifted and disrupted by each individual and result in new, grassroots experiences of a site which may be radically

different from the authorised uses and images of the space, sanctioned by those with power and money. When space is seen as one interactive, linked entity *site/concept/place;* space can be seen to be created and recreated moment by moment by multiple users and forces. While community is created by space, space is also created and challenged by community. This creation of space is one of the major political approaches of the twenty-first century guerrilla artist.

The final section of this chapter discusses the ways in which *site/concept/place* has been utilised by guerrilla artists to create works which challenge traditional ideas of "site-specificity". By reference to theory pertaining to "new genre public art", this chapter argues that guerrilla site-specificity is created as a "function" between community and artist. Meaning is no longer located in the "genius" of the artist or the authorised readings of dominated physical space. Instead meaning is created between the artist and the multiple community knowledges of site, concept and place. In this way the immediate physical "location" of the work is not necessarily foregrounded in guerrilla work. What is important is that new sites, conceptual spaces and places which can challenge spatial discipline and domination can be created by post-structured communities through community-based guerrilla art.

Dominating Space

Spatiality may be seen as a dominating and controlling feature of contemporary life. In this reading, this relatively stable material presence is slowly shaped and reinforced by those with influence and power. Those without power become docile and passive consumers. Artists working with the specificity of physical locations can expose these workings of power, but are constrained by the dominating influences of space over the bodies of those that use it. This reading denies the power of artistic practices, like guerrilla performance, to challenge and recreate spaces. By tracing alternative views of spatial discipline and exploring its contemporary challengers, new ideas of spatiality emerge which can be applied to an understanding of the politics of community-based guerrilla performance.

Physical spaces can be used to control bodies. This is particularly clear in the historical development of European urban space. Space in this example was created to fulfil specific social functions. Nikolas Rose notes, with the increasing urbanisation and secularisation of the government in the eighteenth century, "One set of

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responses sought to use space against space, to transform towns from the dangerous and unhygienic aggregations of persons into well-ordered topographies for maintaining mortality and public health." Through Foucault, he traces the start of a series of "dreams of the healthy 'liberal' city, in which the spatial forms, the buildings, streets, public spaces that had encouraged the agglomeration of masses outside the gaze of civilisation would be reconstructed through town planning in order to produce health, happiness and civility."[331]

This political project affected houses and public institutions, planned patterns of boulevards and streets, public gardens and squares, sewers and running water, street lighting and pavements.[332] Showing how "this was not just 'civilised architecture', but the calculated use of architecture in the service of well-regulated liberty." Rose discusses how the changing physical spaces specifically altered the behaviour of those inside these spaces. The growing museums, exhibitions and department stores' design "explicitly sought to discipline and regulate the conduct of the masses they attracted." He continues:

> [These specially designed spaces] were often accompanied by instructions as to proper forms of dress, conduct, cleanliness and deportment and the avoidance of liquor. And, within them, individuals were not only scrutinised by guards and attendants, but were scrutinised by one another, providing the spatial and visual means for self-education.[333]

Rose goes on to trace the development of this historical impulse to control bodies, with examples dating from the eighteenth-century through to the present. A whole range of inventions were conceived which entailed opening space to visibility and locking each 'free' individual into a play of normative gazes.

> Police forces would patrol, map, inspect, supervise and know the moral character of each district of the town, operating not so much through terror and the certainty of apprehension, but by placing a grid of norms of conduct over urban space and regulating behaviour according to the division of the normal and the pathological.

He goes on to describe how one can trace similar histories of smaller-scale territorialisation, including "regions, cities, towns, zones, ghettos, edge cities" and "spaces of enclosure that governmental thought has imagined and penetrated:

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[331] Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, 72-73.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid., 73.

schools, factories, hospitals, asylums, museums, now even shopping malls, airports and department stores" .[334]

Rose's genealogy of territorial governmentality shows how governmentality becomes an integral part of contemporary design. He discusses the traces of these governmental dreams in the twentieth-century, as "urban design, architecture and the police apparatus have merged into an integrated programme in the name of security [...] control must be 'designed in', embedded in the very structuring of time, space and the environment."[335] The work of Foucault and Foucaultian scholars like Rose reminds us that by the twenty-first century, "these measures need no knowledge of individuals. They are subtle, non-coercive, automatic in their functioning and consensual in their modes of operation."[336] In this environment it is difficult to see how space can be challenged by guerrilla practice.

In a close reading of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, phenomenologist Ed Casey also traces the impact of spatial discipline. He sees this as a flattening of spatial conceptions into grids of control. With close reference to Foucault, Casey describes a growing nightmare landscape of spatial domination, "in which surveillance prevails at every possible panoptical point and in which space and place alike are fixed." He sees this abstract space as "a segmented, immobile, frozen space [where each] 'individual is fixed in his place' ".[337]

Using Foucault to map a historical disciplinary strategy where "[e]verything in site-space is 'constantly located'", Casey notes that "what was a matter of simple location in seventeenth-century physics and philosophy has become the constant location of the 'disciplinary individual', of 'calculable man' in the course of the eighteenth century". Casey's vision of space is one in which, "[t]he rule of functional sites has taken over space, time, and place in a veritable 'laboratory of power' whose aim is to bring about a rigid 'location of bodies in space.'" He concludes that "Thanks to the micro-practices of disciplinary power, such bodies become 'docile bodies' in Foucault's memorable term bodies which exist only in sites and as a function of

[334] Ibid.
[335] Ibid., 74.
[336] Ibid., 251.
[337] Edward S. Casey, "Smooth Spaces and Rough-Edged Places: The Hidden History of Place," *The Review of Metaphysics,* 51, no. 2 (1997): 268.

sites."[338] For many, Casey's vision of spatial domination plays out in lives that are controlled by the spaces they cannot access, own, manage or control.

In his work on urban spatiality, *Thirdspace*, Edward Soja discusses other examples of spatial domination, many of which have been uncovered and critiqued by the discipline of "human geography". Soja describes how recent gender studies, for example, have exposed power relations inherent in the design of suburbs.

> What urban theorists described as urban morphology, the presumably innocent if not 'natural' geographical patterning of urban land uses, was critically reinterpreted by spatial feminists as a veiled cartography of power and exploitation, not just in conjunction with class and race but also with respect to gender.[339]

The design of towns contributed to the spatial marginalisation of certain groups to certain areas and demarcated access to resources through location.[340]

Analyses of the politics of space thus show how physical space is used to encourage certain sorts of behaviours and discourage others. Space works as a tool of power between people and between groups. These rules and disciplines, however, are welcome to many people, who recreate and reinforce these spatial relations. Spatial discipline provides the illusion of stability and the idea that space can be used to increase "public" benefit. To those who cannot participate in this liberal dream of perfect cities and landscapes, whose gender, sexuality, bodies, backgrounds, appearances, economic circumstances, languages or needs cannot be disciplined into the norms being developed, or who seem to threaten the stability of these spaces, this dream is merely another nightmare. Spatiality affects access to resources, to housing, to social spaces. Public interaction is further debilitated and people and communities not considered "normal" are silenced or ignored.

The Inequities of Contemporary Spatiality

As discussed above, Foucaultian analysis such as that of Nikolas Rose shows that power exists everywhere, between all people at all levels of society and that space is an effective technology of discipline to manoeuvre relations of power. Other scholars have noted that space has been utilised particularly well in the late twentieth and

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[338] Ibid. Citations in Casey's article are from Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 70-73.
[339] Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996), 109.
[340] See also bell hooks, "Choosing the Margin as a Site of Resistance," in *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1990) and Debra Burrington, "The Public Square and Citizen Queer: Toward a New Political Geography," 31, no. 1 (1998).

early twenty-first centuries by multinational corporations to increase profits and that this is an activity which can result in social injustice on a massive scale.[341] Journalist Naomi Klein, for example, is famous for cataloguing the spatial power held by multinational corporations in the twentieth and twenty-first century. In her 2000 work *No Logo*, she traces the activities of multinationals, who locate their manufacturing activities in countries which allow shamefully low wages, and where unemployment is so high that workers will not protest even the most appalling working conditions for fear of losing their jobs. These spaces of production are so far removed from the point of sale in wealthy countries that consumers are not able to access information regarding the means of manufacture of these products or be granted a say in the complicated ethical problems this system represents.[342]

The politics of spatiality are further manipulated by corporate activity through commercial advertising and marketing. Twenty-first century spaces are more than simply shaped to govern, they are also colonized by corporate marketing aiming to produce new consumers and increase controlled spending. Spatial control also works outside obvious economic zones such as factories, malls and department stores. Surfaces everywhere are filled. More than any other generation, the late twentieth-century and early twenty-first century see the physical spaces decorated, owned and managed by corporate brands.

The disciplinary control discussed by Foucault is thus used by corporations in an attempt to control the actions of consumers by careful management of space. Owning and branding of spaces reaches into any physical space available. This branding is no longer located on specially-designed commercial advertising spaces, such as billboards. Branding has colonised buildings, walls and transport systems. Product placement and franchised entertainment, advertising tattoos and hairstyles, unauthorised pop-up computer advertisements, mobile phone and email "spam", branded school products, branded clothes, cars sold pre-painted with slogans, airline itineraries with sponsored advertisements, sponsored school canteens and hospital

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[341] For examples of globalised corporate activities and related protests and the ethical concerns of globalisation see Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (London: Harper Collins, 1999), Sanjay Srivastava, "Postcoloniality, National Identity, Globalisation and the Simulacra of the Real," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology,* 7, no. 2 (1996), Bernhard Serexhe, "Deregulation/Globalisation: The Loss of Cultural Diversity?," *CTheory.net,*10 (1996), http://www.ctheory.net/ (accessed July 5, 2006) and Bharucha, *The Politics of Cultural Practice: Thinking through Theatre in an Age of Globalization.*
[342] See Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies.* See also Scott Bedbury, "Brands in New World; Brand Marketers Need to Redefine Success Beyond Profits and Help `Globalization' Benefit World's Developing Nations," *The Advertising Age,* 73 (2002) and Jagdish Bhagwati, "Coping with Antiglobalization: A Trilogy of Discontents," *Foreign Affairs,* 81, no. 1 (2002).

wings are all common sights. City cranes carrying advertising neon, branded sports arenas and corporate franchised TV and radio "news" are all common features of contemporary cities. Each of these "spatial invasions" limits the range of knowledge and actions available to people using and reading these spaces. Commercial spaces are also created with the assistance of environmental psychologists who use their knowledge of human behaviour to design architecture that encourages certain types of behaviour and spending.[343] Apartment buildings, streets, even whole towns are sponsored by corporations, who then have some say in the way they are used. Consumers then internalize these new spatial systems of economic behaviour, and new norms of commercial spatial practice become "natural" parts of everyday life. Corporate economics are well aware of the power of owning and controlling the way spaces are used, shaped and read.

Naomi Klein, writing about branded spaces in the late twentieth-century, notes how these commercialised everyday spaces bring to bear a very different notion of political participation in "public" space:

> Politicians, police, social workers and even religious leaders all recognize that malls have become the modern town square. But unlike the old town squares, which were and still are sites for community discussion, protests and political rallies, the only type of speech that is welcome here is marketing and other consumer patter. Peaceful protestors are routinely thrown out by mall security guards for interfering with shopping, and even picket lines are illegal inside these enclosures.[344]

Here the power is firmly located in the corporations who own and operate these ubiquitous "economic" zones. If these spaces are completely dominated and stable, the guerrilla artist interested in social change can do no more than highlight and expose the inequities.

Culture-jamming

The spatial domination in our lives is not as stable as it first appears. Understanding how physical space can be destabilised allows one to examine spatiality in new ways and can contribute to understanding the site-specificity of the community artist. Klein charts the rising frustration amongst young people about the colonization of spaces by corporations, locating a particular political catalyst in the invasion of public bathrooms by advertisers.

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[343] For summary of design and psychology see Paul A. Bell and Jeffrey D. Fisher, eds, *Environmental Psychology*, 3rd ed. (Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1990).
[344] Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*, 183.

> Short of eyelid implants, ads in college washrooms represent as captive a youth market as there is on earth. But from the students' perspective, there could have been no more literal metaphor for space closing in than an ad for Pizza Pizza or Chrysler Neon staring at them from over a urinal or from the door of a WC cubicle.[345]

Klein sees this as a marker in the history of protest to the colonisation of space by corporate activity.

While *No Logo* focuses on the rise of branded corporatism's significant ethical problems and the subsequent political reactions, it is also an excellent reminder of issues of ownership and control of spaces, from advertising space, to the spaces of globalised production and ultimately through to the social inequities present in everyday spaces. Klein argues that an understanding of spatial discipline is required if challenges to social injustice is to be continued.

> And if the space invaders marched into our schools and our communities unchallenged, it was at least partly because political models in vogue at the time of the invasion left many of us ill equipped to deal with issues that were more about ownership than representation. We were too busy analysing the pictures being projected on the wall to notice that the wall itself had been sold.[346]

No Logo maps the growth of material spatial contestations through the growing use of "culture-jamming" techniques. This is where the physical end products of the brand identities of corporations are remade/ retouched/destroyed by artists and hackers. These guerrilla artists are working to expose the dubious ethics of many companies' exploitation and destruction of the worlds poorest and most disempowered in the relentless search for increased profitability. As noted in Chapter One, this practice includes the changing of billboards and posters, the remaking of company logos, the hacking of internet and television advertising, the creation of publicly-placed art, literature and technologies which mimic and satirise corporate globalisation and the respatialisation and recontextualisation of advertising material to contrast it with some of the realities produced by the activities of the companies. Culture-jamming allows the original space to be present in the new "jam", even as it critiques and creates new spaces of protest.[347]

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[345] Ibid., 292.

[346] Ibid., 124.

[347] A simple example of a culture jam is a picture of a Nike shoe with the word "Slavelabour" replacing "Nike" under the logo on the side. See Canadian magazine, *Adbusters* for culture-jamming images dating back to the 1980s. *Adbusters Homepage* (2006), http://www.adbusters.org/home/ (accessed January 5, 2007).

Klein's reading of the spatial practices of commercial practitioners has relevance when discussing the formation and contestation of physical space. Like "adbusters" and culture jammers, guerrilla performance activity works with surfaces, architectures, environments by exposing their vulnerability to reappropriation and reconstruction and by exposing agendas of ownership, identity production and control.

A specific Australian example of culture-jamming guerrilla performance, although not community-based, can be found in the work of Australian physical theatre company Legs on the Wall. Their 2000 piece, *Home/Land*, had performers abseiling in waves down the multi-storey corporate building of AMP Insurance, located in Sydney's Circular Quay.[348] This flood of bodies was a representation of the waves of immigrant workers and refugees to Australia. It could be argued that the hard work done by these workers on major government initiatives is the basis of the economic stability that Australia enjoys today. The description of these new arrivals' history and experiences of home, loss and poverty contrasted strongly with the wealth and prosperity of the predominantly international corporations who own the shiny veneer of the quayside. The continued arrival of refugee immigrants has also been sharply criticised by the current Australian conservative federal government. This is an issue that has been particularly prominent in the seven years since 2000, and the performance spoke to fissures in Australian society that would widen in the following years. Indeed, the Australian government has continued to encourage fear of difference and to inflame public anxiety about large influxes of foreigners to Australia, through dramatic military manoeuvres against boat people and the highly publicised sequestration of new refugees, including unaccompanied children, into privately owned, armed detention centres, to await "processing" for up to three years.[349]

In the performance of *Home/Land*, the multimillion-dollar, internationally owned glass façade of the building was transformed into a surface of reflection on Australian national identity, corporate activity was halted to accommodate the feet banging on the windows, the clean lines of the city were disrupted by sweating bodies, dancing on the building's shiny surface, speaking visually about fear, war, separation and compassion. The AMP building was no longer just a container for economic activity,

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[348] For critiques of this show see Joanne Thompkins, Nigel Jamieson, and Bill Blaikie, "Home/ Land Panel " (paper presented at the *Australian Circus and Physical Theatre Association Conference*, Brisbane, 2004).
[349] For an external position on Howard's refugee strategies see Patrick Barkham, "The Other Howard's Way Won't Work Here," *The Guardian*, January 25, 2005.

or a symbol of corporate prosperity, it was a stage for the expression of difference. Like culture-jamming, this performance temporarily altered the appearance of the AMP building, its orientation, its management and its purpose.

Australian video artist Kirsten Bradley produces multimedia examples of non community-based "guerrilla" work that aims to disrupt the disciplinary nature of space. Bradley began video ninja activity, under the name Stealth Video Ninja and now has a team of VJs working with her on illicit projection projects.[350] Her work includes the illegal projection onto major "public" and "corporate" city buildings in cities like Sydney, Newcastle, Melbourne and Adelaide of footage of radical perspectives of topical news stories and social issues.. As passers by stop to observe the large projections, Bradley encourages discussion and hands out web addresses for alternative media sources like *www.indymedia.org.* In this way "public" buildings such as Sydney's Town Hall, the Opera House or the National Museum are used in radically new ways. Private corporations such as Starbucks Coffee shops also unwittingly host critiques of their own practice.[351] When conflicts arise over these illegal activities, new conversations occur about the way physical spaces can be recreated for new purposes through arts practice.[352]

These challenges to physical space do not necessarily aim to make lasting change to the spaces utilised, nor do they initiate widespread ideological or social change. However guerrilla art does expose and highlight the political dimensions of spatiality. Importantly, these performance examples also show space as much more than its physical dimensions. In these performances the stability of physical space is beginning to be disrupted by other visions of spatiality, of concepts and everyday practices which interact with physical materiality in subversive ways.

Both these examples of culture-jamming performances were made by professional artists. In the case of *Home/Land*, the piece was made with the permission of AMP

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[350] Whilst it could be argued there is some advantage to Starbucks in being aligned with "cool" VJ artists, the message projected late at night on their walls in Sydney in 2001 exposed the company's record of human rights abuses and some of the results of its corporate greed. The artists, however, walked an uncomfortable line between appropriation and protest which is particularly emblematic of new guerrilla art. See *Stealth Video Ninja* (2006), http://www.squatspace.com/uncollectable/about-nuca/ (accessed January 29, 2007) and Joni Taylor, "New Media: Lateral Activism," *RealTime*, no. 46 (2001), http://www.realtimearts.net/rt46/taylor.html (accessed December 5, 2005).
[351] Kristen Bradley et al., "Is Youth Arts a Dirty Word? Triple J 'Noise' Panel " (paper presented at the *Young People and the Arts Australia (YPAA) Conference*, Sydney Opera House, June 3, 2001).
[352] Well-known Polish artist Wodiczko utilises this technique in his public art, although for less didactic purposes. See Krzysztof Wodiczko, "Performing the City," in *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, ed. Nick Kaye (NY: Routledge, 2000).

and local authorities and could be easily seen by audiences as simply entertainment, rather than work which aims to make a social statement. Both examples aim to create art which utilises the physical environment in the pursuit of company-specific artistic goals. Community-based guerrilla art, however, engages with spatiality in a much more complex manner, as it involves participants from diverse artistic and cultural backgrounds and involves multifaceted and sometimes contradictory understandings of sites, concepts and places. It is also often difficult to ascertain what is "art" and what is "everyday community activity" put on display, a distinction which will be examined presently.

Lefebvrean Space

The work of Henri Lefebvre is excellent for analysing the multiplicity of contemporary spaces in order to understand the site-specificity of the community guerrilla artist. Henri Lefebvre's work *La production de l'espace* (*The Production of Space*) is an oft quoted, complex, fragmented and rich thesis. Well-known Lefebvrean scholars such as Soja, Gronlund, Shields and Bordern all admit that this structure, while complicated, does reflect the multifaceted vision of space being proposed. Edward Soja describes *The Production of Space* as a "polyphonic fugue,"[353] and Bo Gronlund calls it "a spiralling trialectic".[354] It is, however, the complexity in Lefebvre's work and his determination to avoid binaries when discussing spatiality which make it particularly relevant here. Lefebvre attempts to reunite what he calls the three types of space, *perceived*, *conceived* and *lived*. His changing and hybridising definitions make the structure of the work difficult to analyse, for as Rob Shields notes, this "introduces a great deal of confusion, for one is never quite sure which of his forays into defining this three-part dialectic is the definitive one". Yet it also usefully challenges us to understand space as a "shifting, four-dimensional object, which slips out of the comfortable conceptions that attempt to pin it down". [355]

Perceived Space

The first category Lefebvre identifies is *perceived space*. This refers to both the physical attributes of architecture, landscape and materiality, and also to the

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[353] Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, 126.
[354] Bo Gronlund, "On Henri Lefebvre: Urbanity: Lived Space and Difference," *Urbanity and Aesthetics Seminar,* Copenhagen University (1997),
http://hjem.get2net.dk/gronlund/Lefebvreindlaeg_21_3_97v2.html (accessed November 26, 2003).
[355] Rob Shields, *Lefebvre, Love, and Struggle: Spatial Dialectics*, *International Library of Sociology* (London and NY: Routledge, 1999), 161.

interwoven economic producing practices which cause these structures to be built. In this way perceived space is the spatial practice of power, resulting in the physical built environment. Lefebvre's first reference to this notes how "[th]e spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it."[356] This is the space of what David Harvey calls, "The physical and material flows, transfers and interactions that occur in and across space in such a way as to assure production and social reproduction"[357]. Soja refers to these perceived spaces as "fixed mainly on the concrete materiality of spatial forms, on things that can be empirically mapped".[358] Shields sees this as "perceived in the commonsensical mode or better still, ignored one minute and over fetishized the next. "[359] Bo Gronlund admits that it is dangerous to attempt to separate and define the types of space Lefebvre highlights, when it is the complex combination that remains Lefebvre's most enduring legacy. Nonetheless, he still attempts to place together the multiple definitions Lefebvre uses throughout his work. He thus sums up the category of spatial practice, as:

> Empirically observable [...] the practice of a repressive and oppressive space. The way space is appropriated. The way space is dominated. Including the way the body is appropriated/ dominated. Spatial practice embraces production and reproduction. In spatial practice the reproduction of social relations is predominant.[360]

I find it helpful to think about Lefebvre's "perceived space" as the way physical space *works*. I argue that this perceived space is the dimension discussed by Foucaultian scholars of space and contested by the culture-jamming guerrilla practices mentioned above.

Conceived Space

The second type Lefebvre identifies is r*epresentations of space*, also called *conceived space*. This is the space of thought and discourse and the sciences of space. These are the concepts, maps, and grids, zones that divide and shape the building of physical sites. Lefebvre calls conceptualised space, "the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers". He calls this, "the dominant space in any society (or mode of production)". He goes on to state that conceptions of space, "tend, with certain exceptions [...] toward a system of

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[356] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1991), 38.
[357] David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1990), 218.
[358] Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, 10.
[359] Shields, *Lefebvre, Love, and Struggle: Spatial Dialectics*, 161.
[360] Gronlund, "On Henri Lefebvre: Urbanity: Lived Space and Difference".

verbal (and therefore intellectually worked out) signs."[361] These are the mental spaces of analysis, codification and pedagogy that in Harvey's view, "allow […] material practices to be talked about and understood."[362] Iain Bordern and the group of artists and theorists involved in producing the 1990 compilation on urban city theory, *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space,* note that:

> [Lefebvrean] Representations of space are a form of knowledge that provide the various understandings of space necessary for spatial practices to take place. [...] This is space as conceived, as "the concept without life".[363]

Soja and Gronlund both analyse the thoughtful and cognitive forms of this conceptualized space "without life" in their own work. Gronlund notes however that, "[Lefebvre's] representations of space are certainly abstract, but they also play a part in social and political practice".[364]

I think of this 'representation of space' as the ways in which conceived spaces that is maps, ideas, imaginings, plans of space control and shape the construction of space and of the body. The way space is thought of moulds how it can work and what it can look like. These conceived spaces occur in mapping and controlling policies and practices, but also in the way space is described, named and owned, and in the way spatial metaphors relate to oppressive social realities.

Lived Space

The final type of space Lefebvre discusses is r*epresentational space*, which he also calls *lived space.* This is perhaps the hardest notion to untangle and define as Lefebvre had an ongoing problematised dialectical relationship with notions of everyday life. On the one hand he saw lived space as the trivialized space of subdued, capitalism-produced citizens,[365] and on the other as a 'differential space', a place where subversion and presence can challenge perceptions and conceptions.[366] He hoped that a reuniting of 'lived space' with 'perceived' and 'conceived' spaces could result in what Shields calls an "essential terrain of struggle on the way to realising of ourselves as 'total persons'"[367]. Lefebvre saw this lived space as "directly

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[361] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 39.
[362] Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, 218.
[363] Iain Borden, "Things, Flows, Filters, Tactics," in *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space: A Strangely Familiar Project*, ed. Iain Borden, et al. (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 2001), 7. Quotation is from Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* 47.
[364] Gronlund, "On Henri Lefebvre: Urbanity: Lived Space and Difference".
[365] See Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life* (London and NY: Verso, 1991).
[366] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 38.
[367] Shields, *Lefebvre, Love, and Struggle: Spatial Dialectics*, 161. Quotation from Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 38.

lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence a space of 'inhabitants' and 'users', but also [a space] of artists and writers and philosophers".[368] To this list we could add performers and performance artists who locate and reinscribe power structures through 'representational' practice. Lefebvre's lived space includes:

> clandestine and underground spatial practices, which suggest and prompt alternative (revolutionary) restructurings of institutionalized discourses of space and new modes of spatial praxis, such as that of squatters, illegal aliens, and Third World Slum dwellers, who fashion a spatial practice outside of the norms of the prevailing (enforced) social spatialisation.[369]

Lefebvre is seeking to locate a blurred territory *between* the sub-cultural and the hegemonic, between the criminal and the authorised, crossing the heterotopic,[370] utopic and utilitarian, where spatial practices are rehearsed and undergo mutation as people attempt to survive and circulate specific cultural meaning through spatiality.

I contend that Lefebvre's lived space, as it is focussed on the everyday activities of people, artistic ventures and groups, is a space of practice, of body and of interaction. In lived space, the spatiality is not created by authorised maps or plans, or by dominated physical designs aimed at docile bodies or corporate profit, even though neither of these can ever be totally ignored. Lived space is created by everyday use, by the ways individuals practise and experience the spaces around them.

Lefebvre's unfinished work on lived space contains the nascent hope that if we were to acknowledge the lived dimension of spatiality, we would be able to understand and integrate all of the dimensions of space equally, rather than allowing the world to be separated spatially by power and money. He sees lived space as crushed by the abstract desires of economics and government. Lefebvre hopes that by realising the power space has over us, while finally reintegrating our personal experiences and lived practices into understandings of public and private spaces, space could ultimately be more democratically managed and controlled. This dream is also important to artists attempting to create ethical spaces through community art.

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[368] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 39.
[369] Shields, *Lefebvre, Love, and Struggle: Spatial Dialectics*, 161.
[370] Foucault defined heterotopias as those bubbles of space which work under different rules to the rest of society. He cites multiple "primitive" and contemporary examples of spaces like mental hospitals, prisons, fairs, gardens, spas, etc. which, while isolated or named aberrant by the rest of society, create possibilities for re-imagining space and preserving new dreams for spatial organisation and control. Community guerrilla performances are heterotopic, but unlike Foucault's heterotopias, are not so isolated or easily seen as "exotic" See Michel Foucault, "Utopias and Heterotopias," in *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*, ed. Neil Leach (NY: Routledge, 1997).

The Production of Space

Underlying all Lefebvre's work is the Marxist understanding that people are alienated from the means of production; in this case, the means by which space is produced. His work aims to bring these means of production to light. Lefebvre suggests that "[t]he production of space examines how new systems (actual or imagined) of land use, transport and communications territorial organization, etc are produced and how new modes of representation (e.g. information technology, computerized mapping or design) arise."[371] Rather than *a priori,* natural or only abstract, all types of space are reiterable products, created and utilised by and in the production of society.

For Nikolas Rose, Lefebvre's notion of production is a useful reminder of the contingency and importance of spatial dimensions, but he questions the divisibility of realms of spatial practice into separate dimensions. "For Lefebvre", he suggests, "space becomes abstract only as a result of the crushing of lived experience and its vanquishing by concepts and representations."[372] Regarding oppositions between the "lived" and the "represented", the "experienced" and the "conceptualized", the "abstract" and the "concrete" as very misleading, he suggests that spatiality is instead integrated in producing experience: "Governable spaces are not fabricated counter to experience; they make new kinds of experience possible, produce new modes of perception, and invest precepts with affects, with dangers and opportunities, with saliencies and attractions".[373] Rose's critique is a useful reminder of the dangers of reading spatial dimensions in isolation from structures of power.

Spatial dimensions for Rose are "modalities in which a real and material governable world is composed, terraformed and populated". For him space is not the domination of one form of spatiality over another, but "on the one hand the milieux of activity of human beings as living creatures: populations and peoples" and on the other the "field of action of deeper economic forces and processes".[374] Space, then, is both abstract and material, abstract forces reified into dominant spatial practices. Conceptions of space, what Rose (from Foucault) calls 'governable spaces" are developed through crisscrossing forces of power, abstract notions of boundaries, exclusion zones, hierarchies, surveillances, expert knowledges all constructing spaces that then construct the citizens who work inside them. As Lefebvre himself

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[371] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 222.
[372] Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, 32.
[373] Ibid.
[374] Ibid.

notes, this process works as "[social relationships] project themselves into a space, becoming inscribed there, and in the process producing the space itself."[375] These two readings of space, by Foucault and by Rose and Lefebvre, are not mutually exclusive. Lefebvre himself knew these readings of space could not be separated and all types of space must be studied together to understand how their production altered the lives of modern citizens. It is helpful however, to think, as Rose does, of the three spatial dimensions as all involved in the governing of bodies, just as they are all produced through relations of power. This helps to clarify Lefebvre's unfinished picture of space, reading spatiality as both produced and producing.

Lefebvre and Everyday Spaces

There is, however, a radical edge to Lefebvre's spatial trialectics, one which is ignored in critiques such as Rose's. As Iain Bordern and his co-editors of the 2001 compilation *Unknown City* note:

> Lefebvre sees different forms of social construction as central to the production of space—principally in terms of class, but also of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, family relations, and age. It is precisely these characteristics that abstract space tends to erase; therefore, the revolutionary project must be directed toward restoring them.

Bordern and his colleagues claim that,

> [t]hese are the social constructions that differential space preserves and emphasizes, ensuring that the right to the city is not the right to buildings or even public space but rather the right to be different, the right not to be classified forcibly into categories determined by homogenizing powers.[376]

This "revolutionary project" aims to allow all the dimensions of spatiality to be understood and be permitted to have an equal effect on how individuals live and identify themselves. Physical, conceived and lived spaces can be evoked and challenged as part of a political project of social change. This project, committed to preserving difference, is reflected in many contemporary community-based guerrilla performances.

Lefebvre's image of space has variously been reinterpreted and appropriated. Spatiality studies have become increasingly popular as an effective way of studying identity, power, psychology and history. Multi-disciplinary work on spatiality has

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[375] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* quoted in Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, 46.
[376] Iain Borden et al., eds, *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space: A Strangely Familiar Project* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 2001), 12.

increased markedly in the past ten years between the disciplines of architecture, geography, sociology, political science, visual and performing arts and cultural studies.[377] There has been a growing realisation that, as Alan Read suggests, "[t]he discourses of architecture, space, built form and urban context have, at the turn of the millennium, become the pre-eminent critical idioms for cultural practitioners from a surprising diversity of fields". He goes on to describe how,

> [s]ensitive to questions of community in new and radical languages, artists, performance makers, theoreticians, social scientists and multidisciplinary thinkers within, and beyond, the architectural profession, reach for the strategies and structures of the populated street to articulate the sense of their work.[378]

By examining where Lefebvre's work intersects with other work on site-specific art, interactivity, spatial metaphor and place, I draw a new model for site-specificity which illuminates the work of guerrilla artists in post-structured communities.

Reinterpreting Lefebvre: Site

Site

Lefebvre's term "perceived space" describes both the physical domain and the producing effects this domain has on the body. However, challenges to physical sites begin to disrupt the idea that physical space is a completely dominated or stable part of existence. They make it to be possible to see creativity in the experience of the "viewer", "user", "audience" or "consumer" of spaces. By an analysis of this type of "site-specific" interaction between body and space, in arts practice, it is possible to expand on Lefebvre's category of "perceived space", calling this dimension of physical materiality "site". This links Lefebvrean notions of produced and producing physical spaces to understandings of site in site-specific art theory. While it is true that design, money and power shape and discipline our actions and architectures, there is also a fluid interaction that occurs between bodies and the spaces they inhabit. This fluidity has been a particular focus in the sphere of site-specific arts, especially in performance art, as analysed by UK based performance studies scholar

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[377] This increase is particularly obvious when considering the amount of scholarly databases dedicated solely to spatiality studies. See Bruce B. Janz *Research on Place and Space,* University of Central Flordia (2002), http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~janzb/place/home.html (accessed December 12, 2005), *The Center for Spatially Integrated Social Science,* University of California (2001), http://csiss.org/ (accessed March 2, 2005) and *Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis Homepage,* University College London (1995), http://www.casa.ucl.ac.uk/news/index.htm (accessed September 2, 2001).
[378] Alan Read, ed., *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday* (London: Routledge, 2000), 2.

Nick Kaye. His 2000 work, *Site-specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation* describes site as performed into being by artistic practice.

Kaye addresses what it means to be specific to site in visual arts, performance or cultural practice. He examines how site and audience interact in contemporary artworks. His book questions how a 'site-specific work' "might articulate and define itself through properties, qualities or meanings produced in specific relationships between an 'object' or 'event' and a position it occupies."[379] For Kaye, "site-specificity presents a challenge to notions of 'original' or 'fixed' location, problematising the relationship between work and site".[380] His work is useful when looking at the instability and unreliability of space and it highlights that "site" can leak from and challenging its physical boundaries.

Kaye begins with a triple reading of the word site as simultaneously "*substantive,*" referring to "local position [...] the place or position occupied by some specified thing. [...] implying original or fixed position", "transitive*"* referring *to "*to locate, to place", and "intransitive*: to be situated or placed."[381] These three definitions all interrelate in the site of an artwork for Kaye, and he sees site-specific performance as exposing the essential fluidity of all space. His work on ideas of site in late twentieth-century performance art provides us with a reading of simultaneous, interactive physical space in order to then move on to understand how "site" might be contested and created by community-based artistic practice. When combined with Lefebvre's reading of physical spaces as dominating practices, site becomes both productive and creative.

Before proceeding to discuss Kaye's analysis of site-specific performance and art, it is first necessary to delimit what is meant here by site-specific art. Kaye refers to artworks which are made to occupy a particular location or to comment on that location, both indoors and out. These include commissioned "public" painting and sculpture and also gallery work. Installation works in galleries or in other indoor spaces, which provide an environment or concept instead of a single art work, may also be considered specific to their site. Famous non- gallery examples, sometimes called "public" artworks, include the outdoor sculpture of artists such as US-based Richard Serra who works with large metal sculptures in streets and public squares.

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[379] Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 1.
[380] Ibid., 2.
[381] Ibid., 1.

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Site-specific art also includes environmental installations, such as those of UK based Andy Goldsworthy or US based Robert Smithson, who both use found objects and outdoor settings to create site based environmental artworks. These are the traditional ideas of site-specificity, but this definition had been challenged by new artists eager to connect more with the everyday users of site and place. These challenges will be discussed later in this chapter. When discussing site-specific performance, Kaye refers to performance works which explicitly enter into conversation with their physical surrounds or which create performance-installation environments in some way. For now it is useful to trace Kaye's vision of site-specificity, as it opens up ideas of "perceived space" to include interactivity and fluidity.

Osmosis

In searching for vocabulary to describe twenty-first century site-specific performance Kaye, traces a history of minimalism in modern visual arts, specifically by examining the changing notions of visual arts' relationship with the museum and gallery. He discusses the work of US art historian Douglas Crimp, who began to notice that minimalist art required a different relationship between artwork, surrounds and viewer. Kaye notes that:

> Site-specificity as [Douglas] Crimp defines it [...], is not resolved into the special characteristics of the minimalist objects' specific position, but occurs in a displacement of the viewers' attention towards the room which both she and the object occupy [...] forcing a self conscious perception in which the viewer confronts her own effort to locate, to place the work and so her own acting out of the gallery's function as the place for viewing.[382]

Kaye marks a growing interest in the 1980s and '90s in creating an experience of art as "an object *in situation*—one that, virtually by definition*, includes the beholder",*[383] thus mapping how "site-specificity linked to the incursion of performance into visual art and architecture, in strategies which work against the assumptions and stabilities of site and location".[384] Indeed, Kaye describes how site-specific work can destabilise concepts of "location" as "site-specificity arises in a disturbance [...] or in questioning of the art object's material integrity, so the very possibility of establishing a works'

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[382] Douglas Crimp and Louise Lawler, *On the Museum's Ruins* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993) quoted in Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 3.
[383] Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," *Artforum International* 5 no. June (1967) quoted in Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 3.
[384] Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 3.

proper location is called into question. "[385] This relationship is vital to community artists.

In installation work the position of the viewer is challenged and challenging, constituted by and constituting the work of art. Kaye sees this realisation as an important historical development in site-specific art practices, as this "address to inter related orders of space, in which the viewer's privileged position as reader 'outside' the work is challenged, has played a key part not only in minimalism's site-specificity, but in the address to site and the performance of place in visual art, architecture and site-specific theatre".[386] Not only is this a challenge to the viewer/artwork dynamic, it also challenges the processes by which art functions. Importantly, Kaye comes to the conclusion that "site-specific sculpture is realised not simply in *forms*, but in the *performance of the site itself.*"[387] For Kaye, this performance of site is at the centre of any site-specific performance, but it is also the key to understanding site as fluid and dynamic. This is a very useful insight when studying the site-specificity of the guerrilla artist. When read in this way, site is not just created through the producing elements of power, but it also by change and communication.

For Kaye, site-specific interaction is never able to erase what has come before and this performance of site is always being recreated. In this process-based work, "every moment can be final" and "yet each moment and material form retains a memory and trace of the process of which it is part".[388] Sites, audience and artworks blur together and site-specific work is 'living' work in which the representations of visual phenomena cannot be distinguished from the physical processes the substances undergo. In the case of outdoor site-specific visual arts, often environmental processes and the decay of the work are integral parts of the action of the installation. Artists like Robert Smithson have incorporated this decay into massive outdoor installations, such as his well-known *Spiral Jetty*, which erodes a little more every year. Kaye cites installation artist and scholar Celant who states: "Site, under this logic, is a complex of chemical, organic, physiological and biological systems, interacting and affecting one another, and so a complex of relations always in process."[389] This thesis contends that as site slowly produces bodies over time, it

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[385] Ibid., 183.
[386] Ibid., 25.
[387] Ibid., 143.
[388] Ibid., 151. Kaye paraphrases the work of installation artist Giuseppe Penone.
[389] Germano Celant, *Gilberto Zorio* (Eindhoven: Van Abbemuseum, 1991) quoted in Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 143.

could be read as both a simultaneous entity *and* an operation, changing through hybridisation, osmosis and decay.

Site-Specific Performance

It is fascinating how performance makers playing with space have engaged with this fragmentary, unstable and multiple nature of physical site. Kaye sees that in many site-specific performances "'site' is articulated through the installation of architectures reflecting its social, political and historical location, as well as its formal properties and the bilingualism which defines its cultural contexts."[390] The form of the site-specific performance thus reflects and creates the form of the spaces. There may be multiple art forms intermingling with one another and "the tie between performance and place is articulated through multi-disciplinary practices."[391] One-time artistic director of Welsh group Brith Gof, McLucas suggests that site-specific performance is not simply hybrid but is defined, "more directly, where performance and place are invested one in the other". Site is thus read by Kaye and the artists he analyses, as both mobile and temporary, defined through fluid shifting and transient acts and relationships.

According to Kaye, site-specific performances such as those of Brith Gof and Sheffield-based Forced Entertainment act in physical space "by acting out writing over of sites already written upon", yet, in the acting out of spaces "this site-specific performance attempts to define itself *in* the very sites it is caught in the process of erasing".[392] Thus the mobility and transience of space is matched by the mobility and transience of the actions that occur in that space. Yet this activity of creating site-specific performance is not a pasting over, or even a perfect match. In Brith Gof's 1992 production *Haearn*, for example, the performance and the site are at times indistinguishable, but at other times both are present as contradictory spaces. Kaye states that, "Like all ghosts, *Haearn's* body is not solid the host can be seen through it."[393] Rather than attempting a translation of site or even a specific or single reading of site, Kaye sees that "such a fractured work *disperses* the site", constituting audience in multiple places, and as a result audience members have different perspectives of the events. McLucas goes on to say, "There is always a mismatch between the 'host' and the 'ghost' and from the beginning of the work it's fractured,

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[390] Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 54.
[391] Ibid., 3.
[392] Ibid., 11.
[393] Ibid., 54.

it's deeply, deeply fractured."[394] This process of fragmentation overlay and contradiction informs the process of creating site-specific art and results in an idea of site that is much more than just "perceived". It is a creative process of interactivity, where the "ghosts" of other sites are present and active. The "haunted" spaces of site-specific, community-based art will be discussed further in later chapters.

According to Kaye what results in contemporary site-specific performance is thus a very different form of interaction from that of theatre, particularly commercial theatre. Instead, participants experience how "a place and what's built there bleed into one another and constitute an order of existence-something like placeevent". Such a performance is less controlled "There is no single space finally – there are several spaces and these spaces tend to multiply among themselves."[395] These spaces are also very difficult to own, thus challenging the corporatisation of public art. In some cases, says Kaye, paraphrasing sculpture and installation artist Dennis Oppenheim, "you can't see the art, you can't buy the art, you can't have the art."[396] In these placeevents, space is more than the result of dominating spatial practice. Rather, it becomes open to challenge as it is created and recreated in dialogue with its users.

Kaye's work traces a shifting politics of site and a shifting use of space. As public-art scholar Miwon Kwon reminds us, this change in the focus of site-specific art is significant: "In advanced art practices of the past thirty years the operative definition of the site has been transformed from a physical location grounded, fixed, actual to a discursive vector- underground, fluid, virtual".[397] This space of contemporary installation art and site-specific performance, however, is troubled and troubling, and one that is very difficult to review or critique as audiences become like the artists themselves. As artist Robert Smithson states: "Returning from the site the artist who is physically engulfed tries to give evidence of this experience through a limited (mapped) revision of the original unbounded state."[398] This new shifting physical spatiality is, however, also one of great creative and political potential, a process of dialogue and contamination, which changes both the performer and the space itself.

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[394] *Y Llyfyr Glas* by McLucas, Morgan, and Pearson quoted in Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 56.
[395] Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 54.
[396] Ibid., 96.
[397] Miwon Kwon, "One Place after Another: Notes on Site Specificity," *October,* 80, no. Spring (1997): 85 quoted in Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 197.
[398] Robert Smithson, *The Writings of Robert Smithson* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) quoted in Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 93.

A "spatial order", according to Kaye, is one which works inside the fragility, fragmentation and permeability of its own system. He cites de Certeau's famous insight that "[t]he surface of this [spatial] order is everywhere punched and torn open by ellipses, drifts, and leaks of meaning: it is a sieve order".[399] The use of this spatial order in the construction of performances thus produces site-specific works that celebrate the solubility of space. That is its ability to solve and dissolve, to challenge and be challenged, to contest and to constitute. In the face of site-specific performance as outlined by Kaye, it is no longer possible to look at site as just the physical manifestation of power. Site is porous, and in this porous state shapes and is shaped by its audiences. Other types of space, dreamt, practised, imagined, mapped, begin to disrupt the stability of physical location, and destabilise the notion that it could be created and managed to completely control the actions of people. Kaye's book provides an analysis of performance art which shows that site is not simply a static entity, but created in interaction with performers and viewers. In order to further explore this creation of space by artistic practice, one must similarly expand the three Lefebvrean dimensions of space, physical, conceptual and practiced to embrace "site" and new ideas of "conceptual spaces" and "place".

Reinterpreting Lefebvre: Conceptual Space

I refer to Lefebvre's conceived spatial dimension as "conceptual space", a space where representations of territory control how it is thought of, managed, controlled and patrolled. For Lefebvre, conceived spatiality is one of the major ways individuals are controlled. It is an abstract way of containing and positioning people according to specific images of society. Through the powers of planning, surveying, naming, owning and mapping, space can be taken away from its daily specifics to work for the profit of the few and the exploitation of the many.[400]

Lefebvre saw any "community" opposition to this process occurring through a different spatial plane, that of lived practice. While there are certainly "lived" actions which create, change and subvert space, and these will be discussed in the next section, conceptual space does not simply belong to the powerful. In my case study

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[399] de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 107 quoted in Kaye, *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, 57.
[400] For analysis of the conceptual and controlling practices of mapping and naming in postcolonial nations, see Paul Carter, "Naming Place," in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (London and NY: Routledge, 1995), B. Hodge and V. Mishra, "Aboriginal Place," in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (London and NY: Routledge, 1995) and Graham Huggan, "Decolonising the Map," in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (London and NY: Routledge, 1995).

in Chapter Seven, on Peter Sellars's radical artistic direction of the 2001 Adelaide Festival of the Arts, I will be using Lefebvrean ideas of conceived space to examine how ownership of space and cultural institutions became a battleground, and how spatial positioning by artists and communities into new formations became one of the most powerful legacies of the festival.

Unlike Lefebvre, I argue that new alternative mappings, new metaphors and new mental divisions can also shape space, and at times occur in parallel with official dominating conceptual practices. Alternative conceptual spaces are also at times in direct conflict with authorised ways of thinking spatially. Artwork can be directed at working with and challenging this "conceptual space", rather than just interacting with its physical surrounds and, I contend, still be thought of as site-specific. In Adelaide in 2002, the anonymous, unauthorised alteration of place names on city maps and sign posts, to reflect traditional Indigenous names for the land, caused significant disruptions to local government policies and lasting changes to official ideas of land management, despite there being no alterations made to the actual physical location.[401] This was not just the creation of "new" space, but the foregrounding of an alternative Australia, one that has been oppressed and rendered invisible. Conceptual space can be a powerful place of guerrilla contestation and community protest.

Spatial Metaphors

One can expand Lefebvre's notions of what constitutes conceived space to include the power of spatial metaphor. Conceptual space can be connected to the ways ideas of space have been a war zone, particularly in postcolonial and feminist literature and theory and in discussions on the politics of location. As Soja states: "Even in the realm of pure abstraction, ideology, and representation, there is a pervasive and pertinent, if often hidden spatial dimension". [402]

Reclaiming the right to manage, name and control space is a focus for violent struggle, both for those reclaiming colonized nations and for those attempting to understand the oppressed identity of the postcolonial subject, in literature and cultural theory. As discussed in Chapters Two and Three, identity has been shaped

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[401] See *Public Art Action Coalition Homepage* (2002), http://www.publicartaction.net/index.htm (accessed December 5, 2005).
[402] Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, 46.

by binaries which force separations. As Soja notes, this binary logic has a spatial element.

> "'We' and 'They' are dichotomously spatialized and enclosed in an imposed territoriality of apartheids, ghettos, barrios, reservations, colonies, fortresses, metropolis, citadels, and other trappings that emanate from the center-periphery relation. In this sense hegemonic power universalises and contains difference in real and imagined spaces and places.[403]

Cultural feminist bell hooks notes that in radically engaging with culture "one transgresses, moves 'out of one's place'". She sees that "[f]or many of us, that movement requires pushing against oppressive boundaries set by race, sex, and class domination. Initially, then, it is a defiant political gesture. Moving, we confront the realities of choice and location." She asks:

> Within complex and ever shifting realms of power relations, do we position ourselves on the side of colonizing mentality? Or do we continue to stand in political resistance with the oppressed, ready to offer our ways of seeing and theorizing, of making culture, towards that revolutionary effort which seeks to create space where there is unlimited access to the pleasure and power of knowing, where transformation is possible?[404]

For hooks this choice is crucial. "It shapes and determines our response to existing cultural practice and our capacity to envision new, alternative, oppositional aesthetic acts. It informs the way we speak about these issues, the language we choose. Language is also a place of struggle."[405] David Harvey amongst others has analysed the way naming and mapping processes reflect these spatialised binaries of difference and sameness. He sums this up helpfully in his work on post-modern spatiality:

> Beneath the veneer of common sense and seemingly 'natural' ideas about space and time, there lie hidden terrains of ambiguity, contradiction and struggle. Conflicts arise not merely out of admittedly diverse subjective appreciations, but because different objective material qualities of time and space are deemed relevant to social life in different situations. Important battles likewise occur in realms of scientific, social and aesthetic theory, as well as in practice. How we represent space and time in theory matters, because it affects how we and others interpret and then act with respect to the world.[406]

Guerrilla art challenges these spatial metaphors, producing new images of identity and location. This is particularly true when it utilises the performance of post-structured communities.

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[403] Ibid., 87.
[404] bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1990), 145.
[405] Ibid.
[406] Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, 205.

Spatial Dreaming

As well as working with Lefebvre's conceived territory of maps, grids, plans and their alternative private, personal counterparts, and aiming to destabilise boundaries of conceptual "location", like race, gender, sexuality etc, those involved in challenges to conceptual space are also involved in the dreaming of new spatial realties. In this case the spaces can be artistic visions for the future, articulated daydreams or fantastical new alternative dimensions. Imagining spaces outside domination, conceiving ethical spaces for living, dreaming new spaces which expand or contrast contemporary realties, these are also political activities, and for many guerrilla artists, allowing room for this sort of alternative conceptual spatiality is a large part of their work. In the case of the Adelaide Festival, when the street signs and city maps were altered illegally to show original Indigenous names, the space created was also an imagined one. Adelaide's Victoria Square, containing a large bronze statue of Queen Victoria was momentarily also called Tarndanyungga, its traditional Aboriginal name. This was a dreamt space where there could be public acknowledgement of difference and reconciliation between cultures; a fantasy space, as to date Indigenous Australian and non-Indigenous Australian notions of land and ownership have never been ale to coexist on equal footing within the conceptual spaces of authority. This dreamt, reconciled Australia is, however, a powerful image and continues to haunt local government policy in Adelaide.[407]

Conceptual space, like site, is made up of more than just surface representations like maps and grids. It is a complex dimension in which different visions of territory, and identity and imagination collide and combine. Spatial challenges like guerrilla art which engage with conceptual spaces, operate as Gillian Rose states "by asking for a geography that acknowledges that the grounds of its knowledge are unstable. Shifting, uncertain, and above all contested".[408]

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[407] Adelaide City Council, "Council Shows Leadership in Aboriginal Reconciliation," Press release, May 27, 2002, http://www.adelaidecitycouncil.com.au/ (accessed December 5, 2002)
[408] Gillian Rose, Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; Polity Press, 1993) quoted in Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, 107.

Reinterpreting Lefebvre: Place

Lived Space and Place

> We begin to walk. We feel the ground beneath our feet, the wind in our face. And as we do, we leave traces. We are involved in the landscape.[409]

Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks, Theatre/Archaeology

It is useful to look to new theories of "place" to understand how this dimension of Lefebvre's category of *lived space* is produced and challenged. Recent theorising about "place" by phenomenologists, art theorists and philosophers fit very well with Lefebvre's vision. For phenomenologist Ed Casey, the limit of a place is "specified by what a body can do in that place, that is, by its sensory activity, its legwork, its history there [...] it is the immanent scene of finite place as felt by an equally finite body".[410] Like Lefebvre, Casey, saw place as losing out historically to other more formalized, abstract notions of spaces without bodies. These abstract spaces, according to him, are increasingly conceived and built without any reference to the specificity of people's lived experience. Art theorist Lucy Lippard succinctly calls place, space "as seen from the inside"[411] and goes on to add "[s]pace defines landscape where space combined with memory defines place".[412] This has become a popular distinction between the two terms, "space" and "place", although I tend to use "space" to refer to the whole dimension of spatiality, of which embodied place is just one part. Like theatre /archaeology scholars Pearson and Shanks, I understand place to be the ways the present and the past fold together, the ways remnants of histories shape the present and the ways bodies make relationships between land and memory.[413]

Two principles of place emerging from recent research are particularly relevant to the site-specificity of the guerrilla performer. The first relates to the articulation of "practiced" space and is based on the work of de Certeau. This principle, which plays out across the work of new place scholars such as Casey, Lippard and Shanks and Pearson, is the idea that place is an experienced dimension and that physical and

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[409] Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks, *Theatre/Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 2001), 135.
[410] Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 78.
[411] Lucy R. Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society* (NY: New Press, 1997), 8
[412] Ibid., 9
[413] See Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks, *Theatre/Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 2001).

emotional practices work subversively inside dominating and disciplinary spaces. The second is that place is remembered space, i.e. that place is created through the activity of memory, itself a performative practice. Remembered space however is not necessarily buried in the past. Memory is a creative act which occurs in the present and place makes room for alternative histories and alternative ways of remembering.

I define 'place' as made up of everyday practices, grassroots histories and localised knowledges. It is thus analogous to Lefebvre's hopes for "lived space", it is an embodied zone of uncertainty, contact, experience and personalised spatial practice. Place, together with site and conceptual space, is a location where hegemonic power is both played out and contested. For this reason, place is vital to the work of the twenty-first century guerrilla artist.

Assembling Place

> The city, no matter how efficiently planned out or how beautiful, is rendered worthless without people. It cannot exist because it takes people to make a city. It is people who will take the empty shells of buildings and make them function. It is people who take space and turn it into places. It is people who anchor the city in time, even if only for a fleeting moment.[414]
>
> Francesca Wodtke "The Creation of City Space by Pedestrians, According to de Certeau" 2006

Lived space / place is created by activity. In his 1978 essay "Walking in the City", de Certeau famously described the conceit of those who view spaces like a city from above, from aerial views and authorised maps. Those authorised views of the space are often completely irrelevant to those who move through the city every day. It is activities such as walking, dwelling, cooking which for de Certeau are the "tactics" which actually shape the experience of a city. This experienced space is what constitutes "place". De Certeau suggests that the "long poem of walking manipulates spatial organizations". "No matter how panoptic they may be" he writes," [walking] is neither foreign to them (it can take place only within them) nor in conformity with them (it does not receive its identity from them)." For de Certeau practices like walking "create shadows and ambiguities within [...] [cities], it insets its multitudinous references and citations into them (social models, cultural mores, and personal

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[414] Francesca Wodtke, "The Creation of City Space by Pedestrians, According to de Certeau," *Cyberarts and Cyberculture Research Initiative Homepage,* National University of Singapore (2006), http://www.cyberartsweb.org/cpace/politics/wodtke/DeCerteau.html (accessed February 5, 2007).

factors)".[415] Everyday practices like walking thus take people out of authorised placement.[416] Curators of the exhibition *Walking the City*, Melissa Brookhart Beyer and Jill Dawsey say that, "[f]or de Certeau, walking is a form of enunciation, akin to a speech act. Like figurative language, which strays from literal meaning, walking, squatting, or scaling stray from proper places, introducing new significations, ambiguities, and voices into an existing spatial system".[417] One can never ignore the relations of power which create and patrol the boundaries of spaces, but within these economic, cultural and political boundaries, people make do in surprising ways, making "sense " of what spaces they have access too and creating "places" to live through spatial practice.[418] De Certeau's wanderer is not free and is much more engaged in everyday living. Walking is an everyday experience, creating place through new combinations of private practice including work, play and survival strategies. As Kuppers suggests "by walking the street, the 'soulless' plan becomes a lived experience that could, potentially, open up a moment of difference".[419] These lived "places" are articulated by everyday activities and evoked and challenged through place-based art.

Media and cultural studies scholars have cited the need to understand de Certeau's work alongside an analysis of the complex networks of social systems in twenty-first century urban life. If these beautiful images of subversive bodies are to continue to resonate, there is a need to "complicate [...] [de Certeau's] sense of urban compositions and encounters by overlaying with network theories/models".[420] This project lies outside the scope of the present thesis, but it is important to recognize

[415] Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 101.
[416] The "flaneur" or strolling pedestrian who is alienated from the city but involved in it by walking appears in a serious of contexts. See particularly Walter Benjamin et al., *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1999). See also Janet Wolff, "The Invisible Flaneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity," in *The Polity Reader in Cultural Theory* (Cambridge : Polity Press, 1994) and Sally R. Munt, "The Lesbian Flaneur," in *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space: A Strangely Familiar Project*, ed. Iain Borden (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 2001). For subversive uses of this image by the Situationists See Debord, Guy. "Introduction à une critique de la géographie urbaine." (1955) in Knabb, Ken, ed. *Situationist International Anthology*. Berkeley, Calif.: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981 and Sadie Plant, *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age* (London and NY: Routledge, 1992), 59-60.
[417] Melissa Brookhart Beyer and Jill Dawsey, "Walking in the City: Spatial Practices in Art, from the Mid-1960s to the Present Exhibition," *Apexart Gallery Homepage,* (2003), http://www.apexart.org/exhibitions/dawseybrookhart.htm (accessed April 5, 2006).
[418] To clarify different uses of terminology: in his work de Certeau defined "place", as the zone which engages in the authorised placing of people in a grid of behaviour and saw "spaces" as a better term for understanding the mobile, tactical spatial practices. I, along with many scholars including Casey, hooks and Lippard, see "place" as the best term to relate to unauthorised spatial practices. These are just different uses of the terminology, not conflicting theories.
[419] Petra Kuppers, "Community Arts Practices: Improvising Being-Together".
[420] See dialogues on this issue particularly J. Rice, "Notes on a Digital Detroit: Rhetoric and Space in the Age of the Network," *Yellow Dog* (2006), http://ydog.net/?p=104 (accessed August 5, 2007).

that, despite seeing hope in the "awkward" corporeal bodies of individuals, new arrangements of subjectivity and new "bodies" merged with new technologies can be read through de Certeau's metaphors. How does the poetic rhetoric of "walking the city" relate to the complex technologies which shape modern existence? How does technology relate to "place"? These are important questions for the twenty-first century guerrilla artist who works with new technologies and subversive new networks of communication and representation.

The twenty-first century "city" is populated by new relationships between humans shaped by discursive power, and new technologies. The results of these new relationships can be seen, in Deleuze and Guattari's term as "machinic assemblages"[421] that continually merge and change. These "assemblages" can be seen as "bodies" and other "machines" working symbiotically in complex relationships with relations of power. Such machines, from the organic to the semiotic "body", articulate with one another to form 'machinic assemblages'. Each of these is an "intermingling of bodies reacting to one another".[422] Assemblages meet and form new assemblages, ideas of stable bodies, technologies and spaces become blurred. As Malins says of the Deleuzean image of the assemblage, "[t]he body conceived of as a machinic assemblage becomes a body that is multiple. Its function or meaning no longer depends on an interior truth or identity, but on the particular assemblages it forms with other bodies. "[423] In the city these assemblages can be as simple as the relationship between people and their cars, phones, microphones and other technological "prosthetics". They can also be much more sophisticated relationships between people and their virtual personalities or "avatars", and the virtual technologies of media and the internet. They also link physical spaces with their virtual counterparts to create hybrid physical and virtual networks.

For those looking at contemporary images of de Certeau's "walking" spaces, however, these assemblages are still involved in activities which shape the spaces they inhabit. The mediatised, virtual and physical "cities" are still experienced by assemblages, through their everyday activities. Driving, recording hip-hop tracks on a mp3 player, playing an avatar in online multi-user domains, communicating through

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[421] Assemblage is a term defined by Deleuze and Guattari as involving the connection between discursive power structures and material practices. See Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: Athlone Press, 1988).
[422] Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 88.
[423] Peta Malins, "Machinic Assemblages: Deleuze, Guattari and an Ethico-Aesthetics of Drug Use," *Janus Head,* 7, no. 1 (2004), http://www.janushead.org/7-1/ (accessed January 16, 2007).

new technologies, working with new computer programs and viruses, these are all spatial practices, all types of "walking" and everyday activities which make room for what de Certeau called the tactics of the "weak." While all spaces, physical and virtual have rules which govern the available possibilities, "walking" through these spaces creates personal experienced versions of this space. It creates "place". Sometimes this is experienced as virtual body and virtual place. As Daniel Punday suggests, "de Certeau's work on everyday life takes as its point of departure the premise that [all] everyday actions are a tactical bricolage of 'making due' that always works against traditional notions of power".[424] Twenty-first century "place", however engaged in continually changing technologies, is still being practiced into being.

Remembering Place

> Memory is a sort of anti-museum: it is not localizable. Fragments of it come out in legends. Objects and words also have hollow places in which a past sleeps, as in the everyday acts of walking, creating, going to bed in which ancient revolutions slumber [...] . Haunted places are the only ones people can live in. [425]

> Michel de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life.

Place is bound to memory. Guerrilla art often engages with memory in order to create place. Memory is an activity which creates even as it attempts to represent. While the recent expansion of memory and post memory studies across many disciplines has reminded us that memory is a performative that is too easily romanticised,[426] it is also a source of great pleasure and pain, and, when expressed through art, contains the promise of personalized history of spatiality, which like de Certeau's rhetorical city, is practised into being. Barry Curtis, in studies of memory and the city of Venice states: "Place is the product of relationship part subjective projection, part internalization of external reality." He believes that "among the evaluative mechanisms that discriminate place from space is memory, correspondingly amnesia is an operation which reverses that process and dissolves place back into the indifference of [abstract] space".[427]

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[424] Daniel Punday, "Derrida in the World: Space and Post-Deconstructive Textual Analysis," *Postmodern Culture,* 11, no. 1 (2000), http://www3.iath.virginia.edu/pmc/ (accessed September 10, 2004).
[425] de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 108.
[426] For my understanding of post-modern memory studies, see Rebecca Caines, "Christian Boltanski: Representation and the Performance of Memory," *Afterimage,* 32, no. 1 (2004).
[427] Barry Curtis, "On Memory and the City," in *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space: A Strangely Familiar Project*, ed. Iain Borden (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 2001), 56.

Holding onto and expressing memory is also a way to create personalized histories which disrupt authorised knowledge of the past and aid in the creation of inhabited new places. Raphael Samuel's *Theatres of Memory*, maps the unofficial knowledges, which for him makes history. For Samuel, Memory is "a social form of knowledge; the work, in any given instance of a thousand different hands [...] a process rather than an event," and he believes it is ultimately "something which people made for themselves [...] the perceptions of the past which find expression in the discriminations of everyday life."[428]

However, because memory is always partial, created in the moment and always in process, the practised experienced sense of place it engenders reflects this partiality. In fact, lived space/place as always "being remade" is partially why it holds such promise for theorists like Lefebvre, and those who followed him, as it allows for an understanding that place is created and recreated, moment by moment. Place is also contested and Curtis discusses how place, as created through memory is always open to new and conflicting interpretation. In the study of oppressive and exploitative spaces, "anthropologists, cultural geographers and theorists of racial and gendered space have provided alternative readings of authorized urban texts that demonstrate that place, like memory, is a work in progress."[429]

Lefebvre and theorists of place such as de Certeau acknowledge memory and place are not free of power, and like all the other spatial dimensions are created through power relations. Curtis goes on to state that "[m]emory is one of the key ingredients in the creation of place, although it is important to acknowledge that memory is subject to political as well as psychic operations". He summarises the work of other cultural geographers working in the field of memory who have pointed out that memory can "be composed to supplement and realign existing histories" rather than provide alternative stories. [430] Memory and habituation can also constitute "indwelling resistances" to real progress,[431] and can also aid in the "transition from realism to simulation".[432] Despite these negative readings of its appropriation, memory still creates place. As people remember and find ways to express their memories, place is brought into being. Such places are necessarily diverse, created by interweaving

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[428] Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, 8.
[429] Curtis, "On Memory and the City," 61.
[430] Dolores Hayden, "The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History," in *Strangely Familiar: Narratives of Architecture in the City*, ed. Iain Borden (London and NY: Routledge, 1996), 47.
[431] Iain Chambers, "Naples, the Emergent Archaic," in *Strangely Familiar: Narratives of Architecture in the City*, ed. Iain Borden (London and NY: Routledge, 1996), 52.
[432] M. Christine Boyer, "Twice Told Stories: The Double Erasure of Time Square," in *Strangely Familiar: Narratives of Architecture in the City*, ed. Iain Borden (London and NY: Routledge, 1996), 77.

and conflicting memories and different ways of remembering. In this they create fissures in readings of space that attempt to contain and control people in the pursuit of certain norms of behaviour or in pursuit of docile consumers. In my "walks" through the case studies in Chapter Five and Chapter Seven, I evoke my own memories self-reflexively in order to show how place, as well as conceptual space and site, are shaped by memory and by the activities of post-structured communities.

Like conceptual space and site, place is interactive and created by communities of activity and imagination. Art can thus be a useful tool in the creation of place. Lucy Lippard believes that "artists can make the [spatial] connections visible" and are able to

> guide us through sensuous, kinaesthetic responses to topography, lead us from archaeology and landbased social history into an alternative relationship to place. They can expose the social agendas that have formed the land, bring out multiple readings of places that mean different things to different people at different times, rather than merely reflecting some of their beauty back into the marketplace of the living room.[433]

Often a focus on the expression of "place" is central to community art where people's spatial experiences, memories and everyday idiosyncrasies are foregrounded and discussed, even, or perhaps especially, if these memories and everyday spatialities are unpleasant, inequitable or desperately in need of change. As Lippard notes, place is not always nostalgic or even happy. She quotes a contemporary song by James McMurty, "We Can't Make it Here," which states simply "We do not live, we only stay/ We are too poor to get away[434]". Through the expression of place through art——which is a non linear activity——alternative stories and alternative solutions to social problems can be explored. In the case study on the community-based hip-hop of Morganics in Chapter Six, I use ideas of lived space/place to examine how the poetics and politics of memory, home and everyday life are foregrounded by a community-based guerrilla artist. In these hip-hop pieces, the experiences and memories of "place" contradict and challenge the harsh social realities of site and conceptual spaces.

Artworks which discuss or evoke people's specific spatial experiences and everyday spatial practices, are thus place-bound and thus may also be considered site-specific, even if the final artwork occurs in unrelated purpose-built art spaces and

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[433] Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*, 19.
[434] James McMurty quoted in Ibid., 41.

does not enter into conversation with the immediate physical environment. Place specific work remembers and dreams new places into being.

Site/Concept/Place

Vital to Henri Lefebvre was that his three types of space, what Ed Soja called "Firstspace", "Secondspace", and "Thirdspace",[435] always be considered in ontological connection with each other. This idea of space as simultaneously perceived, conceived and lived is very helpful to understanding how site, concept and place coexist in site-specific art practices. Soja calls this "a trialectics of spatiality, of spatial thinking, of the spatial imagination".[436] Bordern and his colleagues describe how for Lefebvre, these spaces are forever implicated *inside* each other:

> Furthermore, these kinds of space are not exclusive zones, but only analytic categories. Spatial practices, representations of space, and spaces of representation therefore necessarily incorporate each other in their concrete historical-geographical combinations; the history of space must account not only for each separately but, above all, for their interrelation and linkages with social practice. Real space and spatiality are always constructed in and through some spatially and historically specific configuration of the three.[437]

Thus Lefebvre's physical spaces, conceived spaces and lived, spatial practices all coexist and, when always examined together, allow an opening out of the possibilities of each. This is also true when one expands these concepts to include more recent theories of interactive site, conceptual space and place. As Shields notes, this also "short-circuits any base-superstructure dualism, making it difficult to think in terms other than a dialectical juxtaposition rather than a hierarchy". Lefebvre's multi-dimensional thesis is thus "in direct contrast to the more customary reduction of space to part of the trinity: production, consumption and exchange".[438]

To say that space is always a simultaneous production of material objects, conceived representations and everyday practices, opens up the notion of site-specific to include works that are not just involved with immediate relationships between audiences and physical locations, but also works which evoke lived, everyday spaces or which work with imagined or conceptual ideas of space. Site-specific becomes a term to name art working with both the relationships and stories of spaces, but also

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[435] See Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*.
[436] Ibid., 70.
[437] Borden et al., eds, *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space: A Strangely Familiar Project*, 7.
[438] Shields, *Lefebvre, Love, and Struggle: Spatial Dialectics*, 159-60.

with the ways spaces operate on bodies. This position moves beyond choosing between these types of spatiality and aims to describe work which is specific to site, conceptual space *and* place, at times acknowledging these interconnected dimensions can contradict, overlap and challenge each other.

Kaye's view of space as essentially interactive, fluid and unstable and Lefebvre's view of it as made up of multiple different sorts of spatiality both help to understand the particular site-specificity of the guerrilla performer. Space in both these readings becomes *site/concept/place*, a focus which allows the guerrilla artist to work with all the elements of spatiality simultaneously, even if one element is prioritised and dominant. *Site/concept/place* is recreated moment by moment, as each dimension of space informs the other, as viewer, artists, location, concept and experience all conflict, mutate and change.

Creating Space

Bordern and his colleagues note that the " relationship between the social and the spatial—in Edward Soja's term, the "socio-spatial dialectic"—is an interactive one, in which people make places and places make people".[439] Indeed for them, the project is now to extend Lefebvre's challenge of understanding space as production and to encourage architects to realise the ways which bodies, while produced by their environments and constrained by the governed conceptions of space, also produce the spatial dimensions they inhabit. They suggest that new theories of spatiality may allow people to understand and make room for alternative production of spaces. "Taken together, work in anthropology and geography encompasses all aspects of the built environment rather than treating works of architecture as autonomous "one-off" pieces of fine art or sculpture; thus it includes building users as well as designers and builders as producers of space".[440] Post-Lefebvrean theories of site, concept and place suggest that everyday spatial practices and performances which utilise and interrupt these practices may have specific power in therefore reshaping the spatial dimensions of society. As Bordern's team. suggest that this theory allows us to see spatial inequity and make room for subjugated ways of producing space. In summary they suggest:

> We must treat the city and its architectures as a "possibilities machine," as what Lefebvre refers to as an oeuvre—a place of artistic production in its widest sense, where the "texture" of the city is its

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[439] Borden et al., eds, *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space: A Strangely Familiar Project*, 4.
[440] Ibid., 5.

creation of time-spaces through the appropriative activities of its inhabitants; a place of nonlabor, joy, and the fulfilment of desires rather than toil; a place of qualities, difference, relations in time and space, contradictory uses and encounters.[441]

Site-specificity

New Sites

Site/concept/place is simultaneously perceived, conceived and lived, and is open to recreation by the activities of individuals and the self-reflexivity of artistic practice. Site-specific artists have utilised these fluid ideas of site, conceptual space and place to create works which bear little resemblance to the publicly-situated, individually-created modernist art pieces which marked the height of 1960s-1980s site-specific art.

Miwon Kwon's book *One Place After Another* is a project of literature review, history, criticism and cultural theory, which examines the last fifty years of site-specific arts practice. It is one of few attempts to map changing ideas of "public" art and community and it is valuable to this thesis as it provides clues to the motivations and practices of the new site-specific community artist.

Site-specific art has come under attack in recent years for being both elitist and controversial. Artists and organisations do not always consult the communities that use the spaces these artworks occupy. There has also been criticism that site-specific art is a practice based strongly on modernist visions of artists as individual geniuses whose works are to be given to others who are necessarily less talented. Big business has invested in the production of site-specific art projects, and this too has limited their ability to challenge certain economic practices.[442]

Kwon links the explosion of new site-specific artwork and theory in the '90s and early twenty-first century to "an attempt to rehabilitate the criticality associated with the anti-idealist, anti-commercial site-specific practices of the late 1960s and early 1970s, which incorporated the physical conditions of a particular location as integral

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[441] Ibid.
[442] For a critique of big business involvement in art, see Pierre Bourdieu, Hans Haacke, and Randal Johnson, *Free Exchange* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).

to the production, presentation and reception of art".[443] She traces site-specific art, through its history towards what is now being called in the US, 'new genre public art'. This might well be another name for community-based guerrilla art that questions the viability of simplistic definitions of site, and challenges the ownership and conceptual territorialisation of space. Kwon traces this historical specificity to a sense that

> [a]s public art broadens there is a recognition within artistic communities that the unspecific (mis)uses of the term 'site-specific' are yet another instance of how vanguardist, socially conscious, and politically committed art practices always become domesticated by their assimilation into the dominant culture.

She adds: "[T]his argument would insist that if the aesthetic and political efficacy of site-specific art has become insignificant or innocuous in recent years, it is because it has been weakened and redirected by institutional and market forces."[444]Guerrilla art, as noted earlier, is very susceptible to this weakening and appropriation by market forces. New ideas of "community" and "site-specificity", however, subvert this appropriation. Understanding new approaches to site helps to highlight these new artistic and political practices.

Kwon argues that artists are now rejecting the label 'site-specific' and argues that the current efforts to redefine the site-art relationship are also inspired by "a recognition that if site-specific art seems no longer viable- because its critical edges have dulled, its pressures been absorbed - this is partly due to the conceptual limitations of existing models of site-specificity.[445] Acknowledging the manifold ways in which artists, governments and communities have responded to the notion of "public", "site-based" art, Kwon recognises a host of new terms that have arisen to deal with the resulting complex arrangements of site and community. She suggests the multiplicity of these terms reflects changes to ideas of "site", moving towards more complex modern definitions of spatiality.

> In response many artists critics, historians and curators, whose practices are engaged in problematizing received notions of site-specificity, have offered alternative formations, such as context specific, debate-specific, audience-specific, community-specific, project-based. These terms, which tend to slide into one another at different times, collectively signal an attempt to forge more complex and fluid possibilities for the art site relationship while simultaneously registering the extent to which the very concept of the site has become destabilized in the past three decades or more.[446]

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[443] Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 1.
[444] Ibid., 2.
[445] Ibid.
[446] Ibid.

Original usage of the term "new genre public art" comes from a manifesto of sorts by Suzanne Lacy, and it is useful to quote the original summary, which clearly delineates new genre public art from its forbears in site-specific sculpture and gallery work.

> Dealing with some of the most profound issues of our time-toxic waste, race relations, homelessness, aging, gang warfare, and cultural identity-a group of visual artists had developed distinct models for an art whose public strategies of engagement are an important part of aesthetic language. We might describe this as "new genre" public art, to distinguish it in both form and intention from what has been called "public art" a term used for the past twenty-five years to describe sculpture and installations sited in public places. Unlike much of what has here-for-to been called public art, new genre public art- visual art that uses both traditional and non traditional media to communicate and interact with a broad and diversified audience about issues directly relevant to their lives- is based on engagement.[447]

Kwon suggests models for "new genre" or "citizen" art, like Lacy's, suit many new site-specific projects, although Kwon does warn against any attempt to locate this work purely in the 1990s. Political interactive site-specific work has occurred throughout history, but in the 1990s, many site-specific artists began to see this practice as capable of producing new forms of conversations and contestations in an era of massive social injustice. These spatial contestations also involved a host of new technologies, new disciplines and new networks of communication. There has thus been an increase in documenting, supporting and analysing this sort of art.

Art critic Arlene Raven suggests that this sort of public, site-based work is "[a]rt in the public interest, activist and communitarian in spirit". She sees this field as necessarily embracing multidisciplinary art, involving all art forms, since" its modes of expression encompass a variety of traditional media, including painting and sculpture, as well as non-traditional media, street art, guerrilla theatre, video, page art, billboards, protest actions and demonstrations, oral histories, fences, environments, posters, murals". Most importantly she has argued that "art in the public interest forges direct intersections with social issues [...] it encourages community coalition-building in pursuit of social justice and attempts to garner greater institutional empowerment for artists to act as social agents".[448] This guerrilla work can create new democratically-organised spaces that strive for social justice and equity.

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[447] Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain*, ed. Suzanne Lacy (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995), 2.
[448] Arlene Raven, ed., *Art in the Public Interest* (NY: Da Capo Press, 1993), 5.

Kwon has observed the ways in which contemporary artists can "reframe site-specificity as the cultural mediation of broader social, economic and political processes that organize urban life and urban space". She traces what we could tie to our Lefebvrean trialectic, *site/concept/place*, interconnected, simultaneous spatiality, looking at how contemporary site-specific art crosses physical, conceived and practiced spatial boundaries with a slipperiness not explained by traditional models of art as object and viewer. This new guerrilla art is not just tied to conversations about its immediate physical location. Kwon suggests that site-specificity is "dispersed across much broader cultural, social, and discursive fields, and organized intertextually through the nomadic movement of the artist operating more like an itinerary than a map". For the 'new genre' public artist, she says "site can now be as various as a billboard, an artistic genre, a disenfranchised community, an institutional framework, a magazine page, a social cause or a political debate. It can be literal, like a streetcorner, or virtual, like a theoretical concept."[449] These are the spaces of the guerrilla artist who is site-specific without being tied to narrow ideas of physical site. They also represent a shift in the processes of making site-specific art.

Creating New Space with Artistic Practice

Lacy is not the only theorist who tracks a critical new relationship between artist and site occurring in what she calls this "new genre" public art. In his work on "functional" sites, James Meyer describes early phenomenological/experiential 'site-specific' art as in some ways confined by a static relationship between artist as giver of cultural product and viewer as receiver. He sees that "Yet for all its radicality", he says, in "its materialist commitment this [site-specific installation] work still operated within a Kantian cognitive model of reflexivity: it still confined its analysis to the "frame". The criticality of such work was perspicuous only within the physical confines of, or in close proximity to the gallery site". He too maps crucial changes in site-specificity across arts practice which results in new forms of multi-disciplinary site-based artwork:

> Today, much practice explores an expanded site, enlarging its scope of enquiry into contingent spheres of interest, contingent location. This expanded institutional critique is as much at home in natural history and anthropological collections, parks, housing projects, and public

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[449] Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 3.

bathrooms as in the art gallery or museums, it may engage several
sites, institutions, and collaborators at once.[450]

This is another example of what Kaye calls "the multiplication of sites". Across the whole discipline of art theory and practice in site-specific arts, it is possible to trace a growing commitment starting in the 1990s towards new ideas of space, new processes of making art and changing ideas of the place of the artist in society. This is reflected in guerrilla art which is deeply embedded in community and site/concept/place.

Lacy claims that "what exists in the space between the words 'public' and 'art' is an unknown relationship between artists and audience, a relationship that may *itself* be the artwork".[451] This is an important insight into how guerrilla practices may work. James Meyer analyses the types of works Lacy refers to, naming them "functional practice". In Meyers reading, new site-specific art occurred where "[t]he 'work' was thus not a single entity, the installation of an individual artist in a given place, it was on the contrary, a *function* occurring between locations and points of view, a series of positions of information and place".[452] Meyer sees site-specific work as destabilising public art models in powerful ways: "Alluding to other points of departure and return, they posited a model of place that is, like the subject who passes through it, mobile and contingent. In doing so these works suggest nothing less than a displacement of the 1960s generates notion of "site-specificity".[453]

Meyer reminds us that these newer site-specific artists are no longer so eager to own and transmit work as some sort of perceived "gift" to communities. Instead, the artist is problematised like the practices and communities within which they work. Meyer notes, "Indeed, in the most thoughtful work, the artist-traveller "nomad" is a thoroughly historicised subject".[454] Meyer suggests that "a functional practice, insofar as it traces the artist's movements through and around the institution, often reflecting on the character of the commission itself, inscribes his or her subjectivity within the work." Meyer claims that as a result of this interaction, "in this meeting of producer and site, fixed identities blur; the insistence of a tautological correspondence of the subjectivities of the artist and community is questioned; the premise of a stable

[450] James Meyer, "The Functional Site," in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. Erika Suderburg (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 27.
[451] Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain*. Quoted in Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 106.
[452] Meyer, "The Functional Site," 27.
[453] Ibid., 35.
[454] Ibid.,36.

"authorial" self is troubled".[455] Once again the unstoppable, producing force of space, foregrounded by Lefebvre is under erasure, as multiple "voices", multiple "spaces and multiple "artists" interact.

In community-based guerrilla performance, the blurring between artist, community, audience and site can be read as a type of camouflage. It becomes a strategy for the guerrilla artist to question relations of social power, while challenging notions of authority and authenticity in ways which elude commercialisation, appropriation or interference. Artists and communities create new, ethical spaces together. This "functional" interaction between artist, community and site creates new sites, concepts *and* places which all contest spatial discipline, domination and control. Meyer's "functionality" may therefore be seen as a major feature of contemporary community performance.[456]

It is vital to remember, however, that much of the 'fluidity' of new genre site-specific practice and theory is tied to understandings of the artist as transient and able to provide facilitation, creative talent and contribution to a range of different communities. These nomadic artists can bring fluid identities to bear on their relationship to site and community. Yet, despite the fact that artists are often low-income earners, the simple fact that they have mobility, both physically and within their identity, means that the artist is often still in a privileged position or an uneven power relationship with the communities they work with. Kwon reminds us that the choice to see identity and space as changeable and fluid is not always available.

> This choice, of course, does not belong to everyone equally. The understanding of identity and difference as being culturally constructed should not obscure the fact that the ability to deploy multiple, fluid identities in and out of itself is a privilege of mobility that has a specific relationship to power.

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[455] Ibid., 28.

[456] This "functional" feature of certain artworks has become the focus for an emerging type of "relational" community performance scholarship, based on the work of French art theorist Nicholas Bourriaud. While relatively new, this field offers much promise for further critical frameworks for "new" guerrilla performance. See Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (France: Les Presses Du Reel, 2002). See also Nicolas Bourriaud, " Interview of Nicolas Bourriaud by Miroslav Kulchitsky," *Boiler*, no. 1 (1998), Dave Beech, "The Art of the Encounter," *Art Monthly*, no. 278 (2004) and Bennett Simpson, "Public Relations," *Artforum International,* 39, no. 8 (2001). New community-based resources in this area include, "Happy to Meet You: An Introduction to Relational Art," *Partnership Learning through Art, Culture & the Environment (P.L.A.C.E),* College of Fine Arts, University of New Mexico (2005), http://place.unm.edu/inviteExC06.html and Gwen Robertson, "An Art Encounter: Rethinking, Renaming, Redefining " in *The Community Performance Reader*, ed. Petra Kuppers and Gwen Robertson (London and NY: Routledge, 2007).

She cites Homi Bhabha's famous observation: "The globe shrinks for those who own it, for the displaced or the dispossessed, the migrant or the refugee, no distance is more awesome than the few feet across borders or frontiers."[457]

In studying site-specific arts practice, one has to continually remember the power dynamics inherent in the relationships between artists, communities, arts spaces, the market economy and the nation state. When studying site-specific community work, one can then analyse the workings of site and community, while remembering the complex power relations at work inside the communities and between artists and their discourses. In the three case studies that follow, power dynamics between artist, site and community both inform and challenge the guerrilla artists. In the performance event *TrackWork*, they affect the way the performance occurs in public spaces and create wonderful combinations of community expression and artist -led creativity. In Morganics' hip-hop work they expose major cracks in Australian and Indigenous Australian relations. In the case of the Peter Sellars's Adelaide Festival, these dynamics cause much pain and distress as the Festival, the artist and the community fight over the right to express and own the spaces and communities of Adelaide. In all three cases, site/concept/place and community are being both destabilised and created.

Kwon presents a challenge, how to embrace space with *both* the deterritorialized fluidity of the nomad artist *and* the sensitivity to the power, both constricting and liberating that our everyday places mark on our bodies. She claims that

> [t]oday's site oriented practices inherit the task of demarcating the relational specificity that can hold in dialectical tension the distant poles of spatial experience described by Bhabha. This means addressing the uneven conditions of adjacencies and distances between one thing, one person, one place, one thought, one fragment next to another, rather than invoking equivalences via one thing after another.

Kwon believes that this ability to evoke and contest spaces in dialogue with communities will address the power inequity inherent in artist/community relationships. These new relationships offer alternatives to either ignoring the power of space or giving in to spatial domination. Kwon sees that only these cultural practices that have this "relational sensitivity" can "turn local encounters into long-term commitments and transform passing intimacies into indelible, unretractable

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[457] Homi Bhabha, "Double Visions," *Artforum International*, no. January (1992). Quoted in Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 166.

social marks – so that the sequences of sites that we inhabit in our life's traversal does not become generalised into an undifferentiated serialisation, one place after another".[458] This is the challenge for the twenty-first century guerrilla artist.

Conclusions

Miwon Kwon's important work reminds us that in studying community-based guerrilla art, "it is not a matter of choosing sides between models of nomadism and sedentariness, between space and place, between digital interfaces and the handshake". She advocates what many guerrilla artists practice, namely a system of attempting interrelations which embrace the multiplicitous nature of physical and virtual site/concept/place, its particular historical and cultural specificities, the position of the artist, and the politics of community. Kwon advocates the "need to be able to think the range of the seeming contradictions and our contradictory desires for them together; to understand in other words, seeming oppositions as *sustaining relations*".[459] It is out of these sustaining relations that new spaces grow.

Opening up site, to allow it to include relationships of power, conceptions and lived everyday practices, leaves us with yet more questions. At the end of her book, Kwon asks: "How do we account for instance, for the sense of exhilaration and the anxious dread engendered by the new fluidities and continuities of space and time, on the one hand, and their ruptures and disconnections on the other? And what could this doubleness of experience mean in our lives? In our work?".[460] In terms of the present study, we might also ask, what happens to both community and site when one is open to the possibility of pluralism, contradiction and simultaneity in performance? What happens when Australian and international artists re-engage with communities to the point where the boundaries between them are impossible to see? What sort of "guerrilla" activities occur, when the focus for the event is no longer a didactic political issue, but instead a representation of something much more complex? What happens when physical space, conceptions of space and the everyday ways we live place interact, or even interfere, with the ways community is performed into being? These questions will be addressed in the following chapters.

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[458] Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 166.
[459] Ibid.
[460] Ibid.

Before beginning my research, as a performance worker from what could be seen as a geographically-bounded community, a small country town and its surrounds, I continually fought with both the impulse to deny the geography of my work to people eager to brand it tied to the town, or to the piece of Northern NSW coast line it lay on. "Australian young people's contemporary performance is linked by age/experience rather than geography", I demanded. And yet I struggled with a seemingly contrasting sense that the locations of my participants were somehow vital to the ways in which the work developed, in both form and content. This frustration intensified when the company moved to Sydney and despite engaging with young people from many rural and urban locations, was no longer considered a "community" group.

Other frustrations greet any arts workers who attempt to initiate work which crosses outside funding guidelines for what constitutes a community. Communities seemingly not bound to a physical location, an ethnicity, a gender/sexuality or a sense of disadvantage, and yet bound tightly to the everyday lives of its participants/artists and to the social groups they form in site, conceptual space and place, are difficult to fund and to articulate. How to resolve working with grounded everyday experience without reducing people to just physical spatial locations which deny difference and elide multiplicity? How to understand the spatiality of everyday experience while developing strategies for opening up discussion of the ethics and power of community in performance? Part of the answer lies in accepting the contradictory nature of space and locality. Artwork can be involved in dreaming and imagining space and uses for space which radically contradict the seeming physical realities. New place and spaces are continually being created by the visions of guerrilla artists working with communities. Site/concept/place can be both liberation and a war zone, a moment when radically different types and views of spaces contest for reticulation and dominance. Another part of the answer lies in the realisation that, rather than communities simply being created by the spaces which they exist within, space is also created by community.

This chapter has argued that space is both interactive and multiple. It is physical, conceptual and experienced, site/concept and place, and is created both by power and by community activity. Guerrilla artists who embrace this view of space are creating "site-specific" works that move well beyond the cliché of site-specific art as public sculpture. Site-specific guerrilla artists engage the interactivity of site, the fluidity of imagination and memory and the idiosyncrasies of everyday practice. They involve themselves with struggles for social justice and do so by "locating" their work

and working "functionally" with site/concept/place and community. Diverse and ethical spaces are created by the activities of guerrilla artists working with post-structured communities in spatial dimensions that are physical, conceptual and practised into being.

SECTION TWO:
PRACTICE

CHAPTER FIVE

Post-Structured Community and Site/Concept/Place in Urban Theatre Projects' *TrackWork*

It's 1997 and I am running seriously late for a train. Not long in Sydney and hearing rumours of muggers on every corner, I rush into Redfern station clutching my purse and eyeing every stranger with mistrust. I am pushed through the barriers by a huge impatient crowd waiting to catch the 4.27pm Penrith via Enfield express. I vaguely catch out of the corner of my eye a girls' dance troupe competing with a saxophone player on another platform, but my view is partially obscured as two Tangara trains blur by, expressionless faces staring out at me and at each other as they pass. For the next three hours I wander Western Sydney, on and off trains and platforms and station malls. I watch infinitely slow martial arts. I hear about a Cambodian man's journey to Australia, and listen as a harried-looking man yells into a mobile phone, his words undistinguishable amongst the growls and squeaks of the loudspeakers. I look at someone's family photographs stuck to the wall of a crowded train carriage, and a drunken angry war veteran yells at me for not understanding what war is. A young group of Vietnamese Australians want to share an elaborate masked myth with me in a deserted station mall, but I am distracted by a near accident on the road nearby and end up buying a Thai Pork bun from an impatient old woman at a newsagents stand. At Granville station, I share hot chips from a huge greasy bundle with a group of people from my carriage, as a Koori[461] hip-hop band gets the commuters to join in on a chant of "Pauline Hanson Sucks"'[462] at the top of their lungs.[463]

A typical afternoon on Sydney public transport? Actually this was my experience of the 1997 Urban Theatre Projects (UTP) theatre event, *TrackWork*, a performance that spanned six train stations and the surrounding areas, interacting fluidly with the

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[461] "Koori" is an Indigenous-Australian word, meaning "people", originally used by the Awakabal clan from the Central Coast area of NSW. The term is sometimes used more generally, to refer to all Indigenous people from Sydney and the South Eastern part of NSW.
[462] Pauline Hanson was a far right-wing politician, whose party *One Nation* rose to prominence in the state of Queensland in the late 1990s, on a platform of anti-immigration, anti-multiculturalism and anti-Indigenous welfare. She is running again in the upcoming election in November 2007.
[463] This description formed the opening to Rebecca Caines, "Guerillas in Our Midst: Contemporary Australian Guerilla Performance and the Poststructural Community," *Australasian Drama Studies*, no. 42 (2003).

everyday workings of Western Sydney life, blurring the line between performance and social process. It was certainly an example of contemporary performance; playing with the nature of theatre, intentionally undermining any possibility of a unified interpretation. Yet *TrackWork* was also a vibrant metaphor for contemporary community in practice, one that deliberately questioned and disrupted the politics of contemporary power relations by creating new sites, conceptual spaces and places.

This chapter will use *TrackWork* as a case study which shows how the guerrilla tactics and politics discussed in Chapters One-Four play out in performance. The first part of this chapter deals with the background of the company and the development of the *TrackWork* project. It highlights how a problematised,"post-structured" sense of community informed the work of UTP and shaped the entire structure of the performance event. Using information gathered from primary and secondary sources, interviews with the artists, performance reviews and my own memories of the event, I demonstrate how UTP and the design of the performance event both exhibit characteristics specific to contemporary community-based guerrilla art. The second part of this chapter gives a detailed description of my experience and memories of *TrackWork* and each of its performance components. It aims, using performative writing techniques and autoethnographic material to "walk the lines" again in order evoke the experience of the artwork and it's Western Sydney for the reader, to interrogate my own experiences and to show how sites, conceptual spaces and places are created, combined and challenged through the performance of community.

While this chapter provides necessary contextual information, it does not present a sociological case study which focuses on the history of the company, or on the lives of the artists and audience. Nor does it examine the ethnographical realities of Western Sydney in 1997 or the marginality of UTP performers, as this work has already been done.[464] *TrackWork* also has an interesting place in the history of Australian CCD practice and in specific debates about policies and realities of multiculturalism in the 1990s in Australia, a subject worthy of further investigation. However, the focus here is on different questions: what can this event teach us about

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[464] Theatre scholars, Eugene Van Erven and Tom Burvill both completed research projects on *TrackWork*, and on UTP in 2001. This thesis relies on their work for company history and for background on the Western Sydney area. See Tom Burvill, "Urban Theatre Projects: Re-Siting Marginal Communities in Outer Western Sydney," in *Siting the Other: Re-Visions of Marginality in Australian and English-Canadian Drama*, ed. Marc; Bellarsi Maufort, Franca, *Dramaturgies Series* (Brussels; NY: P.I.E.:Peter Lang, 2001) and Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*. See also Ian Maxwell, "The Middle Years: Death Defying Theatre Transformed," *Critical Dialogue: An Urban Theatre Projects initiative* 1, no. 1 (2006), http://www.urbantheatre.com.au/criticaldialogue.html.

twentieth and early twenty-first century guerrilla performance, and how does it play out a new politics of community and spatiality This chapter focuses on guerrilla activity inside an established community-based company. It is the first of three case studies exploring the role emergent performance practices can play in developing new understandings of politics.

PART ONE

UTP AND THE *TRACKWORK* EVENT

Developing Post-structured Community

The Urban Theatre Projects company has undergone a series of changes since its inception in 1981. The period this chapter focuses on, 1991-2000, is quite short, but it is significant when considering community-based guerrilla performance. The company produced a series of contemporary guerrilla performance events in this period, although only one of these projects will be discussed here, *TrackWork*, devised in 1997. In order to understand this particular event, it is important to first understand the way in which UTP works with artists and communities, and the way site-specificity is utilised in UTP performance events.

The challenges to ideas of politics, community and site/concept/place discussed in Section One of this thesis are reflected in the development of UTP. The company began in inner city Sydney in 1981 as Death Defying Theatre (DDT). It was a street-theatre group founded by a group of Australian artists, Paul Brown, Alice Spizzo, Christine Sammers and Kim Spinks. DDT created a series of comic street-based pieces, some with a physical theatre base, which as Kim Spinks described, drew "upon the traditions of popular theatre to devise works which critically examine the institutions of Australian society".[465] As well as extensive touring nation-wide they then began to offer free community workshops financed by local councils, and the Housing Department which, as Eugene Van Erven notes, were "designed to bring some cultural life into newly constructed and under-resourced housing estates in Sydney's outer west".[466]

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[465] Kim Spinks, "Death Defying Theatre Is..." in *Community Theatre in Australia*, ed. Richard Fotheringham (North Ryde, NSW: Methuen Australia, 1987), 154.
[466] Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*, 211.

The aesthetic of these early works was strongly linked to the popular theatre tradition that had developed in Europe and North America in the 1970s, in which artists conspicuously announced their presence in a community, as "collectively devised performances structured into small self contained, energetically performed and visually striking units that were underscored by live music".[467] In Chapter One, I referred to this popular theatre movement as one of the precursors to contemporary guerrilla performance. DDT's popular theatre work at this time was informed by the need to bring arts resources to under-resourced areas, to allow for the dynamic expression of community stories and political issues through art and to create new spaces in which art could be made and seen. The form of DDT's work, however, began to change as it moved from artist-centred, issue-based political practice to a community-centred practice based on intimate power relations and everyday realities. This change reflects the challenges to ideas of art, community and politics which have occurred across the field of community-based guerrilla practice in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

John Baylis, co-director of *TrackWork* and sometime artistic director of UTP discusses the name change from Death Defying Theatre to UTP as part of the developing politics of the company. In a 2000 interview he discussed the original name Death Defying Theatre as tied to ideas of "lively" street art: "Kim Spinks [...] was referencing Peter Brook's idea of "deadly theatre", so they decided they make "anti-deadly theatre" with a kind of circus combination [...] which the company was to a certain extent in its early years in the Eighties."[468] In the late '80s, however, they underwent a crisis as their main funding body threatened to withdraw its financial support, and meetings were held to determine its future. Fiona Winning, artistic director of UTP for many years, believes that this crisis was indicative not only of the difficulty of economically and artistically sustaining a professional collective ensemble with constantly changing membership and conflicting artistic visions, but also a symptom of larger ethical debates that were occurring at the time around how community art should be created. She refers to the two main conflicting models for community work as "professional community practice" and "the community-based participatory model".[469] After much debate it was decided the company would not disband but that they would re-focus as a participatory community-based company and move to Western Sydney. The company was later renamed Urban Theatre

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[467] Ibid., 212.
[468] Baylis, interview. See Appendix A.
[469] Fiona Winning (Artistic Director of Urban Theatre Projects, 1990-1997), interview by Rebecca Caines, Performance Space Company Office, Redfern, Sydney, August 4, 2006. See Appendix B.

Projects, to reflect this change from "lively" professional art to artistic community development, from professional artists delivering performances and workshops, to the ethical artistic facilitation and co-creation of performance events as a "function" of work with communities.

In 1990 Paul Brown appointed Fiona Winning, a community artist, facilitator and experienced project manager from Queensland, to the position of artistic director. She coordinated the change from a small popular theatre group to a community-based company and the new company, under Winning, began to facilitate large-scale performance works on topical issues with local artists and "non performers" and to work in close contact with councils, local businesses, NGOs, schools and other community and welfare organizations, with a strong financial base and with strong links to the field of community cultural development in Australia. While working with Brisbane-based *Popular Theatre Troupe*, Cairns TAFE outreach programs and Queensland company *Street Arts* Fiona had decided that she was "no longer interested in "taking performance to people without creating sustaining relationships".[470] She defined community not simply in terms of "shared ethnicity", but also "communities of interest" and perhaps most importantly in terms of the "difference in and of these supposed community groups".[471] This can be seen as a post-structured understanding of community. Slowly, with a new team of artists and production managers the company began to embrace a form of guerrilla community practice which blurred the lines between artist and community, worked with new combinations of site, conceptual space and place, and foregrounded the realities, needs and experiences of changing communities.

In March 1997, John Baylis took over the job of new artistic director of the company, joining the artists Monica Barone, Gail Kelly and the management/administration team of Harley Stumm and Mona Zaylaa. Winning facilitated the handover and was brought back to work on individual projects. Baylis was one of the key members of 1980s experimental performance art group Sydney Front, and brought contemporary performance-practice training to bear on the community development work of the new UTP. Along with the other contemporary artists he employed, Baylis then worked with Winning and her community development team out of the new base in

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[470] Ibid. See Appendix B.
[471] Ibid. See Appendix B.

Bankstown to create new site-specific community performance events which are excellent examples of Australian guerrilla practice.[472]

This new team worked with communities to create pieces which foregrounded multiple perspectives and mixed art and everyday life. *TrackWork* is perhaps the clearest example of this new style of performance which allows for the expression of fluid community and difference and the creation of new site, concept and place. It was not didactic issue-based work; but a new form of practice deliberately working with a politics based on intimacy, difference and multiplicity. Indeed, John Baylis, in a 2000 interview, is very critical of works which are issue-based:

> I personally have a hard time working out how you can make a piece of really issued-based theatre which is still a good work of art and I don't just mean that as art being a separate sphere, but a good work of art meaning that it allowed lots of different meanings to kind of be generated rather than come and be educational in the sense of "we know something and we're going to teach you this something so that you will then be more politically aware". I just find that model really kind of problematic.[473]

Tom Burvill describes this intersection of contemporary arts practice and community development as, " 'post contemporary' community-theatre, striving to find ways to work with community 'post' the high moment of experimental post-modern performance work usually referred to in Sydney as 'contemporary performance.' "[474] Burvill states that the current [as of 2001] creations of UTP "come after" the work of Sydney Front and others to the extent that certain artistic lessons are carried over from one style to the other." In the broadest sense, this involves:

strategies to provoke non-passivity in the audience and the accompanying inscription of multiple perspectives into the work and its experience by the theatre goers. Not only is there no central narrative to provide a central thematic map or continuing characters with whom to identify, but multiple and even simultaneous actions can occur in different parts of the performance site.[475]

This strategy produces multiple "authors" and "artists" and allows audience to take control of the meaning being produced. In this way it links to the guerrilla openmedia strategies discussed in Chapter 1.

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[472] Paul Brown suggests that experimental work had been tried *throughout* the history of DDT, but narrative-driven street theatre work was more sustainable during the 1980s and thus became the main focus for the company until the move to Western Sydney. See Paul Brown, "The Storyteller Enters the Marketplace: The First Decade (and a Half) of Urban Theatre Projects," *Urban Theatre Projects Homepage Downloads* (1991), http://www.urbantheatre.com.au/downloads (accessed January 12, 2007).

[473] Baylis, interview. See Appendix A.

[474] Burvill, "Urban Theatre Projects: Re-Siting Marginal Communities in Outer Western Sydney," 130.

[475] Ibid.

Ian Maxwell, however, cautions against writing triumphalist narratives which describe, as some reviewers suggested, an Australian community-theatre scene "devoid of innovation, inspiration and energy [which] was saved, some time around 1997 [...] by the heroic efforts of 'contemporary performance' to share with the suburban underclass the fruits of their wisdom and sophistication."[476] Instead he encourages a view of the community performance sphere as always working with multiple and conflicting models, gaining inspiration from new artists even as it deals with problems inherent in every model of arts making.[477]

UTP's pieces from the 1990s onwards show a commitment to difference and multiplicity in the very form of their work. They use multiple performers to represent a single "character" or sometimes dispense with theatrical notions of character altogether; they juxtapose "high" and "low" artistic forms, use multiple artistic disciplines and new hybrid art forms including sophisticated technologies.[478] This is a community company which encourages irony, partiality and incompletion in the expression of identity. These guerrilla works are mobile and deliberately simultaneous, recombining strategies in new ways for each performance. Difference is not seen as antithetical to communal expression; instead, difference is celebrated, challenged and performed as the core of the contemporary community.

The work of UTP reflects the double nature of community as a performance of post-structured identity. First, it creates room for "expressions" of community, for the foregrounding of community stories, histories, issues, memories and specificities. Secondly, it deliberately exposes these "expressions" as creative acts, akin to performance, made up of multiple "artists", multiple "settings" and multiple "differences". This work foregrounds the fact that sometimes there are choices in identity formation, but that at other times these choices are significantly curtailed. In other words, the performance of community in these works is both a performative and creative act. UTP achieves this by remaining committed to the preservation of "the other", mixing up "fantasy" and "reality", "art" and "community activity",

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[476] Maxwell, "The Middle Years: Death Defying Theatre Transformed".

[477] Maxwell particularly critiques reviews published in Sydney journal *RealTime* in 1999, 2000 and 2002 which emphasised Baylis and then Talbot's contemporary performance practice as a cure to the ills of the tired community theatre scene of the 1980s. This elided the important new work developed by the company prior to Baylis' arrival. Maxwell encourages a view of community practice which denies any "one size fits all" community theatre model prior to 1997. See also Paul Dwyer, "From Speed Street to High Street: By Train, Tram or Bus " (paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australasian Association for Drama Studies (ADSA), University of Newcastle, July 2000., 2000).

[478] In *Speed Street* sophisticated computer hardware and software were used to score the complex choreography and soundscapes and new mobile technologies were used to track and synchronise the performances. See the video documentary on the project. *Speed St*, directed by UTP (1998; Australia).

"performance" and "everyday activity", in ways which expose harsh or positive realities, and which repeat, expose and create new visions of communities for the participants, the paying audiences and the general public who are often unwitting witnesses to the events.

UTP projects under Winning and Baylis had large casts, utilised contemporary art forms and multi-community composition and they included, often controversially, perspectives that have been "othered" or erased, whether this "other" be oppositional local perspectives on big business and government activity, radical hip-hop anti-authority activity or challenges to stereotypical ideas of culture and community.[479] These pieces engage in a radical twenty-first-century guerrilla activism which is sensitive to a changing sense of "communality" and to the complexities of power relations in and between communities.

Baylis remained artistic director until 2000, when current director Alicia Talbot took over and Baylis returned work with the Australia Council. The current UTP website now describes Urban Theatre Projects as a company which "creates distinctive new theatre works based on a process of dialogue between contemporary theatre practice and Sydney's diverse communities […] Stories and images of contemporary life are created in collaboration with teams of artists from hybrid art practices and diverse cultural backgrounds."[480] Since Talbot's artistic direction the company have continued to incorporate site, community collaboration and local participation, with involvement by local and international artists in CCD works, although she has developed her own style of facilitation, creating collaborative, issue-based performances. These pieces include a focus on issues such as youth unemployment, drugs and homelessness, migrant diasporas and the experience of refugees.[481]

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[479] Examples of works under Winng include Arabic-Australian storytelling piece *Café Hakawati* (1991) and *Blood Orange* (1992), with contemporary poet and playwright Noelle Janacewska and participants from the Fairfield Women's Health Centre. Wining also produced *Site- The Homebush Bay Story* (1994) and *Yunbaburra Rd* (1995), focussed on violence in schools and involving students, Bosnian and Timorese refugees and lesbian and gay antiviolence project volunteers. Larger scale community projects included a multimedia eighty-piece hip-hop show including graffiti, video, raps, funk and break-dance named *Hip Hopera* (1995), as well as *Going Home* (1996), with Maori and Islander communities. Under Baylis, projects included *TrackWork* (1997), a piece about media perceptions and local realities of the south western suburb of Liverpool called *Speed St* (1998) and a piece on the subcultures of Bankstown and surrounds called *(subtopia)* (1999.
[480] *Urban Theatre Projects Homepage.*
[481] Particularly *Cement Garage* (1999-2000, *The Longest Night* (2001-2002) and *Asylum* (2001) See, "Urban Theatre Projects Show Archives," *Urban Theatre Projects Homepage,* (2006), http://www.urbantheatre.com.au/showarchives.html (accessed March 11, 2007). See also Annual Reports from the company 2000-2006, especially Harley Stumm and John Baylis, *Artistic Report* (Sydney: Urban Theatre Projects, 1997), http://www.urbantheatre.com.au/downloads/.

Talbot' style is thus very different from the community-based guerrilla practice developed by Baylis and Winning during the *TrackWork* project.

Developing Site-Specifics

Tom Burvill cites the slogan "intimate spectacle", which the company foregrounded in 1998, as particularly emblematic of the site-specificity inherent in the UTP process during the Baylis/Winning years. Based on the publicity for the production *Speed St* (1998), the full slogan read "intimate spectacle, the world in a street".[482] Burvill highlights the way in which "the company has developed a process for its 'intimate spectacles' which centres on place." He cites Baylis as saying, "[f]irst comes the idea of a particular place, then we develop an angle or a slant on that place, then we approach the residents, or relevant community and invite their participation".[483] In my view the "place" referred to here, is more like the site/concept/place discussed in Chapter Four, as UTP work with governed spaces, conflicting realities and imaginations *and* interactive, fluid combinations of body and site. They combine this with a facilitated community-led collaboration process.

Under Winning, and then Baylis, the focus on performing *in* site, established by the original DDT group, changed to a focus on performing site, conceptual space *and* place. Winning insists that the current focus on site-specificity was developed mostly by Baylis and then later by Talbot, but it is easy to see that engaging with site/concept/place was also vital to works prior to 1997.[484] In *Site: the Homebush Bay Project* for instance, Winning and her team brought people to a space under the seats of a stadium that was being controversially redeveloped to create the Olympic complex for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, in order to discuss the histories of the area. This was creating a "space within a space" (interactive site) in a "site that used to have other uses" (place) while discussing the many reasons "why people came to these particular spaces" (conceptual space). She describes this as a commitment to "mapping a Western Sydney that was changing, or that was secret."[485]

Some of this site-specificity was initially fuelled by the logistical issues of working in under-resourced areas. In the 1990s, there were very few theatre spaces in the area.[486] Working with space, however, became a major focus for the company, as

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[482] Burvill, "Urban Theatre Projects: Re-Siting Marginal Communities in Outer Western Sydney," 129.
[483] John Baylis quoted in Ibid.
[484] Winning, interview. See Appendix B.
[485] Ibid. See Appendix B.
[486] See Winning's description of the theatre spaces available in the 1990s in Ibid. See Appendix B.

Winning and Baylis began to realise the power of interactive site, conceptual and imagined territories and the history and emotion of place. Baylis describes his work with site/concept/place when he states "a lot of people in the past, and currently also, do site-specific work. I guess what makes ours a little bit different is that there is a community involved in it [...] it's not a spectacle in the sense of kind of making large objects."[487] He contrasts this with internationally-famous site-specific community work, such as that of the UK company *Welfare State*, a theatre group which enables people to work together on building outdoor sculptures or collectively creating elaborate costumed processions or parades.[488] "We rarely kind of actually make any 'thing' to put in the spaces. We use the actual spaces as they are, for all the connotations they have."[489] This site-specificity is "located" firmly in the sites, conceptual spaces and places of Western Sydney. In an earlier interview with reviewer Keith Gallasch, Baylis suggests that much site-specific work by contemporary performance artists chooses sites for "romantic reasons, the romance of the old factory, the waste land, the desert".[490] For UTP the emphasis is on "working spaces, spaces that people are actually in, spaces that are generating meaning everyday. They are not blank."[491] In the later interview he notes

> We actually deliberately, if we do a work in a shopping centre, we use the shopping centre itself, [...] we use that location and we like the fact that that there are the people who are in the space anyway plus an audience and plus the performers and the resonances of mixing those three together. And those resonances are what we work with.[492]

This direction certainly ties in with the concepts of camouflage, transience and mobility associated with the twenty-first century guerrilla artist, as well as linking the piece to a contemporary political project of creating a liberated spectator who is involved in the simultaneous performative creation and challenging of site/concept/place.

To John Baylis the process of making performances like *TrackWork* marked a series of choices about how to allow space to speak, while allowing people to *disagree* with each other and the performance. This encourages the understanding that space can be interrupted helpfully by a range of non- "authorised" disruptions. He talks about

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[487] Baylis, interview. See Appendix A.
[488] See Kershaw, *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention*.
[489] Baylis, interview. See Appendix A.
[490] Keith Gallasch, "John Baylis and the Performing Community," *RealTime*, no. 36 (2000) (accessed October 4, 2002).
[491] Ibid.
[492] Baylis, interview. See Appendix A.

the ways some general public caught up in the performance events of UTP responded:

> There are some aggressive reactions where people really resent the fact that the space in which they habitually do these things is being intruded upon and, of course, it is intruded upon [...] if it was in an approved way, they probably accept it, if there were a police cordon and a limousine going past, they probably accept it, because what they are seeing is kind of so messy, so it's unclear.[493]

In some cases, unauthorised changes to spaces are disturbing and unwelcome. At other times the reception is overwhelmingly positive. Overall, reactions to the site-specifics of UTP are very varied. This company, by facilitating community-based performances in non-theatre spaces, causes people to challenge for themselves how the space of Western Sydney is represented, remembered and controlled.

Disturbing Intimate Power, Difference and Binaries

Tom Burvill suggests that the "Urban Theatre Projects company turns to the youth and communities of Western Sydney to make new works emphasising the performance of subculture, class marginality, and 'multicultural identity."[494] In most of their work, but particularly in pieces like *TrackWork* and *Speed Street,* UTP have struggled to contest the economic realities and negative images of the disadvantaged West with positive expressions of diversity. In order to understand the context for these pieces, however, it is important to see how Western Sydney has been demonised into an uneven binary of same and "other". It is then possible to place the work of UTP into a wider context of guerrilla art dedicated to the pursuit of social justice through disrupting this binary and foregrounding a politics of difference.

Diane Powell in a 1993 study of perceptions of Western Sydney, writes:

> The mass media have played a significant role in the emergence of Western Sydney as the 'other' side of a social boundary. One which contains several groups of society's 'others'. The west is seen as the repository for all those social groups and cultures which are outside the prevailing cultural ideal, the poor, the working class, juvenile delinquents, single mothers, welfare recipients, public housing tenants, Aborigines, immigrants from anywhere but particularly Arabs and Asians. All are cast out to the margins, to the 'outer' of the reconstructed city[495]

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[493] Baylis was referring here to an incident in *TrackWork* where commuters complained about the performance in their train carriage. See Appendix A.
[494] Burvill, "Urban Theatre Projects: Re-Siting Marginal Communities in Outer Western Sydney," 127.
[495] Diane Powell, *Out West: Perceptions of Sydney's Western Suburbs, Australian Cultural Studies.* (St. Leonards, NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1993) quoted in Burvill, "Urban Theatre Projects: Re-Siting Marginal Communities in Outer Western Sydney," 128.

Powell and Grace and their colleagues authored another pioneering study into Western Sydney, *home/world: space, community and marginality in Sydney's west*. They describe the history of the West as a layering of immigration and infrastructure.[496] Large flows of immigrants moved to Western Sydney after World War Two, in the wake of an economic and industrial development boom. The area was the home of temporary housing camps and migrant hostels until, in the 1950s, the NSW housing commission began to make cheap land available to house the growing population. Powell reminds us, however, that "out west there were no sufficient shops, schools, hospitals, sewage and public transport, even though most 'Westies' were employed in the inner city."[497]

Burvill reminds us that by looking at studies like Powell's and Grace's, "the under resourced western suburbs, an-area comprising fourteen municipalities, have to deal with relatively high rates of crime and unemployment [... but there is] a clear split between western suburbs and the rest of Sydney in terms of rich and poor, employed and unemployed, a divide [...] that has been growing steadily since the 1970s".[498] The national media problematically turn to Western Sydney as the "prime example of Australia's immigration-related urban problems".[499] According to these studies, and the experience of UTP, while there are inadequacies in resourcing, Western Sydney communities are not the miserable crime-funded ghettos presented in the media and these communities are under represented in political decision-making processes. These richly diverse communities, whose members make up a large part of Sydney's population, while often invisible to the city's political manoeuvring and branded corporate and tourist images,[500] deserve more positive government, media and public attention and greater community-specific resources.

Apart from a commitment to democratic, community-led self-development and the collaborative process of making art, characteristics shared by most CCD practice in Australia, each UTP performance project is involved with very different issues, groups, networks and organisations. In the report for the Sidney Myer Award, which

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[496] Helen Grace et al., eds, *Home/World: Space, Community and Marginality in Sydney's West* (Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press, 1997).
[497] Powell, *Out West: Perceptions of Sydney's Western Suburbs* quoted in Burvill, "Urban Theatre Projects: Re-Siting Marginal Communities in Outer Western Sydney," 208.
[498] Burvill, "Urban Theatre Projects: Re-Siting Marginal Communities in Outer Western Sydney," 208.
[499] Murphy and Watson quoted in Ibid.
[500] For details of the images of Australia used in the Brand Australia project, see Tourism Australia News Centre, "Australia Awarded "Cool Brand" Status in the United Kingdom," Media Release, May 3, 2007, 2005, http://www.tourism.australia.com/NewsCentre.asp?lang=EN&sub=0315&al=1927. (accessed July 5, 2003).

UTP was awarded in 2002, long-time manager of the company, Harley Stumm, sums up UTP's work. He states that he is proud of UTP's "politically contentious work, its queer work, the range from community-based to straight professional work, and all with a strong commitment to social justice and cultural diversity". [501]

Despite this wide range of social justice projects, it is possible to argue there is one common thread running through UTP's diverse body of work. All their performances challenge widely-held misconceptions of the everyday activities of communities in the "othered" area of Western Sydney. These misconceptions, expressed by media and governments, are reflected in governing policy, funding and popular perceptions of "the West". UTP challenges these misconceptions by working with post-structured communities in Western Sydney to create multiple narratives of identity and contact in place of single, incorrect perspectives. They encourage subjugated communities to meet one another in new mosaics of contact and networking and also create and challenge multiple different communities within the same artwork. They use new types of site to make room for communities to create and expose new or previously oppressed sites, conceptual spaces and places which work under different rules, thus destabilising ignorance, prejudice and power imbalances. It is a program dedicated to improving social justice by means of active engagement with intimate power at the point it intersects with everyday life.

TrackWork: A Differential Guerrilla Performance

The development process of the performance project reflects the guerrilla characteristics outlined in Chapter One, including decentralisation, camouflage, multi-disciplinarity and challenges to authorship and control. *TrackWork* was designed by a team of artists and management in a process which continually changed and shifted based on logistical and creative decisions.[502] This hybridising process created multiple alternative mixes of "authorised" community-development planning and "spontaneous" artistic intervention. The fact that the plans for *TrackWork* changed so much between inception and performance as new artists and management redrew the design reflects the chameleon tendencies of contemporary community-based guerrilla art. The development process for *TrackWork* involved many organisations and this highlights the differences between anonymous street-based guerrilla art by

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[501] Harley Stumm and Keith Gallasch, "The Winner: Urban Theatre Projects " *RealTime,* 54 (2002), www.realtimearts.net (accessed October 4, 2002).
[502] Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives* details the rehearsal process.

professional artists who work alone and the collaborative but decentralised nature of contemporary community-based guerrilla performance.

Artist Monica Barone developed the original concept for *TrackWork.*, which was shaped by Harley Stumm's grant proposals and project management and Winning's input, into the project which Baylis and Winning took on in March 1997. Van Erven states that, "Barone's aim had been to create a large-scale moveable theatre performance that would offer a more balanced view of the West than the negative sorties about minority youth gangs that usually made the pages of the *Sydney Morning Herald* and prime time television current affairs shows."[503.] Barone in interview sums up her own aims as an interest in

> [t]he layers of migration, the ways in which people have come and gone to areas like Cabramatta, where there once were lots of former Yugoslavians and now there are lots of Vietnamese. There are all kinds of interesting stories, so I thought, well, wouldn't it be interesting to hear them? The train happened to be the major transportation line. When you put in a railway station, people build homes and lives around it. So that was an interesting place to start.[504]

The original plan was thus to promote the area by means of positive representations and stories inside a mobile theatre event. It would contest power relations which constrain Western Sydney residents, focussing on experiences of post-immigration at the intimate level it played out in local spaces.

Over the subsequent two years, the piece would develop into a "curated" event of multiple performances across trains and platforms and malls, linked by performances on trains by an ensemble of performers from a range of backgrounds. The details of each component of the performance will be discussed at length presently. This ensemble group of stewards, "the onboard entertainment", led the audience around in small groups. The audience met at inner-city Redfern Station, buying an ordinary train ticket and show ticket from the temporary box office, and were issued with a brightly-coloured miniature suitcase which contained a bottle of water, a program and an apple. For the next three hours, the audience followed their steward and experienced the performance amongst the ordinary peak-hour train commuters and local residents. Performances on the platforms at Redfern were followed by "invisible theatre" in the carriages by planted performers from youth theatre groups; and by routines, stories and songs by the stewards on the trains to Auburn, Lidcombe, Berala, Cabramatta and Granville; and by music, visual arts and theatre

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[503] Ibid., 220.
[504] Ibid., 221.

performances and installations by professional artists and community groups on the platforms, waiting rooms and nearby station malls. The piece became multi-disciplinary, multiple and pluralistic.

In an interview in 2000, Baylis ponders the results of the development process.

> So that idea of it [...] being decentralised, autonomous bits which only ever come together in the performance is probably a key element to a lot of our work [...] to deliberately break down the sense of aesthetic whole completeness and allow things to erupt, genuinely allow them to erupt, as directors take your hands off, to be there to kind of keep the whole thing together so that it has beginning and an end, but, beyond that not trying to mould the shape and all the tricks that every theatre director learns to try and take the edges off everything, you know, to make everything neat.[505]

There was no through-line, and the lines between actors and their characters or personae merged and blurred. The "onboard stewards", for example, dressed in bright blue and yellow air steward-style uniforms, dropped character to talk of their own personal stories or to guide people through complicated transport hubs. Opera singers would stop, change character or be interrupted mid-song. Sound and art installations would be half-seen through crowds or be comprised of partial and deliberately fragmented perspectives. The community performances, ensemble performance components and installation artworks all coexisted, and at times competed, aurally and visually for attention. The audience was then left on their own at Granville to make their own way home. The final piece, embracing Baylis' contemporary performance experience and Winning's experience with community performers, was thus very different from the initial design of a story-based theatre piece about immigration in Western Sydney. The show itself was a beautiful image of post-structured community, both providing strength to people and in a constant state of unravelling.

Winning and Baylis describe their initial aims for *TrackWork*, in the documentary produced by Eugene Van Erven. Winning states that for her, there were two main aims. The first was to "occupy public space": she wanted performers to claim, work with and be part of "public" spaces. The second was to "bring people on this journey to Western Sydney to acknowledge that there is this kind of enormous diversity amongst the population of Western Sydney and that Western Sydney is not some kind of amorphous place. 'Other'." She wanted audiences to understand "that it is occupied by a whole range of communities who are practising a whole range of

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[505] Baylis, interview. See Appendix A.

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cultural practices."[506] Baylis had a different aim. He wanted community participants to become involved in the "sense of process" of art-making. For him it was vital that participants could have a "growth experience" by being given the opportunity to artistically respond to the communities and spaces of Western Sydney.[507] Both these aims reflect a commitment to dialogue *and* artistic innovation, identity-positioning *and* a politics of difference.

The project was supported by a series of government funding groups including the Casino Benefit Fund, the NSW Ministry of the Arts, the Australia Council Community Cultural Development Fund and ticket sales, as well as portions of UTP's overall core funding granted triennially by the Australia Council Theatre Fund. There were also significant negotiations for commercial and community discounts, and resource sharing between organisations that lessened the financial strain on the company. The project took over a year to fund and mount. Twenty-first century artists like Winning and her team are used to "using the guerrilla strategy of flexibility and adaptability, making do" by resourcing projects in very creative ways.

TrackWork was also a logistical nightmare, with the main transport body, City Rail, confirming and withdrawing permission to use the public trains and platforms repeatedly over the two-year planning period, even during the final two weeks of rehearsal. It was clear that different levels of authority did not communicate and that the project slipped out of easy definition. The coordination of so many disparate self-contained elements and spaces also proved extremely difficult to sustain. There were complex legal and access issues. Some locations did not need explicit authorisations in order to be utilised and others, like the trains themselves, were tightly controlled and patrolled. Company manager Harley Stumm, in particular, spent hours at a time on the phone, calling in favours and gaining ministerial support in order to force recalcitrant organisations to honour their promises and allow the event to go ahead. The community guerrilla artist does not just come in the night and leave an artwork in a public place. Their subversive camouflaged activity occurs within a huge network of bureaucratic, financial, cultural and ethical demands, negotiating with participants at times numbering hundreds, all of which might have different perspectives of the same project, different ways to access meanings and different levels of power to control and shape events. These works exist inside systems of discipline and offer

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[506] *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives [Videorecording]*, directed by Eugene Van Erven (2000; United States of America: Routledge).
[507] Ibid.

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subtle, creative means of subverting discipline at the level of everyday practices such as walking, singing, dancing or cooking.

The show was rehearsed in three separate locations in the suburbs of Bankstown, Fairfield and Auburn, and incorporated other components rehearsed separately from local individuals and companies. The production staff included the co directors John Baylis and Fiona Winning, company manager Harley Stumm, composer Richard Vella, designer Anthony Babicci and an expert on site-specific project management, Janine Peacock, who was brought in late in the project. The show which ran for four performances over two weekends sold out. It also attracted people who joined along the route, as well as incorporating the everyday life of the area, including: commuters, buskers and beggars, in addition to local residents, some of whom interjected during shows, followed or tried to interrupt performances or used the opportunity to forward their own agendas. The political moments were temporary contestations of everyday uses of space and of oppressive understandings of a community. There was no centre to the project, no clearly-defined audience, no singular aim, and the "results" of the performance cannot be neatly catalogued or controlled.

While this event furthered the UTP aim of contesting misconceptions about community life in Western Sydney, *TrackWork* slowly developed into something more complex than just highlighting positive *stories* of Western Sydney immigrants. By encouraging community groups, like the Tai Chi association, local ballroom dancers, community choirs, community bands, locally famous artists, high school dance groups and youth and physical theatre companies to create their own components for the show, or to highlight the work they do in their own way, the final piece was no longer simply about stories of migration, or about contesting images of youth and the drug trade. By placing the piece inside normal public-transport systems and streets in peak-hour traffic, it became difficult at times to see where everyday community activity ended and where artistic expression began. At other times vivid and invasive art "colonised" the corporate and community spaces, showing alternative visions of how things could be. For some performers, especially those in the ensemble, silenced by lack of academic education, language barriers, mental-health issues, poverty or minimal personal development, having an audience to listen to their words

constituted a massive beneficial change to their experience of everyday life.[508] Participant Julietta Boscolo describes the changes to people she saw over the rehearsal process and performance process as "so huge, people really shone from feeling like they were listened to, and me, I found a whole new confidence and a whole new family."[509] Maria Costanzo, member of the Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani choir, spoke after the performance of "feeling free to move, and to sing to so many new faces, it felt like a new me."[510]

A huge range of daily activities including cooking, singing, dancing and catching trains were shown to be specific to communities and yet open to hybridisation and challenge. Community was shown to be partial, transitory and multiple, at times restricting people and at other times providing new networks of support. The participants, like all contemporary individuals, existed in multiple, at times contradictory communities simultaneously, yet these communities were shown to be an important source of strength. New Western Sydneys were continually created and destroyed during the course of the three-hour performance. The threatening difference of Western Sydney was celebrated and challenged.

This performance marks an interesting Australian guerrilla event: it was transient, mobile and used public spaces, exposing the power relations inherent in the performance and reception of everyday activities. It combined a strong intention to counteract negative images of Western Sydney with a playful celebration of its multiplicity and a commitment to perform and sustain difference. The event, while supported financially by government funding-bodies, worked against control, especially in the case of the recalcitrant City Rail authorities, as it encouraged new spontaneous and creative uses of public spaces such as trains and platforms, exposed inadequacies in funding and infrastructure for the area, and recombined the wealthier inner-city residents with a mix of workers and residents from seven outer-western suburbs and two inner-west theatre companies. It also resisted restrictive structures of class, identity and ethnicity by utilising a contemporary understanding of identity and community in an event which blurred lines between fantasy and reality, and between site, conceptual space and place.

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[508] See company evaluations in Stumm and Baylis, *Artistic Report* and Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives.*
[509] Julietta Boscolo (*TrackWork* Performer), in discussion with the author, Telephone Conversation, Sydney, October 1, 2000.
[510] Maria Costanzo (*TrackWork* Performer), in discussion with the author, Telephone conversation, Sydney, September 7, 1997.

Ethical Issues with Guerrilla "Tourism"

Like many community events, *TrackWork* could be considered a type of "tourist performance". It certainly brought people into an area for the purposes of highlighting cultural performances and creating entertainment. However, there are serious problems with the field of tourist performance. These include uneven power dynamics between "tourist" and "community", the multiplication of stereotypes, and a lack of responsibility and accountability by companies, resulting in the erosion of local cultures, spiritual beliefs and traditions. Moreover negative effects also derive from unsustainable exploitation of the local environment and from reckless manipulation of economic and political systems by external groups who leave local people vulnerable in their wake. The main criticism of tourist performance is that it is always based on unequal power relations between artist, community and audience and therefore can be seen as exploitative. [511]These concerns are all applicable to community-based, site-specific performance projects such as *TrackWork*. There are, however, also positive qualities in tourist performance and these events can be made ethically, as *TrackWork* was, in order to disturb and disrupt oppressive power structures including stereotype and spatial discipline, and to reconstruct cultural binaries which separate "tourist", "artist" and "audience".

Negotiating Ethical Concerns

"Tourist" and "Community"

The interaction in *TrackWork* between "tourist" and "host community", and between "local" and "outsider", was not a simple one. Paying audiences were made up of roughly 60% residents of Western Sydney and 40% inner-city residents. [512] The "audience" for the performance was, however, much wider then just those who purchased tickets at Redfern. It was also made up of passers-by, commuters, railway staff, shopkeepers and local residents. The "performers" were also much more diverse then just those working in the ensemble or in the separate community-based components. They also included the whole array of interacting community bodies and showcased irritated or excited commuters, buskers, beggars and other exhibitionists.

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[511] See Agnes Vogler, "I Came, I Saw, I ? Contemporary Australian Representations That Return the Tourist Gaze" (Master of Arts (Research) Thesis, University of New South Wales, 2005).
[512] Keith Gallasch, "John Baylis and the Performing Community," *RealTime*, no. 36 (2000) (accessed October 4, 2002).

Thus, the power relations between "performer" and "tourist" were varied, and were put under pressure in a variety of ways.

Indeed the relationship between community and local space was itself unclear. At times, the image being presented in the performance was performed simultaneously with a contradictory image being presented by the local site or conceptual space. This will be discussed further in the second part of this chapter. At other times the performance was in direct conflict with the conceptual spaces patrolled by the authorities who manage the transport sites or with the site/concept/place of the everyday commuters. An example of this occurred at Granville, where the local station-master personally disagreed with the politics of a local Indigenous hip-hop piece which was part of *TrackWork* and threatened to close down the performance because, as he said, "This type of thing is not allowed here".[513]

Another example of performer/audience conflict was documented in Van Erven's video of the project when young ensemble performers Tania Gutierrez and Michelle Boukheris were rudely interrupted by a middle-aged couple who were disgusted that their train journey was disrupted by a performance event they did not want to be part of. The women complained loudly, "I have paid for a train ride, I did not pay for us to sit here and listen to you waffle on like stupid idiots [...] I did not pay to listen to this stupidity."[514] When it was suggested by other audience members that the two interjectors leave the carriage if the performance offended them, her companion complained that, due to overcrowding on the trains, he had "no choice". The interchange was loud, involved shouting and debate from other paying audience and commuters who rejected the couple's arguments overwhelmingly, as well as negotiation from the performers themselves. This moment deeply affected the two young performers, particularly Michelle, who was very distressed.[515] Winning regards this commuter/performer conflict as the most ethically disturbing for her, as she felt the relatively inexperienced performers were not prepared for this sort of aggression.[516]

One might regard it unethical to force commuters to view a performance against their wishes or to place young performers in this position. I would argue, however, that contradictions and conflicts are difficult, everyday parts of urban life and public

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[513] Winning, interview. See Appendix B.
[514] *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives* [Videorecording], directed by Van Erven.
[515] See Ibid.
[516] Winning, interview. See Appendix B.

transport that were effectively and honestly highlighted by this performance event. Highlighting contrasting images of community and space is also a valid response to the widespread stereotyping of the area by the media. This conflict raised many questions. Who owns the spaces? How are they used? Whose voices are heard and who patrols behaviour? Why are certain voices heard loudly and accepted in public spaces and others marginalised? These are political questions that *TrackWork* addressed by bringing "tourists" and "art" into "public" and "community" spaces. In this way, the complex relationship between "community", "space" and "audience" formed one of the most interesting sources of contestation to relations of power during this event.

Resisting Stereotype

The performance was also deliberately created to challenge community stereotypes, and was made in a non-exploitative way, with consultation and collaboration with the participants for the mutual benefit for the company and the performers. The images presented were not attempting to be internally coherent, sanitised or to cater to audience expectation. A seemingly coherent community such as "Vietnamese-Australians", for example, was shown in the performance to consist of many different communities. These included the second-generation, young middle-class people involved in the youth theatre company City Moon, who performed a masked myth in the Cabramatta section of the performance, the local drug users who utilised the station mall at Cabramatta and who were often present during performances,[517] other local residents and commuters on and around the Cabramatta train line and station during the event, the ancient Vietnamese myths and traditions presented in the Dragon King performance piece, and other Vietnamese/Australian connections made by individual audience members exploring the wider area during or after the performance event. All of these images of Vietnamese culture simultaneously clashed with and informed each other. It was a collaboration that aimed to allow performers to make their own specific experiences visible, rather than conforming to preconceived images presented in the media. The communities were shown to be post-structured, as they were under contestation at all times.

Accountability

The company also organised debriefing exercises in the form of participant workshops following the event, individual discussion with artists and other forms of

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[517] See Winning's description in Ibid. See Appendix B.

feedback to ascertain any negative reactions. The event was not seen by the participants as exploitative in any way. Indeed many performance groups mentioned positive outcomes including personal experience and self development, publicity for their performance group or individual art, wider audiences for their type of performance practice, new professional and personal networks, the thrill of involvement in an exciting and challenging performance event and the sense of freedom and mobility.[518] Winning particularly notes the "real sense of joy" she felt was expressed by the community performers the chance to perform to new audiences. [519] Participants also discussed positive pedagogical aspects, as participants, artists and audiences became aware of the differences and similarities between communities and new ideas of the site/concept/place that is Western Sydney.[520]

UTP befitted from increased publicity and exposure as a company, new access to networks of performers and artists and subsequent potential for better funding. Ian Maxwell sums up the benefits to the reputation of the artists who had participated.

> Baylis's artistic directorship saw some of the most adventurous, enthralling and inventive performance work ever produced in Sydney—and quite likely Australia. The company's profile and reputation soared nationally and internationally. The vigour (and rigour) with which Baylis and his team developed relationships with various collaborators changed not just the profile and standing of cultural practices across Sydney, but the way in which such practices work. In the process, Baylis and his collaborators set in motion, in their wake, careers, aspirations and imitations.[521]

It is, of course, difficult to access information on how the production was received by other commuters, local residents etc., beyond the few that made their presence felt. This relationship of community to artists can hardly be regarded as in any way exploitative, even though, as with all community guerrilla art, the artists themselves often questioned their right to work with communities to which they do not belong. Baylis recognises that in the attempt to showcase diversity, depth was necessarily sacrificed.[522]

Baylis and Winning also both recognise a kind of "naivety" in their community work. Maxwell has discussed this in more detail in a recent article, "The Middle Years". As white, middle-class, educated arts workers working with subjugated communities,

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[518] See company evaluations in Stumm and Baylis, *Artistic Report* and Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives.* As described by Julietta Boscolo. Boscolo, in discussion.
[519] Winning, interview. See Appendix B.
[520] Performer Julietta Boscolo mentions the communication between the community groups and the ensemble of stewards as particularly interesting and at times hilarious, as language barriers and cultural barriers were negotiated. Boscolo, in discussion.
[521] Maxwell, "The Middle Years: Death Defying Theatre Transformed".
[522] Van Erven, Community Theatre: Global Perspectives, 237.

they could never understand the complexities of community and power that they dealt with. They did not, however, approach these projects with recklessness or arrogance. Maxwell notes "Neither, however, in recollecting their experiences, talks of 'risktaking'; instead, both talk of responsibility and accountability, to audiences, and to the constituencies with whom they developed the work."[523]

This "naivety", when it is accompanied by thorough ethical self and external evaluation, is not a sign that the performances "failed". It is rather a sign of the artists' willingness to approach and work with radical difference. This sort of work, necessarily, has to respond directly and specifically to the time and spaces in which it works, as well as to the particular needs and concerns of post-structured communities.

Locally Specific Responses

It has to be acknowledged that there were some negative responses to the event by community-workers based in Western Sydney, expressed personally to the directors. According to both Winning and Baylis, these people "hated the show". However, these responses had more to do with a perceived lack of good "art" or "polish", the "difficulty of knowing what to look at", or the belief that one sort of performance style in community work, narrative work, has more validity than another style, rather than any belief that the communities have been exploited by the company.[524]

According to Baylis, some community arts workers expressed criticisms which showed a personal bias towards issue-based political community work rather than the fluid practice of UTP. In an interview Baylis describes his response to this sort of criticism.

> There is a long tradition in community arts of there being an activist type of work where [...] you take up a particular issue and make the community aware around that issue and our work doesn't do that, usually, so from that perspective therefore our work is part of the depoliticising of contemporary post-modern culture, you know, taking the guts out of it [...]. There is a lot of, a lot of political action at that level and I think there is a fine line between how much of it is aimed at a political outcome or how much of it is an assertion by the artists of their political creed and whether it has an outcome or not is not the point, the artists themselves can feel that they have asserted their

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[523] Maxwell, "The Middle Years: Death Defying Theatre Transformed".
[524] See Baylis, interview (See Appendix A.) and Winning, interview. (See Appendix B.)

> political creed, so it's not much different from the self indulgent avant-garde artists.[525]

All of these criticisms reflect opinions that narrative styles somehow have more authenticity in representing communities then other art forms such as music, dance, surreal or physical theatre, or performance poetry and rap, even if the community groups chose to utilise their own type of art for their own community-specific reasons. Ironically, despite coming from community development workers, these criticisms also judge community performance according to external aesthetic standards that are not always relevant to the communities in question. These negative responses also reflect a wider criticism of all contemporary performance strategies which deliberately disrupt coherent storylines or single, controlled perspectives. In the case of this work, it could be argued that multiple perspectives, and partiality and multiplicity of narratives are required in order to represent accurately the real experience of everyday life in Western Sydney.

The artistic form of UTP was hardly depoliticised, it just chose to put forward *multiple* community-specific political issues, and allowed the communities to choose the form in which these social realities would be foregrounded. At times, the politics arose from simply bringing artists, participants and audiences into spaces and encouraging them to become hyper-observant and critical of what they saw. At other times, responses to social issues were raised directly, as occurred with the Indigenous hip-hop. The majority of the political activity occurred because UTP brought audiences, local residents and performers together to observe and question intimate relations of power, and to delight in and learn from the multiple ways people subvert oppressive forces of power everyday.

Artists in Communities

The relationship of artist/"tour operator" to audience/"tourist" and to "host community" was problematised during this performance event. There were multiple, independent performance groups, each with their own agenda and each responsible for their own performance. Some performed examples of their own community-based practice, such as City Moon, the Italian women's choir, the Tai Chi practitioner, the local ballroom dancers, Chinese singer Terry Woo or the Indigenous rappers and graffiti artists at Granville station, although some, like the rappers were mentored by company members. Others created relationships with local residents and shopkeepers to create new artworks, such as the "Fellini streetscape", a piece

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[525] Baylis, interview. See Appendix A.

devised by inner-west based Powerhouse Youth Theatre performed at Auburn and showcasing chaotic street life, food and cooking practices and the different communities who use the streets and stations. Others worked directly with Baylis and Winning, creating new performances based on improvisations, tours, conversations and memories, such as the ensemble of "Onboard Stewards". Theatre companies such as PACT, Gravity Feed as well as musical groups and installation artists, all created individual new works in response to the area. The directors sustained the overall vision of recreating Western Sydney, and wove together a mosaic which represented this vision, but the control was loose and independent groups had a degree of flexibility and choice in the ways in which they represented themselves. Constantly changing logistical issues, individual and group artistic decisions and new personal connections formed the event design, and spontaneous connections, disruptions, individual choices by performers, authorities and audience members also changed what occurred during the event. This was not a carefully controlled tourist performance, but rather a performance of post-structured community and conflicting spaces, as will be shown further in Part Two of this chapter. The "tourists" were not transported in an air-conditioned minibus, but travelled through commuter traffic on public trains and were left at Granville to make their own way home through a city which was now a palimpsest, haunted by the performers, locals and audience.

The event as a whole encouraged the creation of what has been called "post-tourists", that is, people who, while engaging in a tourist experience, are aware of the irony and game-playing inherent in any tourism event. Liska describes twenty-first-century post-tourists as, "seen as realistically simply playing a series of games; they play at and with touring; they recognize that there is no 'authentic' tourist experience".[526] Post -tourists can seek new experiences while understanding that there is no such thing as an "authentic performance". The creation of "post tourists" during this performance event challenged the type of expectations people would have when dealing with Western Sydney in the future. This could mitigate the likelihood of tourist performances encouraging tourists to spread stereotypical visions on their return home. Community, space and stereotypes in this event were all under deliberate and obvious pressure.

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[526] Allan Liska and George Ritzer, "Mcdisneyization' and 'Post-Tourism': Complementary Perspectives on Contemporary Tourism," in *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*, ed. Chris Rojek and John Urry (London and NY:: Routledge, 2000), 102.

In summary, this tourist performance foregrounded multiple perspectives and highlighted inequities in power and resources. By highlighting the differences between communities, between spaces and between people, single narratives of poverty, drugs and crime were replaced by multiple narratives. New networks of contact and support were formed, both by the creation of the new "community" of the cast and by the creation of new relationships, both artistic and personal, which occurred between cast, facilitators and audience. New types of knowledges and ways of speaking and knowing were foregrounded. Tai Chi meditation and Indigenous rap, community choirs and Iranian opera, performance poetry and Chinese cooking were all given equal space.

Knowing how to measure the "results" of the variable contestations to power which occurred during the event is extremely difficult. Contemporary community-based guerrilla art, however, does not aim solely to produce measurable "outcomes". While all community performance groups are in some ways accountable to funding bodies, management boards and to the NGOs, community groups and artists they work with, new guerrilla groups also make it their deliberate aim to allow post-structured communities the freedom to pursue their own goals and they have no wish to know or control these outcomes. To do so would be patronising, paternalistic and would subvert the commitment to radical difference, partiality, and multiplicity which marks the guerrilla artist. To attempt to control what occurs after the powerful point of performance would return to didactic protest art making, which, as Baylis suggests, can reduce the complex and fruitful interrelation between professional artist and community participant to an indulgence in personal politics by a radical facilitator.

PART TWO

WALKING THE LINES: REMEMBERING THE SITE/CONCEPT/PLACE OF THE *TRACKWORK* EVENT

In 2006, almost ten years after the *TrackWork* event, I set myself the exercise of re-travelling the same network of trains and stations, at the same time of the day with a notebook and camera. I began at Central at 4:11 p.m. and caught trains as close to the original times as possible, returning finally to Central on the 6.35 p.m. train from Granville. In remembering the event, I found myself confused by the tangle of Lefebvrean physical, lived and conceptual territories I had explored in *TrackWork*. UTP had made an event which caused audience, artists, participants and local residents to re-examine and recreate a city. I realised my participation, memories and experiences were part of the performance process. It is therefore important that I acknowledge my role in the event and point to the moments at which *TrackWork* contested site, conceptual space and place. The effects of this performance event continue to ripple through my memories and through the city, changing the way I see, interact with and build Western Sydney. Through poetic fragments, shifting between past and present tense, then and now, I both remember and evoke the performance and the city.

Central to Redfern 4.11 p.m.

I remember running very late for *TrackWork* in 1997. There was however, still a comfortingly large queue waiting for the show, an improvised box office and the normal ticket window, and a few familiar faces. I was lucky to get my ticket at all as the show was sold out. My perceptions of Redfern and Western Sydney were shaped at this time by sensationalist media stories of muggings and drug problems and rapes and murders on trains and stations, a *conceptual* mediatised space which shaped the way Redfern residents were treated. It was also shaped by less sensationalist everyday stories and *experiences* living in student accommodation near to Redfern. Redfern, for me, was a site where my body existed uneasily amongst some of the poorest bodies in central Sydney, a reality that made itself known in the presence of beggars throughout the area. My perceptions of Redfern were also shaped by my own *memories* of place, having spent part of my childhood

and early high school living in the outer western suburbs at the foot of the Blue Mountains. These were memories of long waits for train services, old, slow and unclean train carriages and complex train routes and conversations with strange, unpredictable, street people. Redfern in these childhood memories marked the joyful arrival into Sydney, the second-last step on a long journey into the centre from its periphery. That Redfern represented hustle and bustle and excitement. Site, concept and place were all contradicting here and informing the spaces I entered.

This Redfern was made up of twelve-year-olds from the Waterloo High School dancing to pop music from a boom box on one platform and funky live music by Pat Ryan's Spastic Mental Suitcase Musical Circus Band on another, as well as the spectacle of around a hundred and fifty buzzing spectators milling around and queuing at a ticket machine to purchase their train tickets to go on the journey. John Baylis yelled into a mobile phone attempting to cue the performers of the incoming train, his persona becoming part of the performance. The spaces of Redfern were changing in front of my eyes.

In 2006, ten years later, I revisit the route of the 1997 performance. On the train from Central to Redfern, where I am to start my second journey, I speak with a man crammed next to me in the vestibule, whose own fears had created his own conceptual Redfern. When I begin to squeeze my way to the exit, he tells me I really don't want to go to Redfern. "Central is safer", he says. "Have you been there?" I ask. He shakes his head. " But there's so much surveillance, video cameras now", I reply. "They don't give a shit" he mutters, "They'll grab you anyway; they don't care about the cameras". "At 4:25 p.m. on a platform? And who are they?" There is no response.

Redfern Station, 4.25 p.m.

In 1997 I had watched the dancing and the music across the platforms at Redfern and then was bustled onto a carriage with two stewards and my group of strangers. In 2006 I watch by myself, a little more leisurely, the people on Redfern station at peak hour, the new technologies and the ever present surveillance strategies brought in after the Olympics and the September 11 attacks in New York. In 2006, unlike in 1997, there are transit officers as a very visible presence, near the ticket office and patrolling the platforms .There are also CCTV cameras monitoring everywhere. I am acutely aware of signs and messages playing on the loudspeaker, warning people to

report anything unusual. Will my camera, my notebook and I be considered unusual, is my activity a threat? How would *TrackWork* go down now in a period of fear campaigns over imagined and real terrorist threats to public transport?

Redfern is a disciplined site, where governmental codes, controlling systems and internalised fears work to maximise effective movement of people and "minimise risk". *TrackWork* had put these codes under contestation. In 1997, people had lingered where they were supposed to move on, and non-authorised uses of equipment and spaces had occurred. Performance poets came out of garbage bins where waste should go.[527] Loud disruptive noises interrupted the authorised sounds of trains and speakers and stopped commuters in their tracks. Groups of people temporarily blocked exits and entrances. Political views were expressed. These disruptions had reclaimed the spaces momentarily, for the expression and contestation of community and the reinstatement of place and imagination into disciplinary sites and conceptual grids. Winning herself admits she would not even try such a performance event now because of what she calls the "closing down of possibilities due to public liability and fear"[528]. Perhaps it has become harder to build new spaces and challenge communities when people fear the imminent loss of what they hold dear, although this is perhaps when building new site/concept/place becomes most important.

Much of Redfern station has been repainted since 1997, refurbished and new computerised "next train" displays replace the old wooden boards, although I find this is not the case the further west I travel; and indeed the unevenness of resources to the west seems as obvious now as then. As in 1997, the crowd is diverse: businessmen, students, mothers with prams, an old man mumbling holding a bottle in a paper bag and whistling loudly, tunelessly, two Muslim women in hijabs. And as in the first journey, my vision across platforms is continually interrupted by incoming and outbound trains. This site is a hub of transport. It has ten platforms and almost every train line stops here. A kid with a plastic sword is being dragged along by a harried mother, rushing to catch a train on a parallel platform, and I wonder what she would thinks of me watching, what they thought in 1997? By making the audience look afresh at the spaces around them, realities came into focus. Redfern is not just its media image, or its economic disadvantages. There are places and imagined

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[527] There can no longer be performance poets in garbage bins as they have been removed from all Sydney train stations which have been deemed potential hiding place for bombs.
[528] Winning, interview. See Appendix B.

spaces at work here that, if given room, voice and resources, could reshape inner Sydney. This station is being recreated for me by the memories of *TrackWork*, by the bodies that walked here, by the conceptual spaces which control behaviour, by the ways people use the physical spaces and by the act of watching.

Train to Auburn 4.44 p.m.

On the Auburn train I remembered the introductions of the 1997 *TrackWork* stewards standing at the front of the carriages. They announced themselves as "On Board Carriage Activities Coordinators". There were two per carriage and different carriages had different performance styles. In mine I remembered the slightly surreal and comedic descriptions of exits and entrances, the descriptions of imaginary onboard "entertainments," airhostess style, the invisible theatre of people (from PACT and Powerhouse Youth Theatre) fainting in the vestibules and engaging in other exaggerated commuter behaviour, the facial expressions of those caught up in this show, on their way to other spaces, places, destinations.

These memories are a ghostlike overlay to this 2006 journey. This time there's a smell, a hot overstuffed carriage full of people sitting on stairs and crammed into aisles, copies of a new free right-wing paper *MX*, distributed free to commuters, appearing everywhere I turn. There are popular green cloth supermarket bags at the feet of many of the seats, and the distinctive white cords of Apple iPod MP3 players are a conspicuous addition to the inner-city look. In 1997 in this portion of the journey, I remember, with delight, a lady complaining to her companion that she just wanted quiet on the train. She was ignored by the stewards and smiled at by an appreciative audience, engaging not just with the show, but with life, pubic transport, the negotiation of space. On other journeys, as was noted earlier, there were interruptions that were much more aggressive and painful to the performers.

Why is one sort of commuter behaviour or one type of political activity privileged over another? What if your abilities or cultures or communities or personalities demanded a different sort of interaction from the docile commuting deemed safest by City Rail? Is needing to talk louder because of hearing difficulties, for example, a "nuisance"? What if your community voice does not have big advertising dollars behind it, as the newspaper *MX* does and you cannot afford to hand out thousands of copies of your opinion to Sydney commuters? Is it less important that this voice is heard? Is graffiti

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any less important than *MX* headlines? What if your voice and your place conflicts with disciplined sites, with other conceptual spaces, with other peoples' imagined lives, with othered bodies? These questions were part of my initial responses to watching other commuters during the *TrackWork* event and again in my walk across the lines in 2006. *TrackWork* exposed these differences by making audience and commuters look at the world around them with critical eyes. Every difference became important. The audience for *TrackWork* became hyper-observant, details usually missed came into focus, everything became a performance, and thus it became possible to question and critique.

On my 2006 trip I sit wedged sideways on a broken seat, another symbol of degraded transport facilities on trains headed for the west, in absolute silence. This location, though uncomfortable, gives me a good chance to watch the trains moving past the windows, the people on their seats. We pass Petersham and Strathfield and Croydon and Homebush and Lidcombe, and I think, "We are leaving the inner-west now". I see roofs of houses, a few highways, many streets. I'm a tourist, but this landscape is layered and created by the performances that go on inside it, both the performances of everyday life and those aware of their audience. I am being guided by a performance event from ten years ago. At Lidcombe, I watch through the window at a young boy being given a fine by a bored looking transit officer. The memory of the show has created a remembered Lidcombe. I think, suddenly, "I know this place, I have been here before".

Auburn Station 4.58 p.m.

At Auburn in 1997 we watched from the platform down at a busy street, where actors from the inner-west company, *Powerhouse Youth Theatre,* performed outside the shopfronts, yelling up to us, in what is referred to in the stage managers itinerary as "The Fellini-esque streetscape".[529] Someone was cooking food on a large open grill in steaming woks, others were waving oversized props and balloons in the shape of fish and meat and other consumables. A cacophony of images and smells and sounds wafted up to us on the platform above. In 2006 I note that this street space at Auburn is still full of signs. row of shops parallel to the platform, all brightly signposted, read Dragon BBQ House, Full Ocean Seafood, Kim Long Fabric Discount, Auburn Fish Market, Auburn Meat Market, Nice Bakery, For Lease, EETL Income Tax, Wizard

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[529] "Stage Manager's Itinerary"*,* Urban Theatre Projects (1997).

Home Loans, Du Tung Chicken Butchery, Asian Food Supermarket. All the signs have Chinese or Arabic subtitles. In 1997 this is the space where a man once yelled at me "You don't even know what war is, you weren't there", repeating this sentence over and over until we left. It took me a while to realise this wasn't part of the official performance. He was still there when I passed back through Auburn at the end of the performance in 1997, so I can only imagine that, with a group of strangers actively observing everyone on the platform, we constituted a new audience for him or a territory invasion. He needed to tell me something, but I felt sorry I couldn't stay, and did not properly understand. We rushed away midway through the streetscape to catch another train.

Here in Auburn, I am uncomfortable, both in '97 and '06, as if I am borrowing these spaces from those who create them everyday, as if at my raised distance from the street, and my ability to walk away from the man yelling, away from the busy scenes before me, represents the privilege of my inner city life. I was and I am again "out of place"; I do not have the structures of feeling and daily histories which make Auburn. In 1997, the performers were attempting to build a metaphorical bridge of dialogue and creativity, between the street and the platform, but they were not from Auburn either. Did this make the performance of this space any less real? It certainly felt like the performance of a series of negotiations rather than a celebration. Perhaps feeling alien to a place is sometimes important to realise its inherent differences. Perhaps creating situations for an audience to feel like an intruder is also part of making room for places, interactive sites and new conceptual zones, while encouraging empathy and collaboration.

Train to Lidcombe 5.11 p.m.

Now, in 2006, the train to Lidcombe is new, a Tangara, air-conditioned, clean. This makes me wonder about the inconsistencies in resourcing Western Sydney: brand new trains on one station and then notice boards too faded to read on the next? Cynically I wonder if this new train is here because Lidcombe has become a changeover spot on the train line for tourists travelling in non-peak periods to the new Olympic Stadium at Homebush Bay. Twenty-first-century Sydney cares about its international image. A young man tries to hold the automatic door for a stranger running late, but fails. Unlike on the old trains, bodies cannot interact with the technologies here. They have graffiti resistant plastic and are ergonomically-

designed for the "average" body. The newer, "safer" trains do not have room for unauthorised difference, different heights or weights, latecomers, helping hands. Thanks to *TrackWork*, I now notice these differences, these changes, these inadequacies. There is an Indigenous man busking on the train with his guitar, he plays a few notes, but this is peak hour and everyone is busy. Again, because of *TrackWork* I notice him, make eye contact, smile. These moments of contact, of realisation contest the structures of power which separate us. I pass a McDonalds car park, the Lidcombe hotel and we are back to Lidcombe. The transit officers are still here and I wonder how long their shifts are. I am tired and it is getting darker, and clouds are reflected in the windows of the office buildings. I have a headache and have sporadic qualms about my safety on the trains at night and I feel shame, like a voyeur. My own body, my fears, my memories are creating this transport site; the carriage is full of smells and noises that cannot be completely erased by the hum of the air-conditioners.

Lidcombe Station 5.13 p.m.

In 1997, this was my favourite stop. Seventy year old Chinese-Australian nightclub singer Terry Woo had made a fantastic entrance in a sequined jacket, singing "Begin the Beguine", walking down the stairs alone "like a Las Vegas superstar," to music heard through the whole station.[530] I also loved the Bill Belchor's Brass Band walking through the overpass between platforms: celebratory, local, like the head of a street parade, playing old standards. There was a new street, created on a station overpass, a new nightclub on a set of station stairs, a new audience that would never have seen this happen before. In 1997 there was a demonstration of ballroom dancing by a mix of couples, old and young, from local amateur dance-schools, and commuters wove amongst the dancers on the platform to get to the exit. There was a beautiful Tai Chi demonstration by a graceful old member of the West Sydney Elderly Chinese Association, leaping gracefully with a sword. These were performers who made me feel I belonged here, that public spaces were created by celebration as much as by shared history, that Lidcombe station belonged to the brave and the expressive and that the local associations and performance groups were their own communities, shifting and powerful networks of intimate interaction that I was privileged to see foregrounded and which shaped the way I lived and moved through these concrete transit hubs.

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[530] Burvill, "Urban Theatre Projects: Re-Siting Marginal Communities in Outer Western Sydney," 208.

For a moment I sensed the peace of engaging in Tai Chi swordplay and the fantastic buzz of playing in a local brass band and I remembered learning dance in my local community hall. For a moment these voices, histories, knowledges colonised the conceptual transport location and the busy public site. I cannot know how these performers experienced this performance, or the long-term effects this performance project would have on these people. I can only say that at this moment disciplinary codes of behaviour on stations, negative narratives of criminal "othered" Western Sydney and simplistic images of "authentic" ethnic communities were all being placed under contestation. Here was an excellent example of the intimate guerrilla politics of post-structured community and site/concept/place.

In 2006, Lidcombe is the busiest station so far, wall-to-wall people, many in rough working clothes or inexpensive office wear. Some young girls are dressed to go out, there are scuffles between groups of young men, and some are escorted away by police. The busker sets up and there is not a bench free so he leans against a wall. He plays "Chariots of Fire", humming along and then sings Indigenous crooner song, "Koori Rose". The fast food kiosk has many signs: I read Focaccia, Fruit Salad, Greek Salad, Caesar Salad, Chickens Feet, Do-nuts, Roast Beef, Fried Rice, Fried Fish, and Lunchbox Specialists. A photograph of that board would be like an advertisement for some sort of cheesy "folk dance and food multiculturalism". I am a tourist here, but somehow *TrackWork* has made me a discerning one. Neither the cross-cultural music from the busker, the police presence nor the vivid diversity of foods on the menu make me feel that I know these communities. Each cultural or community marker is disturbed by a contrasting image, or a partially remembered performance. Each space consists of sites and conceptual spaces, dreams and places, which, because of *TrackWork*, trouble and destabilise each other in my mind.

Train to Berala 5.27 p.m.

The train to Berala in 2006 is very old, rattling and graffitied in "tags" of black and blue. The Indigenous busker gets onto the train and I notice his hat has a land rights slogan and an Aboriginal flag on it. An older man asks a young man with an iPod what the next station is, but he refuses to answer. "Do you know where we are now? Do you even know where we are? Do you?" The man is quite distressed, and the young man changes carriages without removing his headphones. Did he hear? The

busker shows the older man the train map on the carriage wall and I leave as they are consulting it together. "Do we even know where we are?" I wonder how many people are lost and afraid on these trains. I remember Winning's story of trying to talk with a train guard during the performance when a train arrived two minutes early, only to be met with silence and disdain. Her panic at being responsible for audience and performers and needing to know if this train was the right one, met the desires of a guard who was not trained or paid to deal with the public. Urban transport is controlled by disciplinary strategies to encourage swift movement, no conversation that could "disrupt" other passengers or staff, proper transit through spaces. Yet among these strategies, humans connect daily in surprising ways. *TrackWork* foregrounded and multiplied these connections, and highlighted the daily attempts of individuals to work within and against rules, in order to showcase Western Sydney to itself and to others. As de Certeau suggested, walking, or in this case, riding the lines, does not just follow the "map" of a city, it brings place into being and *TrackWork* showcased the hundreds of tiny ways humans shift the codes that form and control them.

Berala Station, 5.30 p.m.

In 1997 at Berala, my group watched, as, on the street, down behind the platform through a cyclone fence, we saw a white limousine screech to a halt and dump four brides in full costume and makeup and then drive away. Many laughed as these beribboned performers sat there weeping and wailing hysterically. These were male and female performers from PACT Youth Theatre. Apparently, in other groups, other brides had been seen both weeping in the carriages and asking commuters if they had a spare tuxedo, or glimpsed outside an unsuspecting person's house, crying into the rosebushes. These Berala brides called out desperately and ran after the car. Local people came out of their houses to watch the surprising image, and also the gawking spectators on the platform. I laughed in '97, linking this image to movies such as "Muriel's Wedding", showing Australian suburbia, its wedding obsessions, and gender roles as well as laughing at what Burvill calls the "wonderfully incongruous" moment, as the audience watches out the train window, leaving the brides behind to move onto other performances. I remember one of the other people in my group wondering aloud what the local residents thought of brides dumped on their doorstop, and I wonder again in 2006 at *Track Work's* strange combination of "good publicity" for the area and surrealism and humour, of exposed and challenged

spaces. So much of *TrackWork* was delightfully wry and ironic, as if exposing the chaotic world did not have to remove your ability to laugh at it. Harley Stumm explains his take on this side of the performance in conversation with Van Erven, stating:

> It is almost assumed that if you're going to see a community production or community exhibition, or any product of this kind of community cultural development initiative, that it always has to be about identity and pride. There was an element of that in *TrackWork* of course, but irony is not the preserve of clever inner city people or full-time artists.[531]

In 2006, Berala station is the first time I feel unsafe, as a young woman alone, after dark. The single middle-aged female guard for the station quickly retreats into a barred locked, box-like room on the platform, and the two women commuters who had embarked with me leave hastily. It is very deserted at Berala, very quiet. I have a jolt of recognition when I look off the platform and recognise the fence where the tragic brides had been dumped, now lit in the darkness by the spill over from the station. This does not feel like a city. There are trees and many quiet streets, no nearby highways and no late-night shops. *TrackWork* showed Sydney as many cities, sometimes entirely different from each other. In 1997 I remember a quirky tour of the platforms, so in my own re-examination I tour myself thought the small quiet suburban station. I see all the signs again. "No exit", "This vending machine is not the property of city rail", "This station has no rubbish bins". There was also a small one which reminded me of the many countries Australia is comprised of, a sign which reminded me of those I had seen in China, where it named a health problem. "Do not spit on the station, benches or stairs. This is an offence. By order of City Rail". I have never seen such a sign anywhere else in Australia. Is spitting a problem in Berala, or is this sign an archaic remnant reflecting the age of the station? Is this a cultural signifier or a conceptual space marker, or a remnant of place?

This station is not graced with electronic noticeboards or sophisticated sound systems. It's so different from Central or Redfern or Lidcombe. It is difficult to know which the right platform is, or which train is coming next. The waiting room is completely empty and the fluorescents flicker. There had been an installation in there in 1997, but I cannot remember what it comprised of. Here is the cement block on which the Berala-born opera singer had attempted to stand, dressed in black, wearing surrealistic, overlarge sunglasses and an enormous hat, interrupting herself

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[531] Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*, 238.

every time she overbalanced, performing a combination of songs. Trained opera voices and thousands of identical suburban houses were shown to coexist in Berala. There were no representations of simplistic stereotypes of everyday suburban existence present in the *TrackWork* performance.

There is the space where the garbage bin used to be. A performance poet had burst out of it, an overflow of words of images and fears that were newly created for each performance, a voice that had never been heard here before. Apparently he did not participate in every performance of the event, due to his fragile mental health. I wonder how often he negotiated the demons in his head to speak so eloquently to the world. I meet Jeff at Berala in 2006, a local man who scares me in the dark asking my name, and what I do for fun. "Ride the Sydney train networks" I reply, he laughs and I am relieved when the train came and we get into separate carriages, separate lives again.

TrackWork also exposed a lack of safety on Western Sydney trains. Many times during the event, and again during the 2006 walk, I felt vulnerable as I witnessed petty crimes, a pickpocket working a station, a used syringe in a toilet, a drug deal overheard over a mobile phone, a violent man drinking beer in the vestibules and abusing teenage girls, angry young men breaking windows, destroyed cars in station car parks. Because of *TrackWork*, however, I both witnessed these things and de-demonised them. Rather than exotic, or sensationalist or terrifying markers of the "other people" of Sydney, they became everyday realities dealt with by the everyday people I met on this journey. Increased surveillance in 2006 did had no impact on the number of these crimes I witnessed. Perhaps cameras cannot undo the economic and social issues which feed this crime. Perhaps witnessing is not the same as dialogue, and discipline different from relationship. Perhaps feeling vulnerable, as audiences did in *TrackWork*, is not always a bad thing, if it can lead to empathy. I am angry and ashamed that these things remain severe social problems in the west.

Train to Cabramatta 5.39 p.m.

Between Berala and Cabramatta in 1997 I heard the Italian Women's Choir, from Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani sing on the train, a large group of happy, bubbly middle-aged women, singing in Italian to much applause. I was also taught a simple Maori song by two other stewards, younger women, not professional singers. I

saw the nerves and appreciated the expression of trust. This was a vulnerable place for two young women in a train carriage full of staring strangers. Singing a song with a group of people evoked community, childhood and homesickness. It temporarily transformed the carriage into a stage, or a workshop, or perhaps a living room. The carriage in 2006 feels so quiet and stark without of all the women in the aisles, the easy laughter and the young stewards' nervous smiles.

Cabramatta Station and Mall 5.45 p.m.

Cabramatta has the worst reputation in the media of all of the stations on the *TrackWork* itinerary. Headlines in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in the months around *TrackWork* included "The boat people's new migration——out of Cabramatta", "Cabramatta connection caught on tape", "Cabramatta caps fit for crime games", "$4m clean-up of Cabramatta drug menace", "Illegal drug trade in Cabramatta", "Cabramatta recovers slowly after assassination" and "Spy cameras to combat Cabramatta crime" to name just a few.[532] While there is no doubt that there is drug trade in Cabramatta, there is very little evidence of any other stories being written about the 80.0000 people who lived there at the time. The conceptual space of Cabramatta is one of fear, drugs, crime and death. Very little of the actual site, or the experienced places and histories of Cabramatta, reaches through these repetitive mainstream stereotypes to people outside of Cabramatta.

In 1997, we were led off the platforms and into a nearby station mall. Here we watched City Moon, a Bankstown-based youth-theatre company perform the story of a fight between a river god and a mountain god who argue over the daughter of a Vietnamese king. It was based on a traditional Vietnamese myth. The piece used mask and costume and large swathes of bright fabric, and clashed violently with the ugly buildings of the strip mall. Later I discovered this was a notorious area for junkies to buy drugs, and I read in Van Erven's account of how rehearsals for this piece affected the young Vietnamese performers: "The designated outdoor performance space in Cabramatta [is] a shopping plaza where junkies hang out. The visit makes some of the middle-class, Bankstown-based City Mooners, who visit the area for the first time, visibly nervous."[533]

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[532] *Cabramatta,* Sydney Morning Herald Online Archive (1997), http://newsstore.smh.com.au/ (accessed May 12, 2006).
[533] Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*, 231.

Part of the joy of this performance event was also about creating and changing space. For me, ignorant of the media narratives around Cabramatta, the plaza was the perfect place for mythical street theatre, and I bought Chinese-Thai pork buns from the nearby bakery and explored the shops with delight. As a result I almost missed my train to the next part of the performance. A near miss between two cars at the corner received as much attention from the audience as the masks and the music in the mall. I dodged a syringe in the public toilet and a helped a local lady to negotiate the narrow cubicles with her pram. I remember Winning's story of a local man's bemusement, as he discussed a drug deal loudly on his mobile phone, while watching the show: "Yeah, I've got it, yeah ... I am here, I am watching some sort of … play?"[534] In the bakery, in 1997, beautiful young Vietnamese women handed me my purchases with nails pained in intricate designs and I remember considering moving out to the area with friends. The City Moon show did not so much oppose Cabramatta's drug spaces as recreate them as places for creativity, history, memory and fantasy. It also presented new versions of a Vietnamese-Australian young person that did not include the sensationalist media slogans of "gang member" tagged on to the end. Here was a direct contestation of negative media portrayals of Cabramatta.

In 2006 I cannot find the mall space again, and I wander the streets after dark with a notebook and a camera, wondering at the sites I am going to because of *TrackWork*. I discover a Chinese mall, complete with stone dragons, which I think could perhaps be the 1997 mall, rebuilt, and my photo of this moment shows an empty street and sign on an elaborate archway which has some Chinese characters and an English subtitle: "Rest and reintegrate". Was that a slogan for the area, or a mistranslation? Wasn't this "reintegration" the complete opposite of the memories of *TrackWork* which encouraged difference in place of commonality? Reintegrate into what? I buy Nurofen for my headache in a brightly-lit chemist and wonder what an old man who asks me for money at the station was doing ten years ago. Here, I have lost the site, but because of UTP and City Moon, the concept and the place remains.

Train to Granville 6.08 p.m.

On the shiny new train to Granville in 1997 I saw a poignant performance by a steward, Cambodian-born Woodhy Chamron, who stuck photographs of his family

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[534] Winning, interview. See Appendix B.

and his journey to Australia and his work on the massive new Baha'i temple to the wall of the carriage with sticky tape and blu-tack as he spoke in his quiet, wry voice about his experiences in Australia and his Buddhist faith. For Chamron, the performance was a "welcome opportunity to discuss a positive image and the daily realities of an Asian person living in the Cabramatta area".[535] Another steward, young student, Julietta Boscolo, also stuck pictures of her family and friends on the walls and seats of the train and took us though her student apartment and we meet her large Italian-Australian family, in Polaroids. In Van Erven's video, Turkish-born performer Pembe is shown donning a hijab to take photos of her local spaces, of buildings with intricate mosaic work inlaid with gold. In the video she looks up with wonder at the high roof of the mosque, examining her cultural heritage anew, the cheap disposable camera in her hand, supplied by UTP for her version of this photo story.[536] These were the site/concept/places and the people with whom these stewards shared their life with and in this intimate moment, we shared them too. We were building connections inside these plastic-lined, graffiti-proof, ergonomically-designed trains, and in these remarkable yet ordinary streets and stations, transient, precious, site-specific moments, building cities we can live, love and move in.

Granville Station

In 2006 the station at Granville is quiet at 6.00pm; I see a total of twenty-five people across four platforms. As I wait I try to remember where the rappers were, where I ate the chips, which exit we took to the pub, where I saw the visual arts installation. The waiting room is so sterile now and the toilets have been fitted with blue light to stop people being able to find their veins to shoot up. This is another strategy designed to shape and control behaviour. I am told over the speakers in recorded announcements that if I see unattended baggage I should notify City Rail staff immediately, and to hold on to my pram if travelling with children; and that I need to stay behind the yellow lines at all times; and that if I see something I should say something because Australia needs my help in the fight against terrorism. The messages are on a loop and repeat every few minutes. It is quiet in the station and two girls in heavy makeup talk softly on mobile phones. Yet this space is not empty, it is filled with the echoes and the colours of the 1997 performance event, voices and spaces which will not be silenced.

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[535] Chamron quoted in Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*, 235.
[536] See *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives* [Videorecording], directed by Van Erven.

At Granville in 1997 the big conclusion to the *TrackWork* event occurred. A simultaneous, audio-visually stimulating dissonance of heavily-miked rap by Ebony Williams and Danielle Tuwai (*2Indij*) and rappers *Southwest Syndicate* on one platform and a striking mime-and-movement piece by physical theatre company *Gravity Feed*, in black with white sheets on another, with a simultaneous live graffiti demonstration. This is the moment when the rappers, accompanied by break dancing and DJing, involved the whole crowd in comments on Aboriginal and wider Australian race and identity, getting the commuters and audience to participate in a call-and-response rap which reverberated through the station. It was loud didactic political opinions from subjugated individuals, expressed through music which dominated this station. The audience and commuter response was loud cheers and whistles and wholehearted crowd involvement in an anti-racism chant of "Pauline Hanson sucks, yeah yeah". Here I ate hot chips with my "steward" and my little group of paying spectators. I was exhausted and exhilarated.

I remember little of the physical space of Granville until the moment I decided to go home, and turning away from the performers I needed to renegotiate the public transport network back to Central. In that one turn the spaces before me shifted. I was part of their creation and the performance had not only shifted my perception, but also the way I walked through and experienced the spaces of the west. The staircases had invisible footprints from the other spectators and the performers. The other commuters were potentially local residents or fellow audience members instead of faceless bodies, the station was a part of a suburb and of homes where these artists and their communities lived. To travel home would be to rebuild these spaces from new histories, new experiences and new performances.

In the 1997 train journey, I was, however, caught at the last minute by a friend and went to a pub with the cast to celebrate the final show, meeting some of the performers and directors together with Van Erven and his film crew, who were accompanying the show, preparing the case study for publication in *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives* and for the accompanying video. It was nice to not return home immediately, like a tourist whose visa has run out. It was nice to meet some performers from City Moon and the Italian Women's Choir and hear details about their experience of the show. In Van Erven's book I read of interviews with people who had joined the show halfway, on the way to a barbecue or while changing trains "We weren't imaging to find anything out west, but we find it's really

good to get out here".[537] New relationships were being built through performance, just as new spaces were being made.

Granville to Central 6.35 p.m.

Going home in 2006 the very old train is full of the debris of peak hour, McDonald's cups, a piece of Lebanese bread, a boy with bright blue hair. I know these stations we pass, I feel as if they are old friends, and the experiences whether cheery or stark have shaped me and changed me. I am passing Auburn now and I somehow feel I know it, that it's safe and familiar, that I am not completely alien to it. Lidcombe, I've been here before, that is where the transit officer was an hour ago, that is where Terry Woo was ten years ago, that is where I changed trains, that is where I ate a pork bun. This is an express and it speeds up past Lidcombe. Flemington, where I went to the markets as a child; Strathfield where I change trains every morning for work and where I met some Polynesian dancers involved in a show of mine once; Burwood, where I have some disabled friends in a community house who cook really good pasta. I see from my notebook that I wrote on this journey: "Have I found the space of *TrackWork*, did the multiple communities I saw construct a city for me then, or now?" I'm almost in the centre of the city now and yet it feels a long way away from both my home and the west where the show was. Were the spaces created by the experiences? When community is performed in all its multiplicity, the physical spaces, conceptual territories and lived activities blur and merge and shift. *TrackWork* did not just advertise Western Sydney to the inner city café crowd, nor just allow multiple voices to express community; it worked in a particularly contemporary site-specific way. Through the performance of community, *TrackWork* created a city.

Conclusions

TrackWork did not articulate a single political position, a single social issue, nor did it result in any one government policy change. It was not a didactic, story-based piece on youth and the drug trade or immigration to Australia. Its politics were much subtler and more complex. First, it contrasted social stereotypes and media portrayals of Western Sydney life as inherently miserable, criminal or alien to its inner city relations. Secondly, it put everyday life under the microscope, showing inadequacies

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[537] Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*, 235.

and injustices in everyday spaces, but also showed how people create hybrid cultures within power structures and how everyday "performances" shape communities. Thirdly it engaged with what I called in Chapter Three a "politics of post-structured community". That is, the creation of multiple in place of single narratives; the formation, expression and strengthening of networks of support and contact; and the creation of room for subjugated voices, knowledges and practices to interact and influence people. Fourthly, it showed how sites can be interfered with, how conceptual spaces and places can form, mutate and conflict and how community performance can create new site/concept/place.

This chapter has examined the ways in which *TrackWork* both represented and challenged community narratives and site/concept/place and thus foregrounded new experimental political forms based on the intimacy of everyday interactions and the performance of difference. The following two chapters contain two further case studies of Australian community-based guerrilla performance forms which, like *TrackWork*, are based on this politics of multiplicity, contact and the post-structured community. These final chapters extend the analysis of twenty-first century guerrilla strategies of community performance events, while also introducing and illuminating some of the problems inherent in the reception of this emerging practice.

CHAPTER SIX

Haunted Voices in Everyday Spaces:
The Community-Based Hip-Hop of Australian
Guerrilla Artist Morganics

This chapter examines the guerrilla performance of Australian hip-hop artist Morgan Lewis a.k.a. Morganics.This chapter discusses his community hip-hop practices, including his workshop processes, productions and solo works. I argue that his work is an excellent example of differential guerrilla performance, as it uses the guerrilla tactics outlined in Chapter 1 to challlenge oppressive, "traditional" and stereotypical images of their communities. His community hip-hop, as a new form of interactive site-specific artwork, also helps participants to celebrate and confront the "haunted" spaces they live in. Part One of this chapter examines the development of Morganics' guerrilla practice, and his place inside the larger international field of community-based hip-hop. I then examine his recent guerrilla work in Australian rural and inner city communities. Part Two focuses on two community-based hip-hop tracks, "The Block" and "Down River" that Morganics facilitated with Indigenous Australian performers in 2001.

The previous chapter focussed on an established community-based company that worked with guerrilla tactics in order to help define and develop community and reshape site/concept/space. This chapter moves on to examine how emerging guerrilla artists can affect and empower "traditional" ethnic and geographical communities and locations. I argue Morganics' guerrilla work engages with differential guerrilla politics through a commitment to difference and partiality over commonality, by naming and exposing structures of power at an intimate level, and by the formation of spaces for subjugated voices and knowledges to develop. His work encourages the insertion of multiple narratives in place of single narratives and focuses on creating new opportunities for social networking and contact.

In this chapter I examine the texts of Morganics' works including the lyrics of these two raps and the script of his solo autobiographical piece, *Crouching Bboy, Hidden Dreadlocks*, a play which discusses Morganics' history and his perspective of the

process of making community hip-hop. [538] I consider the many live performances of the two hip-hop tracks, including those performances inside local spaces and those at other events. I also discuss the electronic versions of the tracks which were produced by Morganics and recorded onto the CD, *All You Mob* in 2002. My memories of Morganics' work are, however, like the rap tracks themselves, fragmented, sampled and repeated. For this reason, rather than "walking" the reader through a single performance event, I have evoked just a few of the many aural and visual moments which best represent my experience of the many performances and recordings of these works. For a full description of my experience of a Morganics workshop, see Appendix D.

A Side Note on Authorship

I have chosen, to focus on Morganics' facilitation of two examples of community hip-hop, rather than on the individual perspectives of the subjugated individuals he worked with. I have included background information from the communities through the voices of the participants, their families and relevant community organisations only where it helps in understanding the narratives of the works or clarifying the particular social situation being depicted. I do not claim that the ownership of these artistic works should lie with Morganics, rather than the young people who actually wrote and performed them. Instead, my claim is that he is a co-creator to these pieces and that his presence, experience, and facilitation was key to training the participants and making space for these works to be created. This is not to erase the talent, presence and experience of the Indigenous performers. I acknowledge that there are complicated relations of power between Morganics as a middle-class, white, male professional artist in his thirties and the subjugated, non-professional, young Indigenous performers who co-created and performed the tracks. There is also an uneven power relationship between the performers in my case studies and my own aims as an educated, white female artist and scholar in her twenties. However, all of these radical differences, helpfully and at times painfully, inform, "haunt" and challenge this research project, as will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

The many individual projects that Morganics facilitates have very different aims, and could be studied individually for their contribution to a host of different social and

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[538] For a copy of the unpublished playscript from the collection of the author see Appendix E.

political projects. The two examples I have chosen could certainly be usefully examined through theories of postcoloniality or in terms of their contribution to the history of race politics in Australia. I will instead be focussing on their contribution to the field of contemporary community-based performance. Overall, I have chosen to focus on Morganics instead of the other young artists involved, because his whole body of work, his particular techniques for facilitating community hip-hop and his emphasis on site/concept/place and community best contribute to this analysis of the politics of twenty-first century community-based guerrilla performance in Australia.

PART ONE

DEVELOPING A POLITICS OF FORM

The Development of Morganics' Guerrilla Performance Practice

Morganics is a 35 year–old MC/rapper, music producer and dance and physical theatre artist. He is also a talented beat-boxer (an artist who makes percussive sounds and imitates musical instruments with the mouth and microphone) and Bboy (break dancer). Originally from Brisbane, Queensland Morganics started acting at the age of eleven at the Australian Theatre for Young People in Sydney and break dancing at the age of thirteen on the streets of Sydney. He was a founding member of what is considered a seminal Australian hip-hop group, Meta Bass'N'Breath, a group which helped pioneer the Australian voice in hip-hop in the 1980s and 1990s. He also has several solo hip-hop albums to his name, and has performed with some of the top US and international hip-hop artists, both in Australia and overseas.[539] Morganics has therefore played a vital role in the recent development of the Australian community-based hip-hop and in the formation of new links between Australian and international hip-hop scenes. He has also developed a cross-disciplinary artistic style which reflects this diverse background.[540]

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[539] These include Morganics, *Evolve*, 2003 by Creative Vibes., Morganics, *Invisible Forces*, 2002 by Creative Vibes and Morganics, *Odyssey*, 2005 by Creative Vibes. His next album will be called "Hip Hop is my Passport" and will include music recorded in Tanzania, NY, Brazil, Bali, Japan, Berlin and outback Aboriginal-Australia.
[540] See Morganics projects at Morganics, "Morganics Homepage".

Parallel to his career as a professional MC and Bboy, Morganics has performed in a number of theatre, TV and film productions and much of his guerrilla work exists in a hybrid between theatre, multimedia and hip-hop. His theatre work can be named as part of a growing field of "hip-hop theatre"[541] and he continues to plan shows that merge theatre and rap, break and graffiti.[542] Morganics' hip-hop theatre shows include, *Hip Hopera* with UTP (1995), cross-cultural exchange *Hip-Hop Horse* at Sidetrack Theatre (2000), *Sport and Porn* (1997) at Sydney Performance Space, and *Stereotype*, with Wire MC at Brisbane Powerhouse (2005). [543] He has also continued his professional acting career by performing in plays which are usually music/theatre hybrids and are often devised in community workshops and collaborations.

Morganics has performed solo contemporary performance in avant-garde art spaces. In the persona "Hot Banana Morgan" and as himself he has also performed in autobiographical theatre pieces about his hip-hop work. Some of his contemporary performance works have been selected to appear at international performance art festivals.[544] The most recent of his autobiographical works, a hybrid performance piece *Crouching Bboy, Hidden Dreadlocks* (2000-2004), featured tracks from his own CDs and from community workshops he has facilitated. Described as a new form of performance-based, guerrilla "cultural activism",[545] it also used video from his tours of Australia and overseas. It was a combination of theatre, contemporary performance, hip-hop, community-theatre and multimedia, with a theme of community-based social justice and could be seen as a combination of Morganics' theatre, music and avant-garde performance experience. This piece will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter. All of Morganics projects exhibit the guerrilla characteristics of new cross-cultural political interventions, new technologies and hybrid genres.

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[541] For information on the US form "Hip-Hop Theatre", and artists Danny Hoch and Will Power see *Hip Hop Theatre Scholarship,* Hip Hop Theatre HQ (2007), http://avltheatre.info/hhthq/hq/ (accessed June 15, 2007).
[542] Highlights of *Hip Hopera* included "eleven to fourteen year old *Three Little Shits* rapping "We're Leb! We're Muslim! We're proud!"; the student activist *Witches of Hip Hop's* critique of the Brady Bunch ("I wanna see a black face!"); the *Notorious Sistas* and *Doctor Nogood* out-toughing the male rappers in camouflage gear [and] Chris Amtuani, an inmate of Minda Juvenile Justice Centre, whose was able to take the stage on the outside through video technology." Harley Stumm and Fiona Winning, *Artistic Report* (Sydney: Urban Theatre Projects, 1995),
http://www.urbantheatre.com.au/downloads/UTP_ArtisticReport_95.doc.
[543] This new show *Survival Tactics* includes respected hip-hop artists SistaNative, Bboy Rely, Wire MC, Maya Jupiter, Morganics and Bboy Jay plus internationally-renowned graffiti artists. It is planned for late 2007.
[544] These include Cleveland International Performance Art Festival (1994) and Brisbane International Arts Festival (1996).
[545] Nielsen, "Hip Hop: The Culture and the Activist Toolkit".

Like John Baylis of UTP and American director Peter Sellars, Morganics is a guerrilla practitioner who mixes a high standard of artistic excellence in his solo professional field with the commitment to facilitate community works with non-professional community artists. Twenty-first century guerrilla artists like Morganics utilise respect and cultural capital gathered in one field, to further their political aims and ability to attract funding and participants in another. At times this strategy is a symptom of an artist needing to cross disciplinary boundaries in order to gain work in an inconsistent project-based arts world. It is also, however, a deliberate "camouflage" approach by guerrilla artists like Morganics who blur the lines between disciplines and between professional and non-professional collaborations in order to reach people who have been marginalised; and who understand that the cutting edge of a practice is often located inside spheres where money, training and public attention are difficult to come by.

In the last five years, due to the success of hip-hop groups he has facilitated such as The Wilcannia Mob, Morganics has perhaps become best known to the Australia public for this innovative community teaching and facilitation. Morganics' community practice is very diverse. As a break dance, beat-box and MC facilitator, he teaches in workshops and festivals across Australia.[546] As a spoken word artist he has curated and spoken at conferences on hip-hop and Australian spoken word. As a theatre artist he has taught physical theatre and classes which mix beat-boxing with fantastical physical theatre. Morganics is responsible also for producing two compilation CD'S, *All you Mob* and *All You Mob* 2, which were made with participants from the community workshops he has conducted, working for multiple different community employers, all over Australia. He has also worked on international collaborations and festivals, most recently at Ubud Writers festival in Bali and in Tanzania with ex street kids, the Wayahudi family.[547]

This chapter focuses on Morganics' community work with new and young artists in Australian jails, regional areas, social welfare centres and isolated Aboriginal communities. I am particularly interested in Morganics' development of MC/rap and beat-box works. These can be described as rhythmically spoken and sung music

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[546] I worked with Morganics and observed his classes at the *Stamping Ground (Male) Dance Festival* (Bellingen, 2000-2006) where he taught beatbox, MCing and breakdance and organised a large scale hip-hop competition, as well as on the *Harbour Youth Service* hip-hop workshop tour (Coffs Harbour and Bellingen, 1999) where he taught classes and recorded raps with marginalised young people. See *Stamping Ground Dance Festival Homepage* (2007), http://www.stampingground.com.au/ (accessed January 11, 2007).
[547] Morganics and Wayahudi, "More G More Fire," *YouTube Video,* (2007), http://www.youtube.com/ (accessed March 15, 2007).

pieces with accompanying sampled beat-boxing and effects. The evidence of these creations is in the many participant videos and the produced tracks. Not only do the making and public showcasing of these pieces constitute performance events, but so does the vital playing back of these tracks to the people who made them, a self-reflexive process in which creators and performers begin to see their own lives in the space of the everyday. In order to examine these guerrilla strategies further, particularly the way in which they challenge "traditional" visions of community and space, it is first important to understand Morganics' contribution to the development of the guerrilla art form, community hip-hop.

The Development of Community Hip-Hop as Guerrilla Practice

This chapter will not be examining the musical qualities of the examples cited, and it does not engage with the rapidly growing field of US hip-hop musicology, as it is working from the premise that community hip-hop is much more than just the digitized musical tracks. The work of Morganics shows that it also includes the bodies, spaces and social networks of the performers, and that it occurs in many performance areas both formal and informal and thus is an example of an important new community-based art form.

Morganics' body of work is, however, not just an example of community-based performance. It is also part of a specific field which some theorists have called "globalised hip-hop", a growing international phenomenon which goes far beyond its US "roots". Examining Morganics' hip-hop in an international context uncovers the ways in which community hip-hop is an excellent example of guerrilla performance practice. Exploring globalised hip-hop also emphasises this art form's unique appeal and highlights how it allows for a hybrid performance of post-structured community and site/concept/place.

Global Hip-Hop- International Guerrilla Art

The form of hip-hop has its roots in the slums of the Bronx, New York City in the 1970s. This time and place is popularly considered the nexus where, according to Ian

Maxwell, the African-American histories of sub-Saharan story telling and traditional African rhythms and more recent enforced histories of oral traditions brought on by slavery and the influence of Baptist evangelism, combined with established Jamaican and Latino-American competitive song and dance forms to initialise or at least consolidate the art form that is generally known as hip-hop today.[548] Hip-hop is traditionally considered to be made up of four elements, rapping/MCing (and more recently beat-boxing), break dance, DJing, and graffiti. Each of these connected elements has its own international histories and all have experienced fascinating mutations and developments since that important period in the streets of the US in the 1970s. Even this (contested) popular history of US hip-hop emphasises the global nature of the art form. It is hardly surprising, given such roots, that since the 1970s hip-hop has become a global phenomenon.

Hip-hop has mass global appeal, both to audiences and to people who wish to learn it for themselves. It is representative of an anti-authoritarian, resistant African-American sub-cultural style of art, embedded in a colourful and political history. This is a subculture which has also had a lot of exposure thanks to the international spread of US TV, movies and media. Hip-hop also continues to be linked with underground and illegal practices of social disruption, from gang warfare to protests for racial and social equality, all of which, despite their harsh realities, have some appeal to those who feel marginalised in any society. Hip-hop is also "sexy"——some might say sexualised——and it can be easily personalised to show distinctive elements of cultural background, temperament and individual style.[549] It appeals to people who want to dance (break), sing (rap and beat-box) or paint (graffiti), but who cannot access training or do not relate to the role models available in the mainstream arts world. The basics of hip-hop are easily taught; it is extremely mobile and is relatively cheap to produce at a local level, requiring materials which are widely available.[550] Importantly, it does not require formal education, literacy or money to create hip-hop tracks, dances or graffiti. Overall, it involves the liberating opportunity for people to express themselves and describe their world through their own experience, or represent their world in the way they would like it to be seen. It is a

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[548] Ian Maxwell, *Phat Beats, Dope Rhymes: Hip Hop Down under Comin' Upper*, *Music/Culture.* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2003), 41.
[549] See "Tha Boyz: Subcultures and Gender" in Ibid., 32-35.
[550] Morganics demonstrates this ability to make hip-hop from whatever he can find when he teaches in poorly resourced areas. One of his most famous tracks *Down River* was made using his own microphone and a loop pedal he got in a charity shop for AUS $2. I have also witnessed Morgan holding his microphone up to a cheap home walkman in order to play participants' tracks when stereo systems failed during a workshop.

guerrilla practice of "making do" with whatever resources are at hand, physical, cultural, artistic or political.

It could be argued that hip-hop's political potential also contributes to its widespread appeal. Much hip-hop is openly political. This can be seen through the expression of political allegiances and discussion of social issues in the lyrics of the raps or the content of graffiti images as well as the politics of class, race and economics inherent in the production and distribution of commercial rap music, dance videos and illegal artwork. It is also politicised by the fact that popular or subjugated voices use it to challenge dominant views of culture and society. It is never a clear case of the oppositional politics of suppressed people being expressed in a positive manner through music and art. Hip-hop, in all contexts, is tied up with the commercial realties of people needing to make money and the, at times oppressive, cult of sub-cultural fame and "hipness".[551] It can encourage violence, racism, sexism, homophobia and the silencing of minority voices.[552] It would be dangerous to romanticise these complex realities into a naive image of all hip-hop as an art form which inherently encourages social justice. This art form does, however, have a logical mass appeal to people of all cultural and economic backgrounds who feel marginalised or outside the dominant culture and who see the accessibility and the political history of hip-hop as signs that it could be their best chance for the expression of difference, the formation of new interpersonal connections and an escape from social problems. Morganics, as one of the most prolific and popular hip-hop facilitators in Australia, is particularly proficient at utilising this new art form in the pursuit of social justice.

"Glocalized" Practice

Cultural studies and music theorist Tony Mitchell sees global hip-hop as a globalised, or perhaps "glocalized", phenomenon,[553] where US based hip-hop techniques and images have travelled across the world to merge and change in each specific new

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[551] Tony Mitchell, *Popular Music and Local Identity: Rock, Pop, and Rap in Europe and Oceania* (London and NY: Leicester University Press, 1996), 26.
[552] See Mitchell's description of the US based rapper Ice T and his concerts in Sydney, 1989 and 1993. Mitchell cites many examples of the misogyny, homophobia and abuse which is common in the work of many internationally famous hip-hop artists. Ibid.
[553] Roland Robertson's used the term "glocal" to show the symbiotic relationship between global and local practices. Roland Robertson, "Glocalization:Time-Space and Homogeneity- Heterogeneity," in *Global Modernities*, ed. Mike Featherstone, Roland Robertson, and Scott Lash (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1995). Mitchell uses it to discuss the complex globlised identity formations which occur in hip-hop. Tony Mitchell, ed., *Global Noise: Rap and Hip-Hop Outside the USA*, *Music/Culture.* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2001), 33.

location as they meet indigenous art forms, forming new hip-hop traditions.[554] The result is an innovative arts practice which crosses disciplinary barriers and which has all the problems and benefits associated with all intercultural performance. Hence, the diversity described in Mitchell's recent compilation of essays on hip-hop outside the US, entitled *Global Noise*:

> Japanese b-boys struggling with the hyperconsumerisim of Tokyo's youth culture, Italian posses promoting hard core Marxist politics and alternative youth culture circuits, and Basque rappers using a punk rock-hip-hop syncretic to espouse their nationalist cause and promote the rights of ethic minorities globally. Rappers in war torn Bosnia declare their allegiance with Central Los Angeles and a rap group in Greenland protests that country's domination by the Danish language.[555]

When describing the globalised presence of hip-hop to participants in his workshops, Morganics cites his own examples of well-established hip-hop non-English-speaking "scenes" in countries such as France, Germany, Indonesia and Brazil. Hip-hop is clearly an international practice and, despite moral panics by the media and by religious groups and politicians who fear the corruption of today's youth by American gang politics, global hip-hop is often tied to local issues and performed by local bodies for specifically local reasons.[556]

This "hybridisation" of global hip-hop is, however, by no means a simple process.[557] As Maxwell notes, hip-hop artists in countries outside the US often walk a careful line between claiming "authenticity" as hip-hop artists tied to the US on one hand, and claiming a unique style and history of their own on the other. They may claim this authenticity through their proven connections to the "authorised" histories of US hip-hop, evidenced in their knowledge of "classic" US "scenes", techniques, vocabularies, body language, dance moves and graffiti styles, or else by encouraging a general anti authoritarian stance and claiming membership of international resistant "brotherhood" or, less commonly, "sisterhood".[558] Like Morganics, they may combine

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[554] Mitchell, ed., *Global Noise: Rap and Hip-Hop Outside the USA*, 3.

[555] Ibid., 1.

[556] Examples of moral panics over hip-hop are documented in Mitchell, *Popular Music and Local Identity: Rock, Pop, and Rap in Europe and Oceania*, 28 and Maxwell, *Phat Beats, Dope Rhymes: Hip Hop Down under Comin' Upper*, 71-72.

[557] I take the term hybridization from Homi Bhabha who uses it to describe the complex merging and relationships between cultures which are always inherently hybrid and unstable. In this case I use it to describe the creation of new transcultural forms appearing at the point where discourses meet. See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and NY: Routledge, 1994) and Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin, and Gareth Griffiths, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London and NY: Routledge, 1989).

[558] Much has been written about the rampant sexism in hip-hop scenes and about the lack of women MCs, breakers and graffiti artists. In Australia, however, the rise of popular female MCs and breakers

this "authenticity" with the desire to see the growth of locally-relevant work over imitative Americanised pieces. This connection to an imagined global "hip-hop community" can provide performers with much strength and joy. It can also place indigenous art forms under pressure and can help spread the economic reach of multinational corporations and import new moral values into previously inaccessible cultural spaces. The tightrope of combining "authenticity" and street "credibility" with the knowledge and support of local "scenes" can also cause friction inside local artistic communities, as described in Maxwell's book, *Phat Beats, Dope Rhymes*. Morganics however walks this tightrope confidently, as he encourages Australian-specific creations and cites his "authentic" hip-hop experience, while also linking Australian practices with those of other guerrilla artists around the world.

I would argue that Morganics' hip-hop is thus *globalised* in its ability to cross cultural borders and feed the desires of marginalised participants, allowing them to imagine themselves into a transnational hip-hop "nation" or "movement" with generalised anti-authoritarian politics and ties to common "roots" in the (often imagined) USA. It is *localised* in its specificity to history, space, language and performance traditions. Morganics utilises this "glocalization", tying his own practices to this global art form and thus utilising the mass appeal of hip-hop. In his workshops he simultaneously offers participants space to foreground their own local, intimate realities, cultures and post-structured communities, thus putting the power structures that contain them under pressure.

Like many other community-based models for performance, teaching hip-hop in the community also equips the participants with the tools to continue to express themselves and challenge their society past the point of the initial pedagogical encounter. This is a type of "community hip-hop" which Morganics has helped to foster in Australia and which is an excellent example of community-based guerrilla performance.[559] In the examples that follow, I will further examine the guerrilla characteristics of Morganics' community hip-hop work.

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such as *MC Trey*, *Maya Jupiter* and *MC Lioness*, as well as the work of teachers like Morganics who mentors hundreds of young women performers through to recording stage, has contributed to the formation of a local scene which since the 1990s has become much more accessible. See Tony Mitchell, "Maya Jupiter Interview: Crossing Musical Borders - from R&B to Hip Hop to Salsa," *Music Forum*, Nov, 2004.
[559] Mitchell, names "teaching a [new] fifth element of hip-hop." Tony Mitchell, "Morganics: Australian Hip Hop, Theatre and Pedagogy," Music Forum, Aug, 2004, 25.

Morganics as Facilitator/Artist

Shifting Authorship, Genre and Control

Morganics utilises his diverse performing career when working in dialogue with community workshop participants of all ages. He also works with other professional hip-hop artists such as Indigenous artists MC Wire and Brothablack or Sydney-based US-born ElfTransporter, to teach elements of hip-hop, graffiti DJ-ing and sampling. He collaborates with practitioners of R 'n' B and other dance and live music forms, and visual artists, theatre artists and film-makers. He has worked in collaboration with social welfare groups, jails, and theatre companies, other community organisations and NGOs, Indigenous elders and community leaders, so his works are oral histories, entertainment, opportunities for personal development, inventive new artworks *and* media for political change. They are at once theatre, music, storytelling *and* multimedia contemporary performance at the same time, and draw different strengths from each discipline and from the input of each different artist. This is why it is extremely difficult to identify one single "author" of these multi-genre community works. I have chosen to focus on Morganics' contribution, for reasons outlined above, although his individual contribution is difficult to separate from the community collaborative process. This sort of shifting authorship and genre-bending are characteristics of contemporary guerrilla performance.

As facilitator, not only does Morganics teach technique and share his wealth of training, knowledge and experience, he also devises and bounces ideas around, learns the oral histories of the places and people he visits, provides moral support, performs with and creates music and beat-box backings for his workshop participants. [560]The experience of constant nomadic travel, during which he engages with a large number of local people, and becomes immersed in their daily lives, hopes and tragedies, also deeply affects the way his practice develops.[561] The communities he works with are both pre-established groups, sharing geography, ethnicity or similar disadvantage and new communities created by the involvement with Morganics and the creation of new work based on radical difference, pluralism and mobility. The contemporary community performance-maker works with the

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[560] For a detailed description of a Morganics hip-hop workshop, see Appendix D.
[561] In "Crouching Bboy, Hidden Dreadlocks" (Sydney 2000), Morganics discusses how the poverty and hardship of some of his participants made him re-evaluate how he debated the role of hip-hop in his workshops. Morganics, "Crouching Bboy Hidden Dreadlocks (Script)," Play Script, 2002. See Appendix D.

community participants to articulate, challenge and disrupt community narratives, understanding that theirs is just another voice in the finished "product", both vital to the artwork and at times invisible within it.

Morganics' hip-hop thus continually unsettles what it means to be an "artist" creating work with "communities". Hip-hop has in its make-up the elements of showing off, of performing to each other, challenging, jamming. Each workshop features these elements. It is a form with dialogue at its heart and in a Morganics workshop it is often difficult to distinguish teacher from student. In his performance events, he performs with, to and parallel to his (mostly young) workshop participants. He is thus simultaneously facilitator/producer, peer, co-actor/performer, collaborator and audience-member for the performance work he coordinates. Neither author nor manager, the guerrilla artist works with and is changed by the specifics of community.

The Workshop Process

> I'd often play some other tracks from other communities. So this bunch they'd, you know, rap about this, this mob raps about this. You know. You don't have to rap about either of those things, but what I'd like to hear is that: What do you want to rap about? What's happening in your life? What's going on? You know, what do you get in to? What do you like doing? I generally like to keep it reasonably positive.... but things will come up, and it's quite ... I mean really, that's where the politics are in your life.[562]
>
> Morganics, Interview with the author, 2004

Morganics' workshops in beat-boxing and rapping include a discussion of the art form and history of hip-hop and its elements, a practical demonstration of techniques, the playing of tracks developed by other young people in Morganics' workshops and shows, the breakdown and teaching of the techniques and, finally, the writing, performing and laying down of tracks. Morganics performs for the participants and "jams" with them. Participants are directly encouraged to speak in their own voices/accents, their own languages and to use local slang and dialects. They are encouraged both to create fiction and to describe their lives and things that are important to them.

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[562] Morganics, interview by the author, Stamping Ground Dance Festival Office, Bellingen Memorial Hall, Bellingen, January 11, 2004. See Appendix C.

Morganics specifically encourages participants not to imitate or copy famous American hip-hop artists, or to use American accents, but instead to articulate whatever they want to say through the medium of hip-hop and to hear it back: "My biggest agenda to push is that I have to put my foot down and say I'm not going to record that if you sound totally American—you're going to have to change it—I'm sorry I don't want you talking about "niggers" if you're a Koori".[563] This is in no way devaluing the vital place of sampling, sarcasm, parody in hip-hop, as these strategies often feature in the workshops and resulting tracks. Nor is it an attempt to elide the powerful connection some disempowered people in Australia feel with the well-documented history of resistant African-American hip-hop and the ubiquitous images of tough, cool, inner-city hip-hop artists. Morganics attributes the repetition of these images in Australian hip-hop to a combination of "racism, poverty, frustration, struggle, and then some guys trying to be tough guys, girls trying to be tough guys".[564] This focus on localisation is rather a strategy to encourage participants to start from a place that is open with the world they daily engage with. On the process of creating the track "Down River", Morganics states, "Hip-hop is all about representing where you're from and your life and story [...] . We just asked the boys what they do and they said, 'When it's hot we go down the river for a swim.' And it was like, OK, there's the beginning, let's go from there."[565]

Of course Morganics and his co-artists cannot help but have an influence on the perspective presented in the pieces, even though they encourage the poetry to come directly from the participants. The facilitator in community-based guerrilla performance walks a careful line between encouraging a positive process of self-development and allowing the participants the freedom to choose the content. In an article in *SMH*, Indigenous artist, MC Wire, who works with Morganics on many of his projects, stated that one of the aims of community hip-hop is to help participants focus on the positives in lives that contain many negative elements. He believes this is partly what attracts young people to hip-hop.[566] In the same article Morganics reminds the reviewer that helping participants avoid negatives is not always a good thing. "For some of the kids, anyway——not all of them——to talk about shitty stuff

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[563] Keri Glastonbury, "Hip Hop Accents, Hip Hop Theatre," *RealTime*, no. 54 (2003), http://www.realtimearts.net/rt54/glastonbury.html (accessed May 5, 2004).
[564] Morganics, interview. See Appendix C.
[565] Peter Munro, "The Wilcannia Mob," *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 29, 2002.
[566] Katrina Lobley, "Ghetto Blasters," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, May 28, 2004, Entertainment Arts section.

... what's the point? Just go home - there is shitty stuff at home."[567] For other participants, letting go of the perception that hip-hop music must be about imported ideas of "niggers and bitches", "gun cultures" or getting more "bling" (visible wealth) allows them to access their own pain and frustrations. The facilitators therefore have to encourage positive expression without dominating young people or denying their experience.

Morganics discusses an example of this careful workshop process in the following semi-fictional scene from his solo autobiographical work *Crouching Bboy, Hidden Dreadlocks*. This scene, based on many real incidents in Morganics' workshops, describes the tensions specific to the community-based process and the power of encouraging the participants to represent and recreate their lives in rap.

> We got the beatbox going and then the first MC got up to do his thing. He was about 16, wearing one of those plastic yellow Fubu tops and he got up and his rap went something like this
>
> "Yo! You aint nothing but a bitch's bitch bitch
> I'd bet you'd fuck a fat bitch in a twitch
> While I'm at home fucking your Mum
> Anyway you spit it you know I'm number one"
>
> Everyone in the room wast [sic] just like, whoa, and I'm left standing there, thinking damn! I'm running this workshop, what do I say to him? So I say "Thanks heaps for your energy, I'm glad you got up but to be honest I don't agree with a word you said and I would much rather if you said it in your own voice, not an American accent" So then this sort of feral uni student guy get up next and kicks his rap which goes like this
>
> "Connection, connection, connection, connection
> No disrespecting women, we are all connected
> Connection, connection, connection"
>
> So the young guy in the yellow tracksuit goes all red in the face and he says "Can I get up again?" and I say "Sure" and I think, watch out, the battle is on. He hops up and he goes [...]
>
> "I'm 16, been homeless since I was 14
> Like a bad dream, you wouldn't believe what I've seen

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[567] Ibid.

I used to live in a caravan eating cans of spam with my Mum

now I'm living in a refuge in Orange, just when you though life couldn't get any worse, it does"

(one hand clap)

That was it, the Zen clap. In that moment he switched. For some kids it can take years, but for him it happened in a moment and what he told us was so sad but it was also beautiful that he had the guts to say it and the whole room cheered him.[568]

Throughout *Crouching Bboy, Hidden Dreadlocks*, Morganics shows that he is committed to social justice and change through dialogue and self-affirmation in the collaborative workshop process described above.

Ted Neilson describes the affect that Morganics' combination of social commentary, guerrilla politics and commitment to social justice as described in *Crouching Bboy, Hidden Dreadlocks* had on the Sydney audience in 2000:

The basic premise of the show (maybe of Morganics himself?) is that hip-hop isn't simply a musical genre but something between a culture and a cultural toolkit. There's a layered poignancy here, a sense of frustration, anger and sadness (a kid from one of his workshops yelling "Morganics!" from the back seat of a police car in Redfern) laced with positive action, humour and hope ("never seen so much rayon in the bush") and if the evening sometimes veers from hip-hop theatre to hip-hop evangelism, it's also infectious and deeply real.[569]

Working with Post-structured Communities

Recent studies in popular music have emphasised the importance in music of "lines of influence and solidarity different from, but no less meaningful than those observable within geographically circumscribed communities".[570] These theorists emphasise new types of social alignments and networks of interaction that feed into art practices like hip-hop. These new "communities" can also be seen as new "cultures", "scenes" or "movements". Morganics works with these new alignments across the body of his artistic practice. I see these alignments as post-structured communities because, while they seem definable in terms of shared geography, ethnicity or disadvantage, on close analysis they are seen to be made up of multiple conflicts and differences. They are both performative and liberating. Foregrounding these "communities" can allow room for radical difference to be expressed and can

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[568] Morganics, "Crouching Bboy Hidden Dreadlocks (Script)". See Appendix D.
[569] Nielsen, "Hip Hop: The Culture and the Activist Toolkit".
[570] Will Straw, "Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change: Communities and Scenes in Popular Music," *Cultural Studies,* 5, no. 3 (1991): 368.

destabilise negative and dangerous media representation, insert new narratives in place of homogenous views of culture, and connect isolated individuals into partial, transient yet productive networks of support and development.

Morganics believes that facilitating in the way that he does allows participants to "speak and tell their stories as diverse as they are [...] through the medium of hip-hop".[571] If relationships come out of this shared artistic work, they follow from the new connections made through this artistic expression, there are no assumptions of communality or shared experience. As Morganics states, "that way you can build a real relationship in".[572] After working with Morganics, participants not only make new relationships with co-participants and facilitators, relationships which often have wide reaching effects on their future lives,[573] they can also create pieces discussing the multiple different communities that simultaneously make them who they are. They can also discuss the networks of interaction that they identify with or that they dislike being forced to be a part of. Through Morganics' work on these hip-hop tracks, community is shown to be simultaneously chosen and inherited, expressive and creative, performed and performative. In this way, the post-structured nature of community is sustained.[574]

The community stories inside Morganics' community work are very wide-ranging. They represent Morganics' commitment to difference without threat and to community as multiple and changing. I have heard and seen raps in Morganics' workshops about going to local schools, about smoking pot (marijuana), about bringing up kids in Australia as a single mother, about the ugliness of a building and the beauty of an evening sky. There are raps about dating Pamela Anderson, just as there are raps on the *All You Mob* CD about towns, high schools, inner states of mind, learning different languages, babies' voices, political tensions, cross-cultural tensions and the state of the Australian music industry. There are, importantly, contradictory raps about the same community, and raps which constantly shift between the multiple voices all-coexisting in the same performances. These voices fight stereotype by means of multiple representations from extremely divergent

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[571] Morganics, interview. See Appendix D.
[572] Ibid.
[573] Hip-hop group *South West Syndicate*, including artist *Brothablack*, for example, were mentored in 1995 by Morganics as part of the *Hip Hopera* production with UTP. *Brothablack* has gone on to have a significant hip-hop career and to teach alongside Morganics on workshop tours to remote Indigenous communities. See Maxwell, *Phat Beats, Dope Rhymes: Hip Hop Down under Comin' Upper*, 14.
[574] "Community" is often criticised in popular music studies due to its tie to obsolete geographical markers, although recent theorists have move closer to the ideas of post-structured communities discussed in this thesis. See Ibid., 146-52.

perspectives. These raps describe prejudice, social inequality and historical atrocities. They also express the intimate, personalised daily activities and hopes and dreams that exist within these communities and place oppressive everyday realities under contestation by envisioning new types of community and space.

The performance of hip-hop in all its guises is a performance of group dynamics, intimacy and contact, with the performers and their environments and with each other. The initial performance events are almost always intimate, rowdy, interactive affairs, in dialogue with the communities they shape and work in. When these performances are repeated or recorded in new settings, these community realities are always present, recreated and challenged again. Community presence may be felt in the developing subject matter and lyrics or heard in the native accents and languages. The presence of community specifics may also be traced in the particular type of background or crowd noises recorded or observed at performances, the instruments and sampled effects chosen or the types of clothing and equipment used. Post-structured community is thus created and expressed in the voices and bodies of these performers. Bringing people together in new constellations of contact and communication can be a political gesture as it can provide support for fragile, creative expressions of difference and combat homogenising and isolating social norms.

Morganics has produced an enormous body of artistic work. This is not the place to explore the myriad ways Morganics guerrilla artistry works with community and space. Instead, I aim to bring to light, in a few metonymic works, the engagement of everyday life and community as an essentially contested activity. In the following case studies I locate guerrilla politics at the point where the everyday practices of individuals, for example, walking, swimming, eating and playing music, meet the discourses of power which shape these individuals, economics, geography, social pressure, stereotype. This intersection occurs at the performance of post-structured community and in the creation and foregrounding of site/concept/place.

Mapping New Visions of Site-Specificity

> I rock my digger[575] hat ' cause my great Grandad
>
> took a bullet from a soldier in France and yes I can dance
>
> Bboy employ the tactics of gymnastics pulling backflips over these
>
> yobbo preconceptions of this Hip-hop constellation like the
>
> Southern Cross[576] to the Southern Land manifested in the hand
>
> of every MC, DJ, Bboy, Bgirl, graffiti artist that ever painted a swirl[577]
>
> to beautify the urban, rednecks we are disturbing
>
> Hip-hop connecting cultures like a turban to a German
>
> Samoan to Aboriginal our styles are original
>
> we never mimmick [sic] that's a gimmick
>
> tourists take a nibble while we eat the whole picnic
>
> get the picture, I paint it like Namatjira[578]
>
> like a sheep to a shearer, the chorus is the map do I have to make it clearer?[579]

Morganics "Fascination", from his solo album Invisible Forces

Morganics constantly travels across Australia, and negotiates the radically different specifics of each new location. He travels on planes, trains, buses, hitch hiking or in his overworked car. Indeed, he has given up renting a home, due to the amount of time he spends on the road. In a recent job, facilitating and recording hip-hop tracks for the Australian National Museum's Oral History Collection, for example, Morganics and co-artists travelled from Weipa (Queensland) to Katherine (Northern Territory), to Derby and Geraldton (Western Australia), Port Augusta (South Australia), Swan Hill (Victoria) and ended in Moree (NSW) all in a period of eight days. These are all extremely isolated areas. He worked with over 1600 participants, some of which were from the [far North] Torres Strait Islands or [far South] island state of Tasmania.[580]

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[575] Australian soldiers during WWI and WWII were called "diggers".
[576] The Southern Cross is a constellation and Australia was called "The Great Southern Land" prior to being named Australia.
[577] This could be seen as a reference to the fact that Indigenous painters often use a traditional form of ochre painting from Central Australia which utilises "dots" and "swirls" to map history, spirituality and the geography of the land into bark and rock paintings. Graffiti could also be considered an urban re-mapping process, building alternative conceptual spaces.
[578] Albert Namatjira was an Indigenous landscape painter who utilised European watercolour techniques. He is one of Australia's best known artists.
[579] Morganics, Invisible Forces, 2002 by Creative Vibes, Music CD.
[580] *Many Rhymes, One Rhythm: The Project,* The National Museum of Australia (2004), http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/community/ (accessed October 5, 2007).

This is a total round-trip distance of 11,042 kilometres. Community projects can not always afford expensive air fares, and there is a constant negotiation between Morganics and the organisations, theatre companies and festivals he works with, a negotiation between the harsh realities of distance and isolation and the economics of sustaining a career. With this sort of geographical scope and experience, coupled with his commitment to fostering Australian hip-hop over imitative US practices and the fact that hip-hop is historically linked to a politics of location, it is not surprising that the hip-hop Morganics makes and facilitates should always focus on Australian sites, conceptual spaces and places. This site-specificity is however, not bound to the individual performance locations, but rather to the remembered, imagined, conceived and experienced sites, conceptual spaces and places of the performers.

Morganics goes *to* his participants and works *within* their local environments, rather than getting them to travel to him. He facilitates in community spaces, from community or church halls and living rooms to jails and detention facilities and his hip-hop work reflects this localisation. He teaches and performs in tiny senior-citizens' halls, old cinemas or in local showground pavilions as readily as he does in nightclubs and concert venues. His work is saturated with the realities of these local spaces. The completed tracks circle around sites, imagined and conceived territories and places, even when they are performed or played back in new physical environments. They describe, evoke and challenge space in the lyrics of the pieces and in the ways these spaces are embodied. This work is therefore "site-specific" without being necessarily tied to the final performance location.

Morganics does more than view the many new sites he sees on his journeys. He has to negotiate carefully through sites, dealing with radically different economic, social and cultural spatialities. In *Crouching Bboy, Hidden Dreadlocks* he describes how this constant travel can mean he can arrive at new places, at times on foot, directly from a recently completed project, only to be thrown directly into the specific social problems of the new locations.[581] He often chooses in these situations to continue teaching or performing even if there is risk to himself. He sees this negotiation of space as part of the simple day to day realities of his job as community hip-hop practitioner.[582] His participants themselves often have to negotiate difficult and

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[581] See Scene 25, Morganics, "Crouching Bboy Hidden Dreadlocks (Script)," in Appendix D.
[582] Morganics is very clear that he resents implications that he is some sort of charity worker, he claims only that he is a professional artist and that he fulfils these obligations with a personal hope for good outcomes and the spread of peace and justice. See Morganics, interview (Appendox C) and Morganics, "Crouching Bboy Hidden Dreadlocks (Script)," (Appendix D).

dangerous spaces everyday. This sort of travel allows him to work in with participants who would never be able to travel to main cities to gain training and can also allow the workshops to involve local artists and important community members. His work is site-specific due to its focus on Australian spaces, but also because it describes and becomes part of a process of understanding and negotiating site/concept/place.

The track "Fascination" excerpted above, from one of Morganics' commercial albums, can thus be seen as much more than a hip-hop track with Australian features, it is an example of a conscious spatial negotiation, a "remapping" of Australian site/concept/place through the process of hip-hop. In his community hip-hop Morganics teaches his participants to visualise Australian spaces in the lyrics of their raps, as he does. He encourages them to discuss the ways in which their local spaces constrain them, and he helps them to articulate the complexities of the spaces around them.

Morganics' hip-hop and multimedia work is also site-specific in its ability to create room for communities to *recreate* their site/concept/place. For example, in the hip-hop performance event *River Rhythm Beatbox*, part of the Message Sticks Festival at the Sydney Opera House, directors Morganics and MC Wire went with the young people from the isolated towns of Bourke, Wilcannia and Broken Hill to their home towns and filmed new footage, showing the sites where the young people work and play, and interviewing local residents and community workers about the young people and their environments. This footage was then projected behind live hip-hop performances by the twenty-three young people. This performance featured many different hip-hop tracks, including a live version of the track "Down River" by The Wilcannia Mob. Reviewer Sarah-Jane Norman describes the event as immersed in spatial locators.

> The performers mingle casually in the space, taking turns in the limelight, while audiovisual material —of the river, of the desert, of the local chicken shop and the IGA [supermarket]—anchors us at the narrative source [...] At no point are we allowed to forget that this show, these performers, have come from somewhere, a somewhere that we are allowed to see and feel instead of just imagine. But this documentary element is necessary not only to provide context, but to remind us that what we are viewing is not a neatly packaged finished product. It's a window into a process—dynamic, honest, warts and all.[583]

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[583] Sarah-Jane Norman, "Outback Hip Hop Hybrid," *RealTime*, no. 62 (2004), http://www.realtimearts.net/rt62/norman.html (accessed May 5, 2004).

For Norman, the video component of this performance showed the connection these community rap performances had to the locations in which they were made, the spatial "context". I would argue, however, that the tracks were already deeply site-specific and that the connection to location was simply reinforced by the images shown in the video footage.[584] Norman's description of the local detail in the documentary elements of this show as part of a process emphasises the most important element of Morganics' site-specificity. In the work he facilitates, everyday locations are shown and allowed to be always in process, always being made and remade by the everyday actions of the participants. In the collaboration with video artists and most importantly in the tracks themselves, all of Morganics' hip-hop work, however high-tech the post-production features, remains tied to changing spaces. Morganics emphasises that space is always being recreated and he makes room for these young people to become part of this recreation process through community hip-hop. Overall, Morganics' site-specificity, seen in his solo works and community facilitation, simultaneously features Australian spatial markers, utilises new spatial tools, and evokes and challenges site, conceptual space and place as being open to change and contestation. What follows is a brief analysis of two pieces developed by young people working with Morganics.[585]

PART TWO

GUERRILLA ART FACILITATED BY MORGANICS

Down River

> When it's really hot we go to the river and swim
> When we go fishing we catch some bream
> When the rivers high we jump off the bridge
> When we get home, we play some didg [didgeridoo]
>
> When it's really hot we go to the river and swim

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[584] Many shows featuring Morganics' hip-hop use video projection. I believe occurs because his hip-hop is a type of aural documentary that links well with projected documentary footage. It is also perfect as the site markers in the pieces link to the images of the local spaces and because participants can often learn and make these video components for themselves, continuing the pedagogy of self expression and contestation.
[585] Morganics' complex, creative, teaching, mentoring and co-performing roles in these community workshops, rehearsals and performances is so often reduced to a simple production credit on a final CD. For his views, see Morganics, interview and Scene 7 in Morganics, "Crouching Bboy Hidden Dreadlocks (Script)," in Appendix D.

When we go fishing we catch some bream
When the rivers high we jump off the bridge
When we get home, we play some didg.

They call me Wally this is where I'm at
I wear on my head a baseball cap
Parramatta [rugby league team] is my team if you know what I mean
To be the captain, that's my dream

My name is Keith from Wilcannia Street
I walk on stilts to a beat the beat
When I go out
I shake a leg
This is my rhyme and that's what I said

Chorus

When Colroy's here, have no fear
The wild pigs better watch out for my spear
I'm with the gang and I'm almost ten
I wanna be an actor like Jackie Chan

Lendell's my name and I like to do backflips
Listen to the words that come from Wally

Jump off the bridge and I play some didg
When I catch a fish, I put it in the fridge

My name is Buddy and I can't stand still
Wilcannia to Dubbo to Broken Hill
I've been moved around
From town to town
And this is how
I get down

Excerpt from "Down River", by The Wilcannia Mob facilitated by, produced and performed with hip-hop artist, Morganics, 2001

Development

> It's not some slick radio track, it's very low-fi [...] We recorded it in a lounge room in a couple of hours one afternoon with an old microphone I picked up in an op shop and a Minidisc and a looping pedal. I suppose that's the beauty of it. People like the rawness of it.[586]

"Down River" was made as part of an outer-Sydney-based Shopfront Theatre hip-hop workshop tour. Morganics was employed by Shopfront to teach break dance, beat-boxing and MCing, and to produce performances with young people in isolated areas. The piece was made in the tiny, remote rural town of Wilcannia, almost 1000 km northwest of Sydney and 195km east of Broken Hill. Its population is 750, and its climate is "hot, slow and dry"[587]. The town is on Bakandji (local Indigenous tribal) land and the river in question is the Darling River. This hip-hop track is both a visualisation and an evocation of the home of the performers.

The piece has had many airings, recordings and performances. Keith Dutton and Wally Ebsworth, who were both 13 in 2001, Buddy Blair, who was 12, and Colroy Johnson and Lendell King, who were both 10, performed the original track. These are the initial Indigenous members of The Wilcannia Mob hip-hop group, formed during a Morganics workshop on this Shopfront tour.[588] Morganics facilitated the creation and initial performance of "Down River". He then recorded this track by The Wilcannia Mob onto a home-made compilation CD, in order to allow the participants to hear the work that they had made. This CD also featured twenty-one other tracks from Morganics' various community workshops across Australia. Tracks from this CD, including "Down River", were then picked up by radio stations and the CD was eventually released commercially under the title *All You Mob*. Morganics has since worked with The Wilcannia Mob, as facilitator and produce in other performances of their work including the aforementioned River Rhythm Beatbox.

New Permeations

> It's about time Indigenous culture was given the freedom to hybridise, and River Rhythm Beatbox [including the performance of "Down River" by the Wilcannia Mob] pulls it off beautifully. Traditional culture permeates the entire performance. It's present in the instrumentation (the didj has a sound almost tailored to hip-hop), the unique

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[586] Munro, "The Wilcannia Mob".

[587] Ibid.

[588] King and Ebsworth have both moved away from Wilcannia, and did not appear at all the performances.

arrangement of beats, and the rhymes themselves. But at no point does this feel forced, like the performers are trying to actively 'Indigenise' hip-hop. They are far too honest for that. Their roots are just there, constantly present as an ancient influence on a contemporary practice. It seems that it is not just hip-hop that's benefiting Indigenous kids; Indigenous kids could teach hip-hop a few new tricks as well.[589]

Sarah-Jane Norman, "Outback Hip Hop Hybrid," 2004.

The Wilcannia Mob group has gone on to considerable fame in Australia, including a debut performance at Sydney's youth music festival *Homebake*, to audiences of over 20,000 in December 2002, winning Best Single at "The Deadlies", the nation's most prestigious Aboriginal sport and culture awards. For some, like Norman, they have come to represent a new generation of cutting edge, specifically "Indigenous" hip-hop. Recently they have been involved in repeat performances, some of which, like "Rhythm River Beatbox" were also directed by Morganics, and in documentaries and features on ABC TV, the national TV and Radio broadcaster, and SBS, the multicultural TV broadcaster, in 2003-2005, as well as considerable airplay of this track on public and commercial radio and TV. The CD on which their work appeared has, however, remained signed with the non-commercial ABC Music, and any funds from commercial airplay and CD sales go into a trust fund managed jointly by Shopfront Theatre and the families of the participants. The track has remained very popular on community and commercial radio in the years following its release and was also featured on the Triple-J radio station's "Top 100 CD, Volume 10" in 2002-03 in a compilation chosen by popular vote.

This rapid career development arising from working with Morganics has deeply affected these young people, from their life experience, career prospects and economic possibilities, through to the way they identify themselves to their community and Australia.[590] The effects of this guerrilla activity may not be properly understood for many years. I make no attempt to map ethnographically the effects of the performances on the lives of the individual participants, nor to analyse the effect of the work on specific Australian social or political institutions. Instead, I am concerned with the way in which performance events in their multiple forms——both

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[589] Norman, "Outback Hip Hop Hybrid".
[590] See Munro, "The Wilcannia Mob,", Peter Munro, "Mob Rules," *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 30, 2002, Metropolitan section, Peter Munro, "Wanna Be a Rock Star? No Experience Required," *The Age*, November 30, 2002, News section and Peter Munro, "No Drip Drop for This Hip-Hop Mob," *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 30, 2002, Entertainment Music section.

as initial creations through to the public displays and repetitions—play out ideas of community and everyday site/concept/place which are contemporary, fragmented and challenging.

The Performance of "Down River"

In the many performances of "Down River" and on the recorded track a local Wilcannia accent is strong, as is the specific evocation of remembered site and place, the Darling River where the boys play. The young boys typically perform in baggy rayon street wear peppered with American logos and with beanies pulled low on their heads. They are accompanied by a didgeridoo player, initially local Wilcannia player Watu and later other didgeridoo artists such as well-known Gamilaroi artist, Stingray. They are also accompanied by live beatboxing by Morganics, or by pre-recorded samples of beatboxing and at times the show includes other artists breakdancing as they rap. During *River, Rhythm Beatbox*, there were also video projected behind the performance, showing time-delayed photography of the Darling River. They are usually supported by a team of artists and facilitators who encourage and support them and are quickly present onstage if anything goes wrong.[591] The tune is catchy and audience responses have been uniformly loud and enthusiastic, even at performances years after the initial hype has died down. Each performance is obviously very different as the audience and the boys themselves change over time. It is important in terms of examining the guerrilla politics of these pieces, however, to trace the wider cultural "performance" of this track, analysing the effects the process of recording and replaying the track has had on the participants, their communities and the wider public.

 The physical "realities" of the Wilcannia "site", such as the bridge and the river, interact in the lyrics of this piece with the local structures of feeling, history, culture and embodiment which make up the "place"; practices such as moving house, playing didgeridoo or going out and "shaking a leg", and histories of the river and its deep cultural connections to the spirituality of the Bakandji people.[592] Kerry King, Lendell's mother, described the experience of the recording and many performances as

> another big burst of pride and honour and self-esteem…The song gives a positive image back to Wilcannia [...] The simple things they

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[591] At the 2000 performance at *Homebake* a microphone stopped working and three members of the crew leapt to help, before the *Homebake* technical support were aware of the problem.
[592] "Rains Bring Life Back to the Darling River," *The 7:30 Report*, ABC TV (Australia: February 1, 2005).

> sing about indicate our lifestyle; how we can live in a remote area in a
> harmonistic way. There are not a lot of material things out there, but
> it's about using what's there in the river and being part of our life.[593]

Thanks to Morganics, these boys therefore learnt to engage with their own visions of Wilcannia, but also with the Wilcannia of their families and peers.

"Down River", is also a "community" narrative previously unheard in mainstream Australia, a fresh story of everyday life, an insertion into a national understanding of what it might be like to be a particular Australian young person. Five different young people show five different visions of community. In one there is joy in dreaming of a career in Jackie Chan style movies and rugby league, in another there is laughter in the memories of walking on stilts or going dancing, and in yet another there is sorrow in the experience of rootless moving from uncertain situation to uncertain situation. Morganics, by sharing his experience and technique and by opening spaces for new voices, has enabled these young people to recognise, challenge and celebrate a geographical community, 'Wilcannia' and 'Bakandji 'and a Diaspora 'Aboriginal young people'. Through "authentic" involvement with globalised hip-hop, they have also engaged with an imagined community 'the hip-hop community' and a resistant link to African-American culture and 'the global political hip-hop artist'. All of these communities simultaneously feed and disrupt the ways in which these boys articulate their home and dreams.

The political climate in Australia at the time was producing radical politicians like Pauline Hansen with her anti-immigration and anti-Aboriginal rights platform, and a right-wing Coalition national government, destabilising Australian multiculturalism through public displays of refugee mistreatment and heavily advertised anti-terrorism policies. This piece played repeatedly on national, government-sponsored youth-radio station, Triple-J and then given so much other national commercial media attention, ensured that a homogenous media portrait of Australian youth was not possible. Additionally, the reduction of Aboriginal and non-white people to simplistic stereotypes was made much more difficult. The guerrilla practice of Morganics and these Wilcannia boys together thus challenged the power relations of representation which shape all their lives.

Despite the strong *evocation* of site, place and personality in this piece, there is, of course, also the *creation* of utopian "conceptual", imagined space. In 2001, for

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[593] Munro, "The Wilcannia Mob".

instance, The Darling River, was in severe drought and at times completely dry.[594] There was not necessarily any "river" in Wilcannia when the majority of the performances of this track occurred. Memory and desire (of the freedom of swimming and fishing in this river), imagination and creativity (of dreams of football captaincy or being a movie star) and lived practice (playing, spearing wild pigs, doing back flips, swimming, travelling) all combine together. The boys' imagined spaces, where "anything is possible", collides with the grimmer conceived spaces of the grids of regional funding and government resource allocation. There is no mention in this piece of other social "realities" of this 'idyllic' country lifestyle in Wilcannia such as the low life expectancy, isolation, high youth suicide rates, lack of social, educational and medical resources, boredom and extreme poverty.[595] Morganics' hip-hop is not just a naïve practice of attempted "identity representation". This is a deliberately creative space of idealism and humour. The community and site/concept/place here are being simultaneously lived and dreamt into being. Here the site-specificity encouraged by all of Morganics' practice resurfaces, as his community hip-hop encourages the participants to name these physical, conceived and lived places into existence, and to reconnect the dreams of the future to the activities of daily life

Perhaps, as these pieces are played and replayed in Wilcannia and throughout Australia, the obvious contradictions and omissions inside the piece, the contradictory economic/spatial realities and desires inside these performances can be further understood and challenged, even as the post-structured communities and the sites, conceptual spaces and places of these boys lives are rapped into being.

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[594] For a description of the crippling drought in Wilcannia during this time see the report, "Rains Bring Life Back to the Darling River."
[595] The life expectancy of a male in Wilcannia is just thirty-three. See Australian Federal Government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commissioner, 2005 Social Justice Report*, by Tom Calma (Canberra, 2005.) Available from http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/sjreport05/.

The Block

Stand your ground, black people from the Block

We are not moving on so rack off cops[596]

With the Redfern housing company[597]

Gonna manifest our own destiny

Junkies from The Block

If you've had a bad shot

You get your final bed

Triple 0, call the Ambos[598]

He's not dead

Junkies better throw their needles away

Or they'll never see the light of another day

Just walk away, just walk away

Doing bag snatching, coppas coming this way

Running out of puff trying to get rid of the hot stuff

Dealers, junkies, gamblers all bringing the coppas around

Making a bad rap for our part of town

We've had about enough

They better move on

We're comin at ya rough from the microphone

This is where we live, what we call home [...]

Standing in the street in the park in the dark

No shoes on with needles around

The playground

Pemulwuy Park[599] is the place to play

Its not just young 'uns I'm here to say

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[596] The lyrics were "Piss Off" in the original, but were edited for school performances.
[597] The (Redfern) Aboriginal Housing Company mentioned in the song is a private non-profit charity and the first affordable housing provider for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia. Incorporated in 1973, the Company's formation was in direct response to the widespread discrimination Aborigines experienced, at the time, in the private rental market. Working off an initial grant, the Company bought and still manages properties in Redfern for the exclusive use by Indigenous families The Company also helped kick start grassroots Indigenous civil rights in conjunction with other organizations like the Aboriginal Medical and Legal Services.
[598] Dial 000 for an Australian emergency phone call.
[599] Pemulwuy was an Aboriginal military leader in the resistance against colonial invasion. The local park is named after him.

People running around with needles in their arm

Falling on the ground doing themselves harm

The government took my people away and now I'm never ever going to see them again[600]

It's a pain when I'm waiting in the rain

A guy asks for a pie

Not again

I feel sorry for the poor buggar

But no one else seems to bother

He must be a gubba, a gubbariginal[601]

And here comes the rain, just another day

Excerpt from The Block, by Jesse Close and the Clevo St Boys (Year 8 Cleveland St High School, Sydney) facilitated by, produced and performed with hip-hop artist, Morganics, 2001.[602]

Development

This second example The Block has a very different history, even though it was made in the same year as "Down River" and features on the same non-commercial, CD *All You Mob*. It was initially made with Morganics as part of a multimedia performance event *Stand Your Ground*, directed by Caitlin Newton-Broad and performed by students from a variety of inner city high schools at the PACT theatre in Erskineville, Sydney, in 2001. The track was later released on the compilation CD. *Stand Your Ground* was a performance of a series of relatively independent raps, breaks, dances, beat-boxes, and stories from residents of the Redfern area, which were the results of eight weeks of dance, video and hip-hop workshops. These separate pieces often had a multimedia component, such as video projection, music or soundscape and were all linked by the speeches and songs of a central "storyteller", didgeridoo player and MC, Billie Mac. It was the result of long community collaboration between PACT Theatre, local organizations and local high schools.[603]

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[600] This refers to the policy of forcibly removing Aboriginal children from their parents and placing them in institutions, forced domestic service and government 'care', which continued in Australia until around 1970, resulting in what has become known as the "Stolen Generations". See Australian Federal Government, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, edited by Michael Lavarch (1997.) Available from http://www.austlii.edu.au/ (accessed March 20, 2001).
[601] Aboriginal colloquial term for a "white person", common in South-Eastern Australia.
[602] Created by Jesse Close, Brian Barnes, Vino Buchannan -West, Beau Streeting, Richie Pickson, Ray Buchannan-West, Mark Hickey and Elijah Phillips, with assistance from local community leaders 'Uncle Rob' and 'Billie Mac and facilitated and mixed by, and performed with, hip-hop artist, Morganics, 2001.
[603] See Michael McLaughlin, "Stand Your Ground," *Artwork Magazine*, no. 51 (2001).

The performance of The Block at "Stand Your Ground" featured Jesse Close and the Clevo St Boys and Morganics rapping and breaking to the pre-recorded track, in front of video screens and to a packed house of friends, families and general public. Two accompanying video clips to "The Block" were made, showing the boys on the streets, in front of community murals and at the famous Elouera-Tony Mundine gym in Redfern.[604] These were projected behind the performance of the piece. The piece was composed by the high-school students in consultation with Morganics and with their families and friends, including an uncle who is an active member of the community property organisation, the Redfern Housing Company mentioned in the lyrics. Like "Down River", "The Block" was about everyday lives and the performance of community. The performance and the recording are thus complex evocations of local politics, spatial identity and a remapping of the site/concept/place where the performers live.

Background

The piece remaps an area popularly referred to as 'The Block', a residential area in West Redfern bound by Eveleigh Street, Vine Street, Louis Street and Caroline Street. Redfern, situated near to the prime real estate central business district of inner Sydney.[605] The suburb of Redfern was the first successful Aboriginal urban land-rights claim in Australian history and this particular part of Redfern has a long and troubled history. This prime inner-city real estate would be worth tens of millions of dollars to potential property developers who are prevented from moving in by the land rights claims and a resistant community. This track is obviously site-specific in its reference to, and evocation of, the contested local neighbourhood of the participants.

Most of the houses on 'The Block' are nearly one hundred years old and according to some local sources are "well past their use-by date".[606] Many, if not all the houses, "are derelict or close to derelict and are far from suitable for human habitation"[607]and there are continual, controversial plans for redevelopment and the construction of new homes for the Aboriginal residents, as well as an equally controversial program

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[604] Anthony Mundine is an Indigenous former rugby league player and internationally famous boxing champion. The gym is a popular local hang-out.
[605] All references to the history, culture and problems on '*Down River* are sourced from the Aboriginal Housing Company Website. *The Aboriginal Housing Company Homepage* (2004), http://www.ahc.org.au/ (accessed May 1, 2004)
[606] Ibid.
[607] Ibid.

of relocation, moving Aboriginal families away from Redfern. The area has "a notorious drug trade, a high record of crime and arrests and constant tension between police and residents".[608] This is a space where the interactive sites and conceptual territories constantly collide and where the daily structures of feeling that make up "place" for the local residents are often hidden beneath widespread media, police and federal government-authored narratives of entrenched, insoluble racial unrest. Through Morganics' facilitation in this hip-hop track, the local residents' everyday experiences of place are brought to light.

Like many of the pieces developed by Morganics, "The Block" unsettles the idea that community hip-hop could somehow be just a vehicle for the transparent reproduction of everyday life, as it is clearly both a description of everyday activities of walking, playing, catching trains and also an articulation of desires, to be left alone by the police, for the drug trade in Redfern to move on, for self-actualised destiny manifested through involvement with strong community organizations, for resistant, celebratory identities as global hip-hop artists. For these teenagers this rap is thus patently fiction and a dream for the future as well as a description of a harsh reality. It is embedded in the places and communities of Redfern, even as it challenges them. It is both a conceived Redfern, spatially controlled by police discipline, and a Redfern lived and embodied by these teenage boys every day, just as it is both a celebration of difference and a strategy for producing it. This multi-authored guerrilla work is thus community-based, site-specific and involved in the contestation of relations of power, while remaining embedded in the daily lives of the authors and performers.

In Performance

Morganics was very prominent at the *Stand Your Ground* performance event, at PACT Youth Theatre. He facilitated with co-writing and producing the initial recording, working in production on the night (clearing stages, setting up equipment), in solo drumming and beat-boxing and in co-performance and moral support, breaking and rapping onstage with the boys during the performance of "The Block*"*, even at times in friendly competition with them. Once again the line between artist and community was blurred, despite the fact that Morganics, as a middle-class, white professional, does not presume to understand or be part of the reality of these boys.

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[608] Ibid.

Linked to the type of resistant, often oppositional hip-hop of African-American rap performers, with echoes for example of NWA's classic "Fuck the Police", at times equally angry, anti-authority and simplistic, this work was specific, contemporary and controversial in performance. When performed by 15-16 year old Redfern residents, in a non-commercial performance venue and medium, it unsettled "popular" ideas of the area as simply apathetically mired in crime, or teenage rap music as inherently tied to commercial profit. Through engagement with Morganics, an artwork was created which foregrounds a district many non-Aboriginal-Australians would prefer to ignore, yet in performance it also produces laughs, as Jesse and his friends impersonate mean 'bad boy' poses with smiles, improvise around the lyrics and make black-humoured jokes about white Australian beggars as honorary Aboriginals, calling them 'gubbaroginals'. The work is not only resistant and angry, but also humorous, grounded in local language and experience.

The whole atmosphere of the venue reflected a casual sense of shared space which foregrounded the specificities of community. The performers responded to audience support, getting ahead of the recording at times as they showed their excitement, shouting louder at parts like "Rack off cops" which got cheers from the audience, playing up the jokes in the lyrics and encouraging the crowd response with arm gestures and eye contact. Jesse Close and the Clevo St Boys sang along to their pre-recorded words played over the sound system, rediscovering them, re-emphasising them, writing them afresh. The teenagers performed with the other adults who helped compose the piece. Small children ran across the stage and danced with the boys, and were picked up and held by the performers as they rapped. It was obvious in this performance how exciting and important the playing of this track was to a wider community of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal parents, friends and peers. I frequently work with teenagers, and delightedly recognized the particular tone in the audience, a kind of high-pitched cheering and screaming, that has to do with the excitement of seeing "people you know" performing for the first time. Performance-maker and academic Clare Grant defines this type of community expression as constituting a vital acknowledgement of the many communities which make up this area. For her a "one-off like *Stand Your Ground*, where everyone seems to know everyone, and where pride can be displayed without antagonism, talent given a go or the community have fun, is more necessary than just worth doing". For her the embodied community connections occurring inside this space as particularly powerful: "It's [sic] volatility, the calls that pass between stage and audience, the raucous shocks and pleasures of recognition and sharing constitute

something more palpable than a fiction on stage."[609] The communities which form this work, the high schools, families, neighbourhoods, noisy supporters, bleed through into this articulation of identity and post-structured community. This performance of this community in "The Block" is thus a live palimpsest, a text written and rewritten over so many times that it's impossible to see where the artwork begins and the community ends.

Like Morganics, "The Block" often evades attempts to categorise it. Perhaps due to the smaller population, less mass-scale commercialisation and relatively new 'scene' of Australian hip-hop, this work does not run the risk of merging into a mass-produced rap music genre, but remains a refreshing new voice in young people's music, a shocking insertion into stereotypes of apathetic, drugged-out young people, somehow unaware of their own situation. Instead it showcases teenagers involved in analysing and resisting complex social situations as part of a changing community.

Despite also being recorded on the *All You Mob* CD, this song, has had very little media attention or radio airplay. Perhaps it is not surprising that the cute voices of the country kids talking about their lives in "Down River" is given considerable media attention, while the didactic, aggressive description of teenage inner-city living in " The Block" has received virtually none. Josh Edge from Perth street press *Xpress* discusses this contradiction up in a conversation with Morganics, in the wake of the massive media attention given to "Down River".

> These days, Morganics is careful not to place too much emphasis on the track [Down River], pointing out the varied contributions of other artists on the album. "Yeah, I can see that it's important not to romanticise the notion of Aboriginal culture only existing in the Territory. Because some of my best mates, like Wire MC and Brother Black, they have a uniquely Aboriginal perspective on (urban) life as well. Y'know, they might not have any of the Aboriginal language, they may not know any dances; but that doesn't mean that they don't have something unique. As good as the Wilcannia Mob tracks were, there was another track on that same album called " The Block", which was about bag snatching, junkies, cops and all that kind of stuff; but Triple J [radio station] didn't jump all over that one.[610]

I would agree with Morganics' reservations. It is a dangerous precedent when one sort of community narrative, incorrectly viewed as cute and therefore "politically

[609] Clare Grant and Keith Gallasch, "Innercity and Proud " *RealTime*, no. 46 (2002), http://www.realtimearts.net/rt46/grant.html (accessed October 4, 2003).
[610] Josh Edge, "Morganics: Follow the Leader," *Xpress Magazine (Street Press, Perth)*, no. 887 (2004), http://www.xpressmag.com.au/music/music_feature/886music.htm (accessed March 12, 2004).

neutral", is given preference over another which is viewed as "too controversial". This problem is compounded when, through massive public exposure, the former acquires the potential for stereotyping an entire multicultural nation. Had the radio and television stations and newspapers engaged with these two raps, both recorded on the same CD, as part of the same project and viewed them as a celebration of the difference without threat which sits at the core of post-structured community performance, they might have reached a different opinion. Perhaps they would have seen that both tracks are innovative, catchy hip-hop tracks about Aboriginal Australians, and both are political performances of site/space/place and of community. These political hip-hop pieces work to challenge the realities of daily life and each of them needs equally to be heard.

This issue highlights a particular problem with the politics of all community-based performance. When taken out of context, these works have the potential to work against the very sense of difference and multiplicity to which they aspire. This is perhaps why UTP's *TrackWork* was so successful at representing difference, even though it did not allow for the same depth of detail and sustained relationship that Morganics' work contains. *TrackWork* foregrounded the partiality and contradiction inherent in the idea of post-structured community *inside* the one artwork. Morganics' work needs to be understood in relation to the communities it challenges and serves *and* with the many different community narratives and other community hip-hop pieces that it stands alongside.[611] Both contemporary works, however, are just one step in a process of social change. In order for this change to continue, dialogue must continue past the initial performance project. The final section of this chapter will discuss how, in the case of *"The* Block*"*, continued social dialogue around issues of police presence and drug use in Redfern "failed", with devastating results.

Haunted Voices

As discussed in Chapter Three, Linnell Secomb, in her paper "Haunted Communities", suggests that the actively remembered 'spectres' of people no longer physically present can still 'haunt' society, forming 'haunted communities' in which the re-remembered bodies/voices of the past interact with the physical present, their presence constantly demanding response. This is especially true, Secomb asserts,

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[611] Morganics has addressed this problem by producing tracks that represent the diversity of Australian and Indigenous culture. An excellent example is a new remix of the "Down River" track with best-selling artists MIA and Diplo, which mixes in a variety of perspectives with the original Down River narrative. MIA, "Mango Pickle Down River", performed by The Wilcannia Mob, Kala, 2007 by XL Recordings; Interscope Records.

where massive injustices of the past form a lineage that can never ethically be "laid to rest"[612], as is the case with Indigenous Australian history. The spaces of community hip-hop are similarly haunted.

The site/concept/place where this 'haunting' occurs is not a blank canvas. In this 'performing palimpsest', the traces/writing we identify are living and re-remembered complex bodies, interacting with each other in intimate social networks. Histories, identities, memories, injustices, the desires of past and present people, voices and 'hauntings' all begin to have equal weight and become almost impossible to separate. This is a palimpsest of 'liveness', of bodies and ghostlike memories invigorated through bodies. Thus, everyday spaces are never empty, and under this analysis, community is ethically and politically both a space for haunted voices to be heard and a continual call for action to be taken in order to put to right the injustices of the past. It is in community performance that these voices can be heard.

 I heard the track *"The* Block*"* in 2001, just after it was recorded on the original home produced *All You Mob* CD, and was blown away by its aggressive political "everydayness". But watching this performance again on video in 2007, I have been haunted by my own spectres. I cannot watch videos of this performance, for all its resistant celebratory joy, without thinking of another performance that happened years later in Redfern, one I know hardly anything about, bar the images in my head from sensationalist commercial media.[613] The images I am haunted by are the bricks, glass bottles and flaming bottles filled with petrol, thrown by indistinct shapes in the light of fires, and the wall of 250 riot-shields advancing down Eveleigh St. in Redfern on the evening of Sunday, February 15, 2005, the so called "Redfern riots".[614]I am haunted by the spectres of those one hundred or so mostly young bodies engaged in violent, destructive resistance to police presence following the death of the teenage local boy TJ Hickey (a relative of one of the performers in " The Block"), who died the day before in a controversial police chase.[615]

This "performance" only increases the very large gulfs between my life (and this research project) and the lives of the performers involved in these two examples, a gulf that these performances aimed at helping to bridge. I am a relatively privileged

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[612] Secomb, "Haunted Community," 138.

[613] "Redfern Riots: A Seven News Report," *Seven News*, Seven Network (Australia: February 15, 2004).

[614] These were not the first public conflicts over police brutality, indeed some of the performers in "Stand Your Ground" spoke in the show about earlier "riots" which had occurred in Waterloo in 2001.

[615] For selected community responses to the tragedy, see Susanne Martain, "The Block Community Speakout," *isis creations,* (2002). http://www.isis.aust.com/theblock/ (accessed November 5, 2002).

white author, living on the stolen land of a people whose history is steeped in violence and oppression and whose continued social injustice implicates me, along with every other Australian citizen. My research project exposes the haunted nature of guerrilla performance starkly, as it emphasises the very real social problems which are thrust into the limelight when community and space are challenged this way. I cannot help but think that the notion of allowing subjugated voices to articulate their communities and their engagement with the space of everyday life is a positive step, but I have to wonder what happens when these subjugated voices of daily life, brought to light by the work of guerrilla artists like Morganics, speak loudly and clearly, but are not listened to. Surely, a sustained social response by Australian society is needed in order to continue this powerful community political action? What happens, one has to ask, when the haunted voices of contemporary guerrilla performance, so vibrantly articulated, in the everyday spaces of our lives, continues to meet no community of response?

The case of the "Redfern riots" highlights a final feature of contemporary guerrilla performance that can be seen in the work of Morganics and other community-based guerrilla practitioners. The performance of post-structured community in these works is shown to include the ethical imperative to recognize more than just the voices of individual members. Post-structured community is shown to not simply a network of *existing* intimate interactions, but also a palimpsest, haunted by *othered* community voices which, as Gayatri Spivak famously reminded us, cannot always "speak".[616] Guerrilla artists recognize these performing palimpsests as vital sources of information, context and social networking as well as locations of new or hidden communities and new site/concept/place. These voices "haunt" their collaborative and subversive work.

At times however, this engagement with haunted communities can be a process that is difficult and destructive. In the following case study on Peter Sellars community-based work in Australia, the haunted palimpsest of the communities of Adelaide conflicted with current economics and political tensions, and with Sellars's own aims, creating a festival that will be remembered as much for the anger, pain and struggle it caused, as for the powerful constructive *and* destructive cultural change that is its legacy.

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[616] Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," 27.

Conclusions

By means of active engagement with a new form of pedagogical "community hip hop" which shifts practices of authorship, genre and control and which utilises guerrilla strategies of collaboration, hybridisation and "making do", Morganics, evokes haunted, post-structured communities and, as a result, new sites, conceptual spaces and sensations of places are exposed, challenged and nourished. Unfortunately, in the case of "The Block", this process alone could not prevent the loss of a young life, nor the public display of pain and anger that followed. Morganics does, however, continue to pursue his goals of bringing hip-hop to marginalised people in the pursuit of hope, reconciliation and social justice and his work is an excellent example of twenty-first century site-specific, community-based guerrilla performance in Australia.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Experimental Politics:

Peter Sellars and the 2002 Adelaide Festival of the Arts

> What are the alternatives? Can we experiment? What are human beings like under the following conditions? We need to know, because there's a whole lot about what human beings are like that we truly don't know.[617]

Peter Sellars- ABC Television (1999)

This chapter examines the site-specific, community-based guerrilla work of US theatre director Peter Sellars and focuses specifically on his curation of the Adelaide Festival of the Arts in 2002.This case study examines what happens when site-specific, community-based guerrilla practice enter into conversation with entrenched arts institutions and related, embedded social and institutional injustice. It then explores the processes and problems that surround these interactions. This chapter thus expands on the definitions of site, community and guerrilla politics as laid out in Chapters One to Four of this thesis. I argue that Sellars is a twenty-first century guerrilla artist whose festival work, although extremely problematic and controversial, engages with a unique experimental sense of politics based on making room for post-structured communities to recreate site/concept/place, without predicting what the "results" of this experiment might be. This case study shows that this sort of experimental guerrilla work is both vitally important and ethically risky.

Part One examines Sellars's reputation, background and politics as an artist, public speaker and social commentator and also the artistic director of a series of international arts festivals I argue that Sellars is a contemporary guerrilla artist because he works in a radical fashion from inside established institutions, whilst using his commercial and artistic reputation as a lever to influence governments, corporations and the media in the pursuit of social justice.. I then consider the specific guerrilla techniques Sellars developed during his "successful" tenure as

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[617] "Cultural Activism in the New Century," *Flinders University Investigator Lecture* ABC Television (Australia: August 19, 1999).

artistic director of the LA Festival of Arts from 1987 to 1993. These include camouflage and manipulation, provocation of public debate and the localisation and decentralisation of management models and artistic programming Part Two examines what happened in 2002, when Sellars brought his guerrilla-festival model to Australia and had difficulty applying the same strategies of localisation, decentralisation and provocation of public debate to the development of the 2002 Adelaide Festival. The chapter investigates the clash between Sellars's LA model and the Adelaide Festival as traditionally conceived in order to analyse the problems that disrupted the festival and led to Sellars resignation in November, 2001

Part Three documents the final program for the 2002 Adelaide Festival which was completed in Sellars's absence. I consider the festival as a whole, rather then providing a performance analysis of individual events, as I believe the unfinished festival program can be usefully explored as a conceptual artwork in itself. This artwork was facilitated by Sellars working in conjunction with the post-structured communities of South Australia and the wider nation. I describe the many accidents, negotiations, compromises and absences which marked the Festival, many of which proved distressing and painful to community participants, although they exposed and challenged the social problems, elitist arts structures and inaccessible and oppressive spaces of Adelaide. This section also records my own experience and memory, walking through the many site-specific community-based ceremonies, performances, exhibitions and workshops that made up the Festival in March 2002. In an addendum, I examine the proposed closing event and conclude that a linear way of measuring aims and results may not always be useful in measuring the success of guerrilla projects.

Overall, I argue that the experimental nature of the Adelaide Festival project caused anger and unhappiness, but also gave post-structured communities the chance to work without predefined goals to recreate and challenge the ways Adelaide space is built, used, thought of and remembered. The chapter illustrates Sellars's use of guerrilla techniques to create a site-specific, community-based, re-democratised public art festival in place of import-only festivals driven by economic and cultural capital. Sellars's festivals are shown to be conceptual guerrilla performance events, aimed at creating social debate and supporting the development of artistic solutions to social problems.

I conclude that Sellars's fascinating and problematic work highlights that, while it is essential to make the process of a community-based work both relevant and

accountable to participants and open to change, debate and critique, it is also vitally important for artists to engage in performance experiments which take big risks so long as these experiments are collaborative and aimed at both increasing equality and preserving difference.

PART ONE

PETER SELLARS AND HIS "SUCCESSFUL" LA FESTIVAL MODEL

The Reputation

Peter Sellars is usually described as a controversial *Wunderkind* of American and European theatre and opera, who has made his reputation by the use of shock tactics and by mounting highly publicised attacks on twenty-first century US society.[618] He has also been publicly blamed for the economic failures of many of the artistic organisations he has led, as well as for the destabilisation of other existing arts structures, such as the LA Festival and the Adelaide Festival. This has resulted in further heated media debate around his qualifications as a manager and as an artist.[619]

Others, however, reject any image of Sellars as simply a "shock-jock", bent on controversy and see him as one of the great modern theatre directors, unafraid to combine a rigorous classical education with deconstructivist contemporary performance techniques and an informed commentary on popular culture and politics.[620] Sellars's work, for example, is significant enough to be included in multiple compilations discussing "great" contemporary directors in rehearsal.[621] In Europe, Sellars is well respected and repeatedly invited back to direct, plays and opera

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[618] Sellars' other well-known theatre productions with major companies include a didactic production of Aeschylus', "The Persians" (1993), in Salzburg and NY, which commented on the US- Iraqi conflicts. He also directed a contentious cross-cast version of "The Merchant of Venice" (1993) in Chicago, commenting on the L.A. riots and racial segregation and violence, and a production of Euripides little known "Children of Herakles" (2003) in, Cambridge, Massachusetts, which commented on US refugee policy and included refugee children in the cast.
[619] Angus Crook, "The Peter Principle in America," *City Messenger*, November 7, 2001.
[620] Maria M. Delgado and Paul Heritage, eds, *In Contact with the Gods?: Directors Talk Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press; NY: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 223.
[621] See Susan Letzler Cole, *Directors in Rehearsal: A Hidden World* (NY: Routledge, 1992) and Josette Féral, *Mise en scène et jeu delL'acteur: Entretiens* (Montréal: Éditions Jeu, 1997).

festivals.[622] The only full length monograph on his work praise Sellars for what editor Frèdèric Maurin calls his "cleverness, boldness, humor, and technological wizardry", as well as for being a " complex and engaged artist who believes in the power of theatrical art to effect change".[623]

These images of Sellars – as a "maverick theatre director" with a "talent for controversy"[624] and radical political commentator, and as a "great contemporary artist"—are both connected, and vital to understanding his guerrilla festival projects in LA and in Adelaide. This reputation as both controversial and eminently experienced secures him funding and support for his projects across the world and this reputation influenced the management of both the LA and Adelaide Festivals to engage him. Without his *Wunderkind* status and his invaluable media profile, Sellars might never have been given the resources he needs to continue campaigning for social justice through experimental and innovative arts. Like Australian artists Morganics and John Baylis, Sellars uses this profile as a respected and internationally known professional artist to access local participants, form new artistic alliances and create multi-disciplinary guerrilla art projects that blur the line between mainstream institutional art and community-based arts.

Background

Like the other guerrilla artists discussed in this thesis, Sellars has a wide range of professional experience which accounts for the multidisciplinary nature of his work. Sellars (now 49) began working in avant-garde puppet theatre as an adolescent, before studying theatre at Harvard. He directed several radical, well-received student productions, and then leapfrogged shot to stardom by winning the MacArthur Foundation "genius" award in 1983. He assumed leadership of mainstream theatre companies such as the Boston Shakespeare Company and the American National Theatre at the Kennedy Centre by the age of 26, and then gained critical attention for directing a series of controversial multimedia opera productions in the late 1980s and '90s, some of which were televised in the US and Europe.[625] He has collaborated with

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[622] See *35th International Theatre Festival* (2003), http://www.labiennale.org/it/ and *New Crowned Hope - a Festival by Peter Sellars (Vienna) Homepage* (2006), http://www.newcrownedhope.org/ (accessed January 5, 2006).
[623] Frederic Maurin, ed., *Peter Sellars*, vol. 22, *Les Voies De La Creation Theatrale* (Paris: CNRS editions, 2003), 326 quoted in Jane Baldwin, "Peter Sellars (Review)," *Theatre Journal* 56, no. 2 (2004): 326.
[624] Peter Culshaw, "It's a Sellars Market for a Rebel with a Cause," *Sydney Morning Herald*, June 11, 2003.
[625] *Don Giovanni*, directed by Peter Sellars (1990; Austria: Decca), *Le Nozze Di Figaro*, directed by Peter Sellars (1990; USA; Austria: Decca), *Theodora*, directed by Peter Sellars (1996; United Kingdom:

artists such as composer John Adams[626] and video artist Bill Viola.[627] He also has a prodigious natural talent for passionate, crowd-pleasing public speeches, which has resulted invitations for public-speaking tours across the US, Europe and Australasia.[628] Sellars has guest lectured courses at a variety of universities worldwide. He is currently a permanent member of staff in the Department of World Art and Cultures at University of California LA (UCLA). This diverse training and experience in theatre, music, film, installation art, teaching and public speaking, allows him to move effortlessly between, and also combine together, artistic disciplines and genres. Furthermore, it connects him to a network of other international artists who work with him on his experimental political projects.

Sellars's Social Goals

Political Vision

> And the question is: How can we now put back at the centre of our artistic practice what has formed the power of artistic practice through history but has been missing hugely in the last generation, which is very simply social justice? [...] And what we're talking about is generating energy in a society where people are feeling stagnant and powerless, and we're talking about how you move beyond this state of social paralysis into a mode of activism which is about movement. [...] . none of us has a success unless that success is a success that is shared through the whole society.[629]

> Peter Sellars, ABC Television, 1999.

All of Sellars's projects have a clear political agenda. He has continued the social justice campaigning evident in his opera work into other more collaborative work with community-based theatre companies such as US based, LAPD (LA Poverty

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Warner Music Vision), *The Seven Deadly Sins*, directed by Peter Sellars (1993; France: RM Associates), *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, directed by Peter Sellars (1990; France; Belgium; Germany: Decca) and *Cosi Fan Tutte*, directed by Peter Sellars (1990; USA; Austria: Decca).
[626] Sellars and Adams have premiered six operas together. Most recently they collaborated on *The Flowering Tree* for the New Crowned Hope Festival in Vienna in 2006.
[627] See Bill Viola et al., eds, *Bill Viola: The Passions* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003).
[628] See Peter Sellars, "Getting Real: The Arts in Post-N.E.A. America," *Doreen B. Townsend Center for the Humanities Occasional Papers*, no. Paper 12 (1997), http://repositories.cdlib.org/townsend/occpapers/12 (accessed January 5, 2001), "The Culture of Democracy," *The Proms Lecture*, BBC (London: August 3, 2003), "Cultural Activism in the New Century," and Peter Sellars, "Arts in the 21st Century" (paper presented at the Young People and the Arts Australia (YPAA) Conference, Sydney Opera House, June 23, 2001)
[629] "Cultural Activism in the New Century,".

Department) and Cornerstone,[630] and in his community-based festival curation in the USA, Europe and Australia from 1990 onwards.[631] His community-based projects aim to reconnect high arts and community arts by promoting an understanding that art should be accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds and locations and should be used to comment on and reflect the diversity of life itself.

However, Sellars's political agenda is not based on seeing immediate results. Instead, he suggests to his students and in his public talks and interviews, that artwork should be made without expectation of any immediate outcome, but with hope for the distant future. In the first lecture in his "Art and Social Action" class at UCLA, for example, he tells his students to bypass a culture of instant gratification and aim at results in "seven times seven" generations.[632] He encourages them to approach all art as one step in a working process towards community-based social justice, including pacifism, reconciliation and environmental and social responsibility. Sellars aims for the "re-democratisation of cultural institutions" because he feels art has been relegated to a luxury item, [633] that people have been isolated from the power of art to help deal with deep personal and social problems and that the results-oriented society has meant that art has been commoditised, and judged on immediate outcomes, rather than long-terms effects. His political vision may be summarised as an understanding that all art, but particularly the performing arts, can and should be used to debate, challenge and change society to benefit everyone. By encouraging a combination of high ideals, rigorous artistic training and a changed sense of how to measure "success" in the arts, Sellars promotes an understanding of politics and political performance based on both social accountability and experimentation.

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[630] See *Art and Life: Finding the Thread*, directed by Marina Goldovskaya (2004; USA: Goldfilms).
[631] Sellars' latest festival New Crowned Hope linked Mozart to themes of social justice and community. See New Crowned Hope - a Festival by Peter Sellars (Vienna) Homepage and New Crowned Hope - a Festival by Peter Sellars (London) Homepage (2007),
http://www.barbican.org.uk/music/series.asp?id=310 (accessed January 2, 2007).
[632] Peter Sellars, filmed in lectures for the UCLA courses "Art as Social Action" and "Art as Moral Action" in *Art and Life: Finding the Thread*, directed by Goldovskaya.
[633] Peter Sellars, "Whose Festival? Can a Flagship Arts Festival Embrace Community Cultural Development?" (paper presented at the *Art of Dissent Workshop and Seminar*, Adelaide Masonic Centre, March 8, 2002).

Taking Risks

> In America you have to hit and run. As soon as they figure out what you're doing, they take you out behind the barn and shoot you in the head.[634]

> Peter Sellars, PBS Television, 1990.

Sellars's guerrilla work is also notoriously "risky". It is a free-wheeling attempt to use business, media and funding bodies wherever and however needed to get the political and artistic work done. In a lecture at the University of NSW in 2001, he described the arts world as a complex money-laundering process; taking "dirty business money and making it clean", by using it for artistic practice which furthers social justice. [635] For Sellars, "money is like sausage. Don't ask where it came from".[636] It is obvious from his work in the US that Sellars does not balk at creating hostile relationships with big business, the media or elitist arts institutions. He is also patently quite happy to use his "high art" status to present political challenges to the notion of that same "high art", even if these guerrilla activities destabilise the very institutions which employed him.

This "hit and run" agenda can be a dangerous strategy. By seeming to fit into the economic high arts structures, at least temporarily, while simultaneously questioning and challenging each of the institutions he works in, Sellars gives himself room to work from a position of power, supported by the very structures he aims to destabilise. He uses his position to remould how they create and fund work. When these institutions take time to reconsider themselves in the light of Sellars's chaotic presence, he has moved on to another event, another city, another challenge. There are obvious problems with this agenda. There can be very little possibility of economic and artistic sustainability and fragile arts structures can find themselves permanently damaged in the aftermath of a Sellars project. It is an undeniable fact that almost all the companies that Sellars has directed have subsequently folded.[637] Sellars history as a director connected to controversy also leaves him open to attacks on his person and his politics by his critics, and these attacks can seriously impact on

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[634] Peter Sellars in "Exploring the Avant-Garde: Peter Sellars," *World of Ideas with Bill Moyers*, PBS (U.S.A.: March 18-20, 1990).
[635] Peter Sellars, "Art as Social Action" (paper presented at the *School Seminar Series*, School of Media, Film and Theatre, University of New South Wales, April 3, 2001).
[636] Peter Sellars and Eugene Van Erven, "Community Theatre: Global Perspectives" (paper presented at the Performance Space Book Launch, The Performance Space, Sydney, July 8, 2001).
[637] Jo Caust, "A Festival in Disarray: The 2002 Adelaide Festival: A Debacle or Another Model of Arts Organization and Leadership?," *Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, 34, no. 2 (2004).

the work he produces. This was certainly the case in Adelaide during his tenure as artistic director in 2000-2001.

It is also difficult to make community participants properly aware of the risks inherent with these projects, while at the same time sustaining hope and idealism. This remains a major ethical problem with this sort of guerrilla work, as will be shown presently. Not all artists and managers have Sellars's record and career to fall back on when they lose their jobs with unstable arts organisations under Sellars's leadership, and many vulnerable community members suffer when projects are disrupted or unsustainable. Sellars's strategies for management do, however, put inequitable power structures under pressure and encourage open-ended public participation in the arts.

As artistic director of the LA Festival of the Arts in 1990 and 1993, Peter Sellars developed a model for community-based festival curation which was based on taking "risks" and making big claims, while simultaneously making himself and his festival accountable to the communities of LA. This model centred on furthering social justice by supporting ethical but experimental community-based work. He used a variety of guerrilla strategies and developed a new model for arts festival curation which he then exported to Australia in 2001.

Sellars's Festival Model

Camouflage

Peter Sellars deliberately uses his reputation as "the critical darling who 'knows how to create a tight second act' ",[638] as a form of camouflage which allows him access to public funds and the support of major arts institutions and make room for community participation. In 1987, for example, Sellars was hired to direct the high-profile, big-budget LA Festival of the Arts for three seasons. Critics such as Mead Hunter point out that the previous LA festivals of 1984 and 1987 had been based solely on imported, mostly European art, to the detriment of local artistic practices. Hunter suggests that the choice said much about LA's ambivalence about its own cultural identity and reflected an adolescent desire to be seen as part of European cutting-

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[638] Peter Sellars' self-description, interviewed by Linda Frye Burnham, "Year One on the Pacific Rim," *The Drama Review; TDR,* 35, no. 3 (1991): 109.

edge artistic practice.[639] Once employed Sellars had the opportunity to recreate the structure and build a new program. His "high arts" reputation as a publicity magnet and as a solo theatre and opera artist can thus be seen as a kin of guerrilla "camouflage". His actual methods for destabilising elitism in the arts get much less attention than his public profile and political views. Despite his position as a professional artist, his festivals are not programmed to cater to "high art" tastes, nor to bring acclaim, money or tourist trade to the cities involved, but instead are based contentiously on principles of decentralisation, democratisation, experimentation and sustained community collaboration.

Manipulation

Sellars's festivals use manipulation as a way of tackling entrenched relations of power within arts institution so as to allow local communities more participation. In 1990, for example, Sellars and his team deliberately manipulated the arts community and the LA media by presenting a vision for his first LA festival that was, in his own words, "sucker bait" for what his associate director Norman Frisch called a "hidden agenda".[640] The festival was launched as a new take on international arts based on the arts of the Pacific Rim. Actually, the final program contained a series of performances which were based on issues that were specifically relevant to the communities of LA. Instead of expensive arts products it featured accessible, interactive, site-specific pieces that were political, spiritual and involved contemporary communities. Sellars stated: "The Pacific Rim was a catchphrase, sucker bait handed to the press. The real interest was in art that is community-based, collectively created, not made by solo geniuses. Art that is kept alive over a period of time because a few people cared."[641] Frisch stated:

> We looked for the most overtly political and most overtly spiritual work we thought we could get away with presenting. We eschewed artists whose work struck us as primarily decorative in its intent in favor of those involved in creating culture in conditions of necessity. We sought individuals whose practices blurred the conventional distinctions between art-making, activism, and prayer.[642]

Sellars's festivals are thus guerrilla challenges to established models of the state-supported arts festival. These projects work from within the camouflage, funding and structure of established organisations to manipulate, disrupt and challenge the idea

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[639] Mead Hunter, "Gringostroica in Los Angeles," *Performing Arts Journal*, 13, no. 1 (1991): 111.

[640] Norman Frisch, "The Hidden Agenda," *Los Angeles Festival Program Books* (1990): 2.

[641] Peter Sellars, at a September 15, 1990 press conference, quoted in Peggy Phelan, "Here and There, the 1990 L. A. Festival," *The Drama Review; TDR*, 35, no. 3 (1991): 119.

[642] Frisch, "The Hidden Agenda," quoted in John J. Flynn, "Postcards from the Rim," *Performing Arts Journal,* 13, no. 1 (1991): 102.

of public festivals as a showcase of expensive, imported art product and to make room for difference by means of an engagement with post-structured community.

Localisation

All Sellars's artworks engage with local issues and local specificities. His festival model is based on democratising publicly-funded arts festivals and making them accessible to local artists who can then respond to the specific needs of their communities. This localisation occurs through a process of research, conversation, networking and communication. Prior to the 1990 festival, for example, Sellars spent "months of riding city buses, inspecting established enclaves of High Art as well as scouting for alternatives, and attending LA's numberless ethnic fairs".[643] He employed a team of twenty local artists to help develop the project and held meetings with local artists, community leaders and representatives from education institutions, NGOs and social-welfare organisations. Artist and scholar Linda Frye Burnham described how, " LA's cultural communities were consulted about the kind of work they would like to see brought to LA, and, in many cases, these communities helped raise money for and hosted their artistic guests".[644] The combinations of artworks chosen were the result of participation, collaboration, consideration and risk.[645]

The 1993 LA Festival was also designed to respond to specific, local issues and communities. The program was launched while the fires from the 1992 LA "riots" were still burning.[646] Sellars and his new team believed that the communities of Los Angeles needed radical re-visioning in the face of the violent conflicts between police and citizens, and the Festival was in a unique place to help facilitate this change.[647] The steering committee decided to give the Festival a new theme, "Home, Place and

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[643] Hunter, "Gringostroica in Los Angeles," 112.

[644] Burnham, "Year One on the Pacific Rim," 111.

[645] The 1990 program included contemporary dancers *The Australian Mornington Island Aboriginal Dance Group*, US-Cambodian *Cambodian Dance Project of Van Nuys*, ceremonies and speeches from elders of the local Gabrielino Indians as well as avant-garde performances by Chilean post-modern musical theatre group, *El Gran Circo Teatro de Chile*. The program also featured local US community-based performance companies such as *Cornerstone*, *LAPD* and US theatre troupes such as *Bread and Puppet Theatre* and *The Wooster Group*. Many invited guests were not representative of the institutionalized arts practices of their home counties, but instead were activists, spiritual leaders or proponents of cross cultural exchange at a local level.

[646] Sellars saw the fires a "highly specific and codified map of LA". Jacklyn Wilkinson, "Peter Sellars and Performance Efficacy: An Investigation into Peter Sellars' Artistic Production and His Plans for the 2002 Adelaide Festival" (Honours (Research) Thesis, University of Melbourne, 2001), 46.

[647] According to reviewer Littlejohn "A typical program [at the 1993 festival] mixed a multicultural jazz band, a Ugandan dancer-musician, and a Turkish orchestra, all performing in a black Baptist church. " He goes on to describe how during the program "A seven-part series on different L.A. neighbourhoods, broadcast on local cable TV, was entitled "Mi Casa is Yo Pagoda." Neighbourhood-based theater pieces were commissioned, angry women writers spoke out, and a hundred films were screened, most of them telling poignant tales of Africans, Middle Easterners, or their American descendants." David Littlejohn, "Nine Years Later, L.A. Festival Short on the Festive," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 7 1993, 16.

Memory" and began a process of dialogue and debate to make it relevant to the specific needs of LA in 1993. Through the 1993 festival, people from opposing or radically different communities were invited to interrogate how their communities were structured, how they communicated with each other and how they were represented by governments and the media.[648] The final festival events challenged ideas of how to judge "successful" performance, suggesting that markers for good results in the arts can be widened to include what Sellars likes to call "meaningful [local] social participation", contact, experiment and risk-taking.[649]

Transience and Decentralisation

Sellars's techniques of transience and decentralisation can be seen as a function of both his international scheduling needs and his vision of localised control of public art institutions. Sellars deliberately deconstructed the hierarchical model of a festival based on a single curatorial vision. He deliberately absented himself from the process of development for both festivals and arranged to be working on several projects overseas, and he emphasised the importance of a large, local festival committee. Sellars claimed "[t]he most important thing [in LA] was that I was suddenly replaced by twenty people [...] These are people who care a lot. The festival is an attempt to see they have a platform. It's not my baby".[650] These steering committees, for both LA Festivals, were made up of local artists and community leaders chosen by Sellars to guide the new processes and to be in charge of the further selection of people to run projects and programming. He stated, "They see the festival's mission as a quiet building of dialogue"[651]. A strategy such as this also encourages people with significant knowledge and experience, working inside community structures, to liaise with festival management. This would seem particularly important when Sellars was a new comer to the cities to which he was working, as was the case in LA in 1990. It would also be no less important in Adelaide, where he was a foreign artist struggling to create networks of trust and collaboration while preserving local difference.

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[648] Leipzig interviewed Nancy Berman of the Jewish Skirball Museum, Fadwa El Guindi, an anthropologist and founder of Al-Funun Al-Arabiya, an Arab arts organization, and Terrie Rouse, the former director of the California Afro-American Museum. The 1993 festival brought them into dialogue for the first time.
[649] Peter Sellars uses the phrase "Meaningful social participation" to describe art that works as social activism, spirituality and communication. See The Adelaide Festival, "A Statement from Peter Sellars," December 11, 2001, http://www.adelaidefestival.com.au/archives/2002/ (accessed March 2, 2007).
[650] Adam Leipzig, "Acts of Imagination. (Los Angeles Festival)," *American Theatre,* 10, no. 5-6 (1993): 24.
[651] Ibid.: 23.

This transience and decentralisation is, however, not always appreciated. Theatre scholar Janelle Reinelt cites many conference papers, reports and conversations following both LA festivals, where "Sellars has been criticized for habitually being absent from festival planning and fund-raising and for being arrogant and ill-informed about what it would really take to realize his goal".[652] To him however this is not part of his job: "Management is not something I do," he admitted to Reinelt, "I'm not a professional festival director at all".[653] In conversation with LA artist Adam Leipzig, he admitted that he realizes some of his staff are "resentful when they're left holding the bag", but he likens directing a festival to directing an opera: "The nature of my work is that I move in at certain moments to make the next step possible."[654]

Debate as Performance / Performance as Debate

Another important aspect of Peter Sellars's festival model centres on the provocation of public debate. Many scholars regard Sellars festival as a sort of experimental "conceptual performance piece".[655] While grounded in individual artistic practice all Sellars's festivals are giant artworks of their own, made up, as all community guerrilla work is, of a blurring between "artists", "collaborators", "participants" and "visitors". This conceptual performance can be best seen when public debate over the purpose and function of art becomes part of the whole festival "performance". In both LA and Adelaide many "performances" occurred in the conceptual and planning stages of the festivals, where dialogue, creativity and participation shifted expectations and changed the ways the cities "worked" culturally. Other important "performances" occurred in the way audiences responded to the actual art events in the program and in the nature of the publicity materials, reviews and responses the festivals produced and prompted. Sellars placed notions such as "community", "site", "art", "politics" and "quality" under the microscope and encouraged everyone to join in the debate.

This use of a festival as an experimental conceptual performance piece is controversial to say the least. For some critics of Sellars, this focus on debate and "conceptual work" is "all talk", and interrupts the production of art events, the employment of artists and the creation of sustainable arts organisations. A Ford Foundation study into the outcomes of the LA Festival, for example, concluded that many business and arts institutions considered Sellars's focus on a "festival of ideas"

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[652] Janelle Reinelt, "The Los Angeles Theatre Festival. Summer 1990," *Theatre Journal,* 43, no. 1 (1991): 107.
[653] Ibid.
[654] Leipzig, "Acts of Imagination. (Los Angeles Festival)," 24.
[655] Burnham, "Year One on the Pacific Rim," 110.

a misuse of public funds to have been allocated to a professional arts festival.[656] For Sellars, however, the artworks chosen for his festivals stand as community-based artistic contributions to a larger, ongoing debate about social and political issues. His festivals are thus conceptual artworks which collect together challenges to vital social questions in a variety of formats, disciplines and public arenas, including art performance, media and academic debate and artistic collaboration and communication. These "conceptual artworks" have clear social justice aims. They cannot predict how people will respond, but rather they experimentally make space for new voices and for new answers to serious social problems.

"Results" of the LA Festival model

Foregrounding and Contesting Post-structured Community

> We are living in a period where anybody who has the most money is looked up to. Bill Gates is, I will say, definitely the greediest person on the planet but there are more interesting things going on and this is the time now, grass-roots level, where I think most of the world is wearying of this kind of gigantism, this sense that the only solution is big and bigger and bigger and joining larger and larger corporate entities. People are realising the quality of life in a giant corporate entity is not what they had imagined and, in fact, the quality of life you are looking for is in a community, is intimate, has pleasure, has shared experience and a whole series of other things.[657]

Peter Sellars, Hawke Centre, Adelaide, 2000.

Sellars is an advocate for the foregrounding and sustaining of intimate networks of meaning and support, and calls these "community".[658] Like other community-based guerrilla artists, however, Sellars curates work in his festival projects which are not transparently "representative" of communities and which do not encourage stereotypical or static images of any group. He deliberately seeks artworks which are not representations from "authorised" sources, sanctioned by national governments or states. He also seeks to maintain conditions where there can be constantly shifting representations of a single community available to the audience, thus foregrounding a politics of difference, even if this occurs because of mistakes and negotiations.

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[656] See K. L. Ito, "The 1993 Los Angeles Festival: The Use of an Arts Organization as the Basis for Intercultural Contact and Communication," *Ford Foundation Report*, 1995.
[657] Peter Sellars, "The Politics of Architecture" (paper presented at the *Public Seminar Series*, The Hawke Centre, University of South Australia, 5th Oct, 2000).
[658] In his 2001 paper at the YPAA conference, Sellars defined community as "the way people sustain hope through moments of connection". Sellars, "Arts in the 21st Century"

Sellars has been accused in naivety in connecting with artists who may represent community in ways which do not produce positive results. In one example, Sellars shows how this naivety can be an important way of connecting with important issues.

> In the classic mode of a blind pig stumbling upon a truffle, I should emphasize that I became aware of the Salvadorian artists in Los Angeles through one spectacular gaff. This is why I'm always in support of giant mistakes, because I make them all the time. In this case, in the 1990 L.A. Festival, we invited Latin American poets to come to Los Angeles. We had a committee of people who read lots of poetry books, picked their favorites, and then we invited ten marvellous poets including, from El Salvador, a fellow named David Escobar Galindo, a lovely poet with very cultured works. In fact, he was the closest personal friend of Mr. Cristiani, and it was his signature that was on the evil false peace agreement. Indeed he was, in fact, the reason why Los Angeles has the largest population of Salvadorians outside of El Salvador. They can't live in their own country because of the death squads. So the fact that we were inviting the favorite poet of the death squads to come to Los Angeles was really not treated as a positive move within the El Salvadorian community. I arrived the day after an enouncement in the newspaper that we were inviting David Escobar Galindo to find my office occupied by fifty angry Salvadorian artists, which is how I met the Salvadorian arts community in Los Angeles. [659]

Often, Sellars seeks to include artworks in his festivals that are controversial, banned or rejected in their home country or community of origin. In LA in 1990, for example, he controversially fought to include a contemporary street form of Thai voguing named 'likay' against the wishes of many leaders in the local Thai community. After much debate, the Thai community wrapped the performance [of likay] in their own context".[660] Phelan describes how,

> At the temple, a full Thai bazaar was set up. Food and crafts and games were available on the grounds. The temple was open and the monks were a strong presence. Yes, the Festival presented "hee-haw" likay, but the Thais presented the culture and people who animate their temple.[661]

Sellars insists that his use of controversial art forms is not just a shock tactic, but a way of allowing people with no public voice to be heard, and a way of foregrounding the diversity present in every culture, however static or homogenised the national image may appear to outsiders.

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[659] Sellars, "Getting Real: The Arts in Post-N.E.A. America".
[660] Phelan, "Here and There, the 1990 L. A. Festival," 125.
[661] Ibid.

Unlike Phelan, Linda Frye Burnham supported Sellars's commitment to controversial inclusions and conversations, citing Sellars's own response that he aims to

> foment discussion of those issues by trying to display a full range of cultural expressions, including those that might be offensive, because those, too, exist in our cultural lexicon […] Exchange, the airing of controversy, was more important to him than political correctness.[662]

As was the case in UTP's *TrackWork*, Sellars's festival worked to challenge structures of power by foregrounding communities and cultures which were not static groupings but fluid, multiple and post-structured, and which were strengthened by debate and the presentation of difference.

Challenging Site/Concept/Place

Sellars's festivals are site-specific events, in that they encourage post-structured communities to re-engage with the political nature of site/concept/place. Many events during both LA festival programs, for example, were located outside, and most were also free of charge. In 1990 Sellars and his team recognised the specific problems of racial segregation and social isolation in LA and hoped the festival could bridge these by means of a re-engagement with everyday site/concept/place and with accessible, interactive artworks. The 1990 Festival took audiences out of expensive, inaccessible, centralised and purpose built arts venues to interact and become part of local everyday spaces across LA such as the Wat Thai Temple in the San Fernando Valley, Plaza de la Raza in East LA, the Million Dollar Theatre Spanish movie palace downtown, the Santa Monica Airport, as well as numerous shopfronts and local parks, where they experienced events that were supported, funded and attended by residents who used these spaces. Artist John Flynn named the entire festival a "geographic interlude". He contended one of the most important effects which would "doubtless seep into the city" was the "notion of the city itself as a continuous performance space". He argued that in the final analysis, "one of the most shocking things about this Festival was that it recognized and addressed itself to the city".[663]

The 1993 LA Festival carried this strategy even further. The Festival team responded directly to the LA "Riots" by moving the hub of the festival to a refurbished 1931, art-deco movie theatre at Leimert Park., in the "center of a middle-class black neighbourhood, about four driving miles from the notorious 'Reginald Denny

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[662] Ibid.
[663] Flynn, "Postcards from the Rim," 105.

intersection' of Florence and Normandie".[664] The 1993 team hoped that wealthier art audiences from west of La Cienega and north of the Santa Monica Freeway would cross into territory which had been shown in the media during the "riots" to be dangerous and alien, and thus to experience art which challenged spatially-marked cultural divides. The events during the 1993 Festival were organised headings such as "Spirituality in Art", "Voices of Liberation", "Life and Art of the Streets" and were programmed in such a way as to bring together the city's segregated communities into new articulations of site, home and conceptual territory.[665]

New readings of space were encouraged by programming events which both acknowledged and challenged the way in which site/concept/place was created and sustained by communities in very different parts of LA. One series, for example, "Sacred Landmarks", featured concerts in five local churches and temples across the city. It mixed performers familiar to local residents with other nationally and internationally renowned groups, most from a Middle Eastern, African or African-American background and brought diverse audiences into fascinating examples of rare religious architecture, buildings that themselves contributed to ideas of contemporary community and spirituality.[666] In direct contrast to the 1984 and 1987 LA Festivals, which were focussed on expensive European art, both of Sellars's projects responded to the specific geography and architecture of LA and to the ways in which communities imagined and lived in everyday spaces. Both festivals gave artists, communities and audiences the artistic resources to challenge physical, conceptual and historical boundaries and divides.

Measuring "Success" in LA

Sellars encounters many problems when he applies his new model for public festival curation to established high-arts institutions. Spaces like LA are vast and many commented that Sellars's festivals, while immersive for those who attend, do not touch much of the city's population.[667] Others, like Peggy Phelan, argued that the Festival's preoccupation with gazing at itself made LA a player in a generalising of cultures towards some utopian global village, ultimately erasing the dark sides of history, complicity, and difference and exploiting otherness in the search to create

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[664] Littlejohn, "Nine Years Later, L.A. Festival Short on the Festive."
[665] Ibid.
[666] Meg Sullivan, "Festival Will Shine the Spotlight on Little-Known Architectural Gem," *Los Angeles Daily News*, August 20, 1993, LA Life section.
[667] Hunter, "Gringostroica in Los Angeles," 112.

new cultural myths for LA and for its place in the world.[668] For others the simple fact that the festival did not make money at the box office and has subsequently closed down is a sign of its significant failure.[669] Many journalists claimed that Sellars destroyed the artistic credibility of the LA Festival. Stating a common idea in mainstream media, Berkeley scholar and art critic David Littlejohn, for example, claimed that:

> The incomparable world's fair of the arts first mounted in Los Angeles in 1984 has, in nine years, been transformed into a massive community feel-good operation, with the inevitable injection of sometimes bitter urban politics and a heavy dose of World Culture from UCLA scholars […] The organizers now seem to care more about cross-cultural rhetoric and theory than about artistic quality or excitement, and to engage performers one could see here, with a little effort, almost any weekend of the year.[670]

In the face of such contrasting responses, how does one judge the "results" of this guerrilla performance model?

Studies were commissioned to try and understand what actually happened in LA and why the festival has not continued past 1993.[671] Both festivals were marked by constant budget cuts, project cancellations part-way through development, controversial resignations, adverse publicity in local papers and a loss in box office revenue. Australian arts management specialist, Jo Caust, summarises the Ford Foundation report on the festival which notes

> that there were difficulties with the 1993 Los Angeles Festival, such as matching the organizational process with the artistic goals, reaching new audiences, and clarifying the central role of the festival In addition, the report asserts that the festival had a problematic relationship with the Los Angeles Times, with the festival staff arguing that the newspaper equated success with box office returns, rather than the vision that was being promoted.[672]

Many of these problems were the direct result of Sellars's choices in developing a festival model based on decentralisation and community collaboration. For some

[668] Phelan, "Here and There, the 1990 L. A. Festival," 127.
[669] Diane Haithman, "L.A. Festival to Curtail Operations, Study Future Arts: The Triennial Event Is `No Longer Viable as a Large-Scale, Citywide Production' Because of Dwindling Public Support, Its Organizers Say.," *LA Times*, April 11, 1994, Entertainment section.
[670] Littlejohn, "Nine Years Later, L.A. Festival Short on the Festive."
[671] The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities hosted a four-day conference in January, 1994 in LA. The Ford Foundation also completed a report on the use of arts as intercultural communication. Ito, "The 1993 Los Angeles Festival: The Use of an Arts Organization as the Basis for Intercultural Contact and Communication".
[672] Caust, "A Festival in Disarray: The 2002 Adelaide Festival: A Debacle or Another Model of Arts Organization and Leadership?," 104.

critics such as Littlejohn, these choices were too risky, produced "bad" art and by killing off the funding for the festival produced an overall negative impact for LA.

In contrast, Leipzig, amongst many others, sees Sellars's projects in LA potentially "as revolutionary in its time as the New York Shakespeare Festival was 40 years ago".[673] For him this is because so much of the festival "focused on so-called 'amateur' art, art made by people for whom making it is a way of life, not a way of earning a living". He suggests that "[b]y finding the 'culture-bearers' in communities throughout Los Angeles, and super valuing their efforts to the point that they can share a platform with some of the best-known performers of the world, the festival makes an important statement that counters the professionalization of human expression in America".[674] In contrast to measuring box-office returns or what Bourdieu famously called "cultural capital",[675] Leipzig suggests that a different set of "results" can be observed arising from Sellars's LA work:

> The LA Festival's aesthetic imagination radically departs from the prevailing cynicism about our cities, our society and the lack of spiritual support for the arts. It says: We all belong to and partake of many communities. We are all makers and partakers of culture. If we imagine this fully, sensitively, we accept our responsibility to the communities we are members of and therefore serve. We're all teachers, we're all students, all artists, all in the audience, all priests, all acolytes, and all this in the face of the most transitory moment the world has ever known.[676]

These contrasting opinions cannot completely represent the Festival to an outside reader. They do, however, show that Sellars's festivals are both problematic and fascinating. As well as challenging mainstream ideas of "success", by foregrounding community-based outcomes such as personal and social development and artistic process, Sellars's festival work also challenges the idea of looking for immediate "results" altogether. His work in LA was "successful", as it obviously did produce a festival which pleased many, but it was also a risky, unsustainable social experiment.

It is in his controversial Adelaide work, however, that Sellars's new festival model and his important challenge to ideas of "goals" and "outcomes" becomes clearer. During all of his festivals, but particularly during his Adelaide project, Sellars's guerrilla art shows that experimental projects can produce unexpected outcomes or can "fail" at fulfilling their own goals, while simultaneously producing challenges to power

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[673] Leipzig, "Acts of Imagination. (Los Angeles Festival)," 27.
[674] Ibid.
[675] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J.G. Richardson (NY: Greenwood Press, 1986).
[676] Leipzig, "Acts of Imagination. (Los Angeles Festival)," 27.

relations at the community level. These "failures" cause difficulty, but also can aid in allowing post-structured communities the funding and support to contribute to recreating site, concept and place in pursuit of a more equitable society.

PART TWO

"FAILURES" IN ADELAIDE 2002

Background to the Adelaide Festival

> The biennial Adelaide Festival was founded 40 years ago with the mission of bringing London closer to Adelaide, as an enlightened, generous, civic gesture and also so that certain culture ravens could demonstrate their connoisseurship and impress their friends [...] My mission in Adelaide has been to transform an import festival into an export festival, to invest in grassroots cultural practice on the ground and in this generation, and to begin to create a window to the world to demonstrate to Australians and everybody else just where this country may be going and what it has to offer the new century[677]

> Peter Sellars- New York Times, 2001

Unlike the short-lived LA festival, the biennial Adelaide Festival, modelled on the Edinburgh Festival has a long and complex history. The city of Adelaide (pop. 1,138,833) has long considered itself a centre of arts and culture. The state of South Australia was settled by free settlers, not by convicts as was much of Australia. It was established in 1836, under Wakefield's principles of "systematic colonization", meaning that it was designed by the British government to be a Commonwealth territory in its own right as a centre of British civilisation, which promoted cutting-edge city-planning, religious toleration and the arts.[678] This reputation continues to inform the way the state is branded as a national and international tourist destination for those interested in "good living, fine food and wine, the arts and architecture".[679] The Adelaide Festival began in 1960, and has been directly tied to the state's identity

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[677] Peter Sellars, "Australia's Arts Unfettered," *The NY Times*, September 30, 2001.
[678] See Edward Gibbon Wakefield, *A View of the Art of Colonization with Present Reference to the British Empire: In Letters between a Statesman and a Colonist* (London: Parker, 1849) and Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, eds Ramsay Cook and Ral Blanger (Toronto: University of Toronto and the Université Laval, 2000), s.v. "Wakefeild, Edward Gibbon"; Available from http://www.biographi.ca/index2.html (accessed June 5, 2001).
[679] *Official Tourism Website for Adelaide, South Australia* (2005), http://www.southaustralia.com/adelaide (accessed May 21, 2007).

since that time. It has had direct government support, including funding for a multimillion dollar Festival Centre theatre complex to house the main events of the festival, which was completed in 1973. There is also a symbiotic relationship between the Festival Board, the government and the local media, a relationship that will be further explored later in this chapter. The deliberate positioning of the Adelaide Festival as a central part of South Australian identity is perhaps best demonstrated by the government dictate in 1980 that all car number plates would carry the words "South Australia: the Festival State".

Throughout the history of the Adelaide Festival there has always been conflict between the board of governors (later called the board of management) and artists and artistic directors. In 1969, Wal Cherry stated that one of the strongest criticisms of the Festival "was the stuffiness, censorship, lack of experimentation and lack of originality on the part of the organisers and particularly the Festival Governors"[680] The artistic directors, always chosen by the board, have often brought controversial artistic challenges with them. Some, like Anthony Steel, artistic director from 1974 to 1978, jettisoned traditional elements of the festival, such as a "flower street parade" due to lack of "artistic merit". This alienated the public, as the parade had been included since the initial festival to celebrate 100 years of "settlement" in Adelaide. Others, like Louis van Esseyn in 1972 or Christopher Hunt in 1994, attempted to shift the Eurocentric nature of the Festival by focussing on other artistic cultures, like those of Asia or Pacific nations, but in both cases there was media disapproval, the festivals lost box-office income and they were not invited by the board to return. There has always been conflict over the lack of public input into this publicly-funded festival.[681]

Most artistic directors of the Adelaide Festival however, follow the board guidelines and aim to bring cutting edge, internationally renowned artistic practice to Australia: for example Peter Brook's *Mahabharata* came in 1988 and Peter Greenaway and Saskia Bodeke's *Writing to Vermeer* premiered in 2002. Even Australia's own maverick *Wunderkind*, controversial theatre director Barrie Kosky, produced a festival in 1996 which, despite commissioning shocking new Australian works such as suburban Hills-Hoist clothesline sculptures on inner city-pavements, also remained committed to a model of showing "important" works from Europe, Asia and the

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[680] Wal Cherry quoted in Derek A. Whitelock and Doug Loan, *Festival!: The Story of the Adelaide Festival of Arts, Adelaide Festival Centre. Trust* (Adelaide: D. Whitelock, 1980), 46.
[681] See Ibid.

Americas.[682] His Adelaide Festival programme for 1996 summed up the image of an "art-starved" Australia. He stated in his opening address: "Now we present an unrivalled opportunity to see what theatre artists around the world are doing with texts and words on stage at the moment."[683]

Historically, the festivals are judged both on their economic sustainability and on their ability to bring artistic acclaim to Adelaide. Kosky's Festival lost $400,000, but was still hailed with critical acclaim as gutsy and global.[684] The following director, Robyn Archer generated the largest profit of any Adelaide Festival in 1998 and this guaranteed her return in 2000. Both Archer programs included premieres by internationally-renowned artists. Archer's festivals were hailed as the most successful in the history of the event, attracting major sponsorship including naming rights from Australian Telco, Telstra. The 2000 Festival program included some thirty-seven world premieres. It also contained programming appealing to many, from international premieres to young artist features, to Indigenous concerts. Archer's program also featured a multiple-location regional food-based event, named *Plenty*, coordinated by Gay Bilson, a director whose food-based art would later be at the centre of a major controversy during Sellars's 2002 Festival. Despite budgetary problems, there was very little public discord between Archer and the Festival board and on the whole the board and the media responded positively to her program. In 2000, Sellars stepped into leadership of an established festival, resistant to new ideas and which had a proven record inside Australia as the premier destination to engage with international art.

Sellars immediately began to apply his LA Festival model to the development of an Adelaide-based program of events. This model, which had already been controversial in LA, proved even more so in Australia. Analysing this development process shows some of the inherent problems with this sort of guerrilla work, while also showing that surprising new directions can grow from the type of negotiations, cancellations and compromises which marked the rocky 2002 event.

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[682] Using Lefebvrean theory, Mary Hunter argues that Barrie Kosky collapsed spatial boundaries between Australian conceived spaces with his artistic direction of the 1996 Festival. See Mary Ann Hunter, "Utopia, Maps and Ecstasy: Configuring Space in Barrie Kosky's 1996 Adelaide Festival," *Australasian Drama Studies,* 44 (2004): 36-51.
[683] 1996 Adelaide Festival of Arts Program, *The Adelaide Festival of Arts* (1996).
[684] Jo Roberts, "Kosky Vienna Bound," *The Age*, March 20, 2001, Today section.

Replacing the established Adelaide Festival model with the experimental LA model

Camouflage and Manipulation

Peter Sellars's appointment was announced in 2000. As in LA, the media responded with elation at the prospect of an international theatre legend at the helm.[685] Much has been written about the board's decision to choose Sellars for the Festival directorship, given his controversial background and well-publicised methodology in LA.[686] Why would such a conservative Festival board look for a director with such a well-known community-based festival model? Former CEO of the board, Nicholas Heyward, sees this as a direct strategy of competition with growing festivals in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth: "If we are to be the event to follow, it means we've got to take risks. That's what Robyn Archer did with her thirty-seven world premieres and international collaborations. That's why we jumped on Peter Sellars and asked him to come and stand it on its head".[687] As had occurred in LA, the board of governors were dazzled by Sellars's controversial and artistic "camouflage" and hoped he could bring new publicity and artistic acclaim to Adelaide. They did not fully consider how his program might disrupt the forty-year old traditions and were unhappy when these changes began to take effect.

As he had in LA, Sellars aimed to restructure the Adelaide Festival model to give it directly relevance to Australia and to Adelaide in particular, rather than to focus on international product. In Adelaide in 2000, he announced that, apart from a few notable exchange ventures with other international Indigenous communities, the 2002 Festival would be only featuring Australian art and that much of this art would be based in contemporary communities not previously represented at the Festival.[688] He wanted to make as much of the Festival as free as possible and to embrace art which moved outside the central Adelaide arts district and, as in LA to return to site-

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[685] Penelope Debelle, "A Cultural Comeback for the Great Southern Land," *The Age*, April 13, 2000 and Tim Lloyd, "American to Direct Festival," *Advertiser*, February 20, 1999
[686] Georgia Seffrin, "The Cellaring of Sellars" (paper presented at The Annual Conference of the Australasian Drama Studies Association: Drama on the Edge, School of Visual and Performing Arts, University of Tasmania. Inveresk Academy of Arts. Launceston., July 3-July 7, 2002).
[687] Peter Ward, "It's Showtime Folks - but Will Anybody Want to Come?," *The Australian*, August 10, 2001.
[688] Sellars, "Australia's Arts Unfettered,", Peter Sellars, Paul Downton, and Cathy Woolcock, "Interview: Peter Sellars, Adelaide Festival Director," *Artlink* 20, no. 4 (2000) and "Cultural Activism in the New Century."

specific art and performance which had resonances for local Adelaide residents.[689] He was not employed to run the finances of the company or be production manager of his vision. He did, however, warn the Festival board that developing local work could be more expensive and require more time to organise than simply importing the latest A-list European artists.[690] The pay-off would be new Australian product that would attract the world to Australia.

Sellars and his team did not directly manipulate the board, media and local artists, as they had in LA. Sellars did sell the Festival as an international cultural activity and then only support local community-based dialogue, but he did seem to genuinely hope that the Festival would bridge the gap between these two types of artistic activity by creating community-based work which would then be recognised internationally. He promised that the Adelaide program would produce a large quantity of new works that would bring Australia international renown. This was a big, risky claim for an experimental, community-based festival with uncertain funding.

At a televised lecture introducing his Festival, for example, Sellars describes his initial conversations with the board:

> I talked a lot about my obsession with reversing the flow from forty years ago when the Adelaide Festival was created because culture was in London. Bringing London closer to Australia was supposed to help people taste culture again. Obviously, things have come a long way since then and my attitude now is that everything in the festival should be made here, because this is the place to be […] As an international artist, I'm interested in what's here. I'm interested in the Adelaide Festival being about Adelaide, not being about London, not being about Paris and not being about Berlin. Actually, what is going on here is newsworthy to me. So what we're going to do is make things here and then take them to Paris, Berlin and New York, but make them here.[691]

Sellars raised high expectations by suggesting that this Festival would be a turning-point for Australian art, taking it to a new global market. Many responded to this idea with enthusiasm. This manipulation of the board, the media and the Australian people took the form of promises of "results", which Sellars had no way of knowing would occur, given the experimental, collaborative community process he intended. Yet, without this hype, it would have been very difficult to get support for such an experimental process.

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[689] Sellars, "The Politics of Architecture".
[690] Sellars summarised his initial employment agreement in, Sellars, "Whose Festival? Can a Flagship Arts Festival Embrace Community Cultural Development?"
[691] "Peter Sellars," *The Arts Show*, ABC Television (Australia: July 3, 2000).

These promises and hype promoted a sense of excitement around the Festival program. Sellars's big claims, so derided by the Adelaide press later on in the development process, caused his associate directors like Bilson to state in August 2001 that "Peter's public speeches raise expectations which can't be fulfilled". She goes on to say "And sometimes I just want to say 'Shut up Peter, let's just do it, let's be modest about it'". Bilson stated:

> I hear him talking about specific projects like my Port Road feeding for instance and he makes it sound like a march to the end of the universe, a most extraordinary thing. And as a restaurateur I believe you describe the dish as simply as possible in order to allow the dish to be something wonderful on the plate. So I'm at odds with Peter about this- I just think he exaggerates ridiculously. And in fact he will undo our work if he's not careful. If he keeps on raising expectations that just simply can't be either fulfilled or viscerally felt by the audience he will cause it to fail.[692]

Hype and manipulation helped Sellars to get access to funds and sponsorship to pay for new staff and to commission new community projects, but it also may have contributed to the bitter and damaging press reactions when the final program did not meet expectations. Indeed, in my view the majority of the Adelaide artistic community were not angry with Sellars after his resignation because they did not understand or were opposed to his vision, but instead were disappointed because they *had* supported the future described in Sellars's speeches and then had to watch it "fail". Adelaide had no experience with such large-scale radical social experiments where no clear line could be drawn between expectations and "results".

Localisation and Decentralisation

As he had in LA, on arrival in Australia, Sellars spent months researching the Festival, interviewing artists and travelling the country, speaking at universities, arts institutions and conferences before announcing any specific plans for the Festival. He asked hundreds of new artists, to write to him describing their work and established communication with leaders in artistic organisation and in communities including Indigenous communities and other post-structured communities based on culture, choice, geography and disadvantage around the country. He employed associates whom he felt offered new focuses on community and the arts in areas such as Indigenous spirituality and welfare, modern architecture, food, new Australian film and the art/science/technology interface. He also gathered artists in a

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[692] Gay Bilson, interviewed in Jacklyn Wilkinson, "Peter Sellars and Performance Efficacy: An Investigation into Peter Sellars' Artistic Production and His Plans for the 2002 Adelaide Festival" (Honours (Research) Thesis, University of Melbourne, 2001).

variety of disciplines to advise him during the development process. Following this research, he identified three themes which he felt were most urgent to Adelaide and to Australian society as a whole. Sellars examined Adelaide and its "problems with environmental destruction, poor or non-existent reconciliation with the Indigenous people of the area and a lack of communication between a class and culturally segregated town and its sprawling suburbs".[693] His final three themes for the Festival were 'truth and reconciliation', the 'right to cultural diversity' and 'ecological sustainability'. He set these main social justice themes for the Festival, but he left the way in which they might be addressed open to the associate directors, working in association with Adelaide and SA communities. In this way, the Festival would not lay down prescriptions for the projects, but allow the communities to create collaborative and locally appropriate artistic responses to overall social justice goals.

One of the major issues surrounding this development process was Sellars's choice to select ten paid associate directors to supervise the production of the program. These included Gay Bilson, Bridget Ikin, Amanda McDonald Crowley, Jonathan Parsons, Waiata Telfer, Karl Telfer, Lynette Wallworth, Rose Wight, Catherine Woolcock and Angharad Wynne-Jones.[694] Sellars also gathered an unpaid steering committee, with a fluid membership of around twenty artists, to advise these associates. They also held public meetings where any local residents could directly discuss the program directly with the associate directors. This was in keeping with Sellars's guerrilla vision for decentralisation, democracy and increased access and diversity in decision-making roles in cultural institutions. It was perhaps even more appropriate that a visiting American director, bent on localising the Festival, should have surrounded himself with Australian associates able to access communities and create new channels of communication and artistic development. As in LA, Sellars wanted the Festival to respond directly to the social realities of Adelaide and its specific needs and working processes and needed to find new management strategies to make this possible. This decentralisation strategy and committee model, however, clashed with the way the Festival had been organised since its inception and put extra pressure on the fragile Festival budget.

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[693] Caust, "A Festival in Disarray: The 2002 Adelaide Festival: A Debacle or Another Model of Arts Organization and Leadership?," 104.
[694] Wynne-Jones took maternity leave during part of her tenure as associate director. Most reports thus name nine associate directors on the final project, despite the fact that Wynne-Jones continued working for the festival in a consultant position.

The structure and history of the Festival was entirely set up to support a high-arts focused arts festival which could bring documented economic and cultural "benefits" to Adelaide, as judged by the SA government. The director and his team were already responsible to a pre-established Festival board, made up of affluent business people, internationally-renowned artists and accountants. These eight members were directly appointed by the government, and subject to government auditing and inquiry at every level. The Board also included a representative from each of the 40-year-old group of wealthy sponsors and Festival alumni named Friends of the Adelaide Festival, as well as a representative from the Adelaide City Council. The Board were subject to the control and direction of the South Australian Minister of the Arts except in respect of the artistic content of an event and were expected to oversee the finances and management of the biennial Festival. The board also answered ultimately to the Commonwealth Governor of SA. Many of the governors on this board had been serving in their positions for many years and, as will seen presently, were very unwilling to change their minds regarding the purpose, process and benefits of an arts festival. The Adelaide Festival board was also expected to work closely with the management board of the Festival Centre arts complex, an incorporated corporation charged with running the centre during the Festival and the rest of the year, itself made up of business managers, accountants and arts administrators. This was a model that involved the most influential Adelaidean cultural, business and government personalities but did not include any community representatives and was difficult to reconcile with Sellars new vision for decentralised community-based decision making.

Arts management expert Jo Caust sums up the major points of conflict between the usual Festival structure and Sellars's model;

> Essentially, there was one group that was accustomed to working on a conventional festival model in which programming decisions were made eighteen months in advance. The task was to deliver the outcomes of those decisions. The other group of paid and unpaid people (associate directors and advisory committee members) focused on a process of participation and cultural enfranchisement. Although the associate directors had little previous experience producing a conventional festival, they were expected to find sponsorships to support themselves and their projects. Inevitably, irreconcilable differences arose between these two groups, both in terms of objectives and of practices. One group was less interested in

process and more focused on implementation; the other group focused more on process and less on final outcomes.[695]

The budget for the whole Festival then also had to support these ten additional salaries at an annual cost of between $40,000 and $80,000 each, incidental costs for organising the steering committees and advisory groups, as well as Sellars's own AUS$200,000 salary. Sellars did return his salary to the budget by making a donation of AUS$100,000, in early 2001 and then foregoing his final payments after he resigned. Sellars's guerrilla strategies of decentralisation and access met entrenched bureaucracy and fiscal pressures head-on. The fact that he was working with such an entrenched system, with relations of power that benefited the rich and powerful in Adelaide rather than disenfranchised communities, made this guerrilla experiment both particularly difficult and, it could be argued, particularly important.

Transience

As had been the case at both LA Festivals, Sellars was constantly absent from the decision-making process during the lead-up to the Adelaide Festival. His deliberate strategy of transience in order to force local artists to take ownership of the project was intensified by his own attempts to juggle difficult scheduling responsibilities. He was directing a revival of his Salzburg Festival version of Saariaho's opera, *L'amour de loin* at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris and simultaneously collaborating in LA with composer John Adams on his new opera *El Nino* during 2001, amongst other productions. This resulted in his spending long periods away from Adelaide. Due to the volume of emails and letters, the distance of many artists from the Festival base in Adelaide and the delays between Sellars's visits to Australia and due as well as the pressures of his busy schedule, Sellars did not reply to communication and was extremely difficult to meet or contact directly. As the Festival developed he was increasingly unable to be relied on to make prearranged Australian meetings or return phone calls.[696] Sellars was attempting to absent himself to allow Australia to take control, but this strategy inevitably put pressure on his staff that they were not capable of bearing.

He was absent from his own program launch. The original launch was rescheduled in light of the attacks on New York's Twin Towers on September 11. He was working at

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[695] Caust, "A Festival in Disarray: The 2002 Adelaide Festival: A Debacle or Another Model of Arts Organization and Leadership?," 110.
[696] Christine Nicholls (Lecturer at Flinders University), Peter Sellars at Flinders University, in discussion with the author, Telephone Conversation, Adelaide, August 3, 2003. See also Caust, "A Festival in Disarray: The 2002 Adelaide Festival: A Debacle or Another Model of Arts Organization and Leadership?".

the time in Paris and sent a filmed speech to be played at the new launch. However the tape somehow missed the plane and his associate directors were left to launch Sellars's controversial program on their own before an increasingly hostile local media. It was a move which visibly upset many Festival staff.[697] He was also not always available to teach the high profile course on *Art as Social Action* that he was booked to lecture at Flinders University,[698] leaving co-lecturer Christine Nicholls to do much of the work and to field the celebrity watchers who turned up to see Sellars.[699] He was not in Australia for crucial board meetings, the resignation of some of the board members, the announcements of program changes or cuts. He was not even present to deliver his own resignation in November 2001. At any of these stages, Sellars might have helped to ease the burden on his co-workers, but this would perhaps not have allowed Adelaide to explore for themselves the range and limitations of this radical experiment.

Sellars's absence was especially difficult for the associate directors and the board of the Festival when external events added to the economic and social pressures on the development process. The program was cut in half by July 2001 due to budget concerns, as a mysterious 1.15 million-dollar shortfall was suddenly exposed, dating from the 2000 Robyn Archer Festival. The budget was then slashed again when Australian airline Ansett collapsed, losing the Festival AUS$250,000 in airfare sponsorship. It was cut again as sponsorship dollars from national telecommunications giant Telstra became uncertain, following negative media reports surrounding the initial publicity materials that had been circulated. These included references to a 30-second television advertisement featuring an image of Hitler.

Telstra had already reduced the sponsorship offer to $600,000 in 2002.This was partly due to the decision of Sellars's team to deny them the naming rights as the Telstra Adelaide Festival. The team felt naming rights would damage their attempt to

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[697] Penelope Debelle, "Breaking the Mold: Peter Sellars' Ill-Starred Stint at the Adelaide Festival," *andante magazine online* (2001), http://www.andante.com/article/article.cfm?id=14898 (accessed November 20, 2002).
[698] Flinders University, "Adelaide Festival's Live Wire Comes to Teach at Flinders," Media Release, June 25, 2001, http://www.flinders.edu.au/news/articles/?fj10v12s02 (accessed December 20, 2001).
[699] The course had been programmed to coincide with the final six months of festival preparation in 2001. Sellars would phone Nicholls from Paris or L.A. to express his disappointment at not being able to get there to teach and leaving her with vague instructions for workshops or sending old course outlines with contradictory information, US course codes and references to missing course materials. Nicholls stated "He would phone me from Paris and tell me the sunset was beautiful there, but that he wouldn't make it back for the planned workshop. He was constantly absent, and I was left with the star seekers, celebratory watchers who had come for a taste of Sellars himself, on a course which was rehash of something he had done before at UCLA and which I was left with". Nicholls, Discussion.

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promote an anti-commercial position on the place of arts in society.[700] The proposed TV ad featuring Hitler was the last straw in damaging the relationship between the corporations. Telstra recanted, partly due to a phone call from Sellars, just twelve hours before the program was launched by Nattrass, they restored the funding in full.[701] The Festival's shaky economic basis was, however, reported in detail in local and national media, and the Festival team soon found that every move they made was under even more scrutiny from the media, national arts organisations and the South Australian state government.[702] Local sponsors withdrew. Sellars responded as best he could to these pressures on the short return trips to Australia he made, and by international phone calls, faxes and emails, but his absence during many of these crises was heavily criticised.[703] Sellars's mistakes, however, became part of the experimental process which provoked thought over the ethical place of the professional artist in facilitating community work and over the relationship of art to business.

The decentralisation process of the Festival was, unfortunately, never completely clear. The associate directors' program, carefully devised by them over six months leading to March 2001, was not what was launched in October 2001.[704] Many suggestions by the associate directors were ignored, as Sellars did not want to engage with state or national community cultural development agencies which he perceived as filters, he preferred to go "straight to the community" and work outside those who had been working for many years inside government supported community-cultural development organisations.[705] Jo Caust also documents the many arts organizations, both locally and nationally, who given the initial invitation by Sellars, approached the 2002 Festival. She goes on to suggest that "the process for programming decision making was unclear, eventually excluding many organizations, communities, and individuals by rejecting or not acknowledging their proposals". She describes how "[s]uch poor communication caused tensions in the arts community". She cites Leigh Warren, artistic director of Leigh Warren Dancers, an Adelaide-based contemporary dance company, who said: that "there was all this stuff about having

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[700] "Hitler Ad Leaves Arts Festival in a Hole," *The World Today*, ABC Local Radio (Australia: October 29, 2001).
[701] Ibid.
[702] "What Is the Future for the Adelaide Festival of the Arts Following the Shock Resignation of Artistic Director Peter Sellars? The Hon. Carolyn Pickles - Opposition Arts Spokesperson for South Australia," *Perspective*, ABC Radio National (Australia: November 15, 2001).
[703] Samela Harris, "Goodbye Peter Sellars," *The Advertiser*, November 13, 2001
[704] Bilson and Parsons interviewed by Wilkinson, "Peter Sellars and Performance Efficacy: An Investigation into Peter Sellars' Artistic Production and His Plans for the 2002 Adelaide Festival"
[705] Lockie McDonald, Stephen Spence, and Don Chapman, "Adelaide Festival 2002: Three Differing Perspectives of the Adelaide Festival 2002," *Artwork Magazine*, no. 53 (2002): 41.

wide consultation because it was going to be inclusive [...] In fact, what I have experienced is just the opposite. I never even got to first base".[706] The decentralisation of the management of the Adelaide Festival was thus uneven and opaque and Sellars was not always accessible or accountable to the Adelaide people or local artists. This was a problematic side-effect of choosing to simultaneously use his position to influence the arts in Australia and to remove himself from the decision-making process for the Festival as much as possible.

In Sellars's defence, decentralising a state-supported arts festival is a difficult prospect. Appeasing the conservative Festival board, at the same time as attempting something radically different and politically charged, was a complex juggling act. In order to meet his own goals, he needed to be open to potential involvement from the most unlikely of sources, whilst also being willing to hold firmly at arm's length the artistic organisations whose high art interests had made the Festival so inaccessible to so many. Sellars had to consider the ways in which his position as an outsider could allow him to take particularly large risks and try things in new ways, while simultaneously taking advice from those who has been excluded from the decision making process and from those who had strong ideas for the future of the Festival. He had to hold on to a strong central vision for the Festival as an opportunity for social justice, while also letting go of the power and control, and absenting himself from the development process in order for Australians to reclaim the management of it. This is a process that had to dislodge many artistic organisations and individuals from entrenched positions of influence and power. It is difficult to see how it could fail to cause distress.

CCD Artist and activist Stephen Spence, however, amongst many others, blames the failure of Sellars's decentralisation on what he sees as Sellars's inability to connect with Adelaide residents and to understand the culture of the city. He also saw Sellars as unwilling or unable to reach Adelaide social activists at the grass roots level.

> The Associate Directors who were left to do most of the work of putting the festival together were appointed through a process few at the grassroots level were part of. They were not an organic part of the process. There was no expression of interest and no interview process that was known at the grassroots level. Peter seems to have collected people on his travels; a shiny stone here, a bright bauble there. Few knew who they were or even who was in the running until

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[706] Caust, "A Festival in Disarray: The 2002 Adelaide Festival: A Debacle or Another Model of Arts Organization and Leadership?," 107

they were announced. To Adelaide activists they were largely an unknown and untested quantity. Some were felt by many not to be skilled or connected enough to pull off what they were supposed to achieve. Their roots did not go deep enough into the communities in South Australia. Most were like Sellars himself, imported into South Australia in the lead up to the festival. The top end kid brought a lot of his new best friends with him, and they despite their best intentions and a number of worthy efforts were just not steeled in the South Australian communities, activists or artists.[707]

This may be true, but Sellars's experiment was also based on making room for new voices, new versions of community and the grassroots, and for controversy and difference.

Unlike his critics, some artists expressed only gratitude at the combination of Sellars's vision for the future and his decentralisation approach. In an interview with Brian Logan concerning her appointment as director of the London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT), Angharad Wynne-Jones talks at lengths about the effect the Adelaide Festival had on her as an artist and manager. She calls it "an extraordinary experience". Logan sums up her experience: "As one of the Festival's directors, she experienced at close quarters Sellars's commitment to pluralism in the arts. He didn't curate the Festival, so much as enable its curation in part by (and for) the Indigenous communities usually excluded from such processes".[708] This process of enablement was partly due to Sellars's insistence that local Australians own the process of developing their own Festival without being controlled by outside influences, even his own. Wynne-Jones also found his commitment to taking risks on behalf of communities very inspiring.

> Community is a very contentious word in Australia [...] for me it's the area where some of the most interesting work can be done. And so, being part of the Adelaide dialogue was one of the most inspiring times in my career. It felt like a chance to move to the most idealistic part of yourself. And that's something that we don't get offered that often. It's quite uncomfortable and it can feel naive and vulnerable. But when it works, and other people are also encouraged to operate in that space, then extraordinary things can happen. And they did.

Logan goes on to note that "Sellars and Adelaide helped hone Wynne-Jones' belief in *mutual* engagement between artistic and cultural communities (my italics)".[709] This is a belief that has led her to continue to challenge the structure of the organisations

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[707] McDonald, Spence, and Chapman, "Adelaide Festival 2002: Three Differing Perspectives of the Adelaide Festival 2002," 42.
[708] Brian Logan and Angharad Wynne-Jones, "Possibility into Action: An Interview with Lift's New Director, Angharad Wynne-Jones," *Lift News*, no. Spring (2005).
http://liftfest.oberon.titaninternet.co.uk/newsite/ (accessed June 7, 2007).
[709] Ibid.

she leads and the artistic projects she curates. This is just one example of how Sellars's vision has directly changed the way an Australian-based artist engages with the collaborative, experimental politics of post-structured community.

Debate as Performance

Debate in the Boardroom

Like both LA Festivals. Sellars's Adelaide Festival was a conceptual performance made up of many artistic and social components. One of the most important was the formation of new avenues for public debate on the purpose of arts in society and on important issues of social concern. These debates became performances in their own right and further highlighted the inherent dangers and surprising benefits of Sellars's experiment.

The first difficult area of debate was located in the publicised debates inside the board room. Community-based guerrilla work sits uneasily between the history of illegal, anonymous radical political gestures and the politically ambiguous territory of state-supported community art. Sellars walked a difficult line, attempting to work with, charm, coerce and sometimes ignore the wishes of a board of management in the pursuit of a program of social justice. He pursued this vision despite the fact that his board seemed to have a very singular vision for the purpose of the Adelaide Festival, one that did not include any focus on art as a vehicle for communities to make social change.

There was an obvious conflict between the vision and model suggested by Sellars and the history of the Festival as an exercise in status, economics and tourism. Four key members of the management resigned during Sellars's tenure as artistic director: C.E.O. Nicholas Heyward, financial controller David Hepper, executive producer David Maclicari and board member Ed Tweddell. They all cited business or other arts management opportunities as reasons for leaving, but Associate director Gay Bilson acknowledged before Sellars's resignation that there was "serious upheaval going on there because of Peter"[710] and *The Age* reported that Heyward had raised the idea on the board of "abandoning Sellars's vision and returning to the big ticket events the

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[710] Wilkinson, "Peter Sellars and Performance Efficacy: An Investigation into Peter Sellars' Artistic Production and His Plans for the 2002 Adelaide Festival".

public have come to expect"[711] Bilson confirmed in a interview that there had been "talk of the Board refusing to sign off on the festival"[712] Sue Nattrass and Teresa Crea were brought in to replace Hepper and Heyward, and both supported Sellars's concept, Nattrass in particular going on record as saying that she was "really looking forward to helping Peter realise his vision".[713]. The resignations however signalled a major clash of visions for Adelaide and a challenge to established structures of power.

The most famous conflict between board and director, however, came in November 2001 when Sellars was asked by the board to broaden the program. When he was given no more funding with which to do this, Sellars chose to resign. Chairman of the Board, John Morphett in an interview with ABC TV, explained that "[w]hat we wanted to do was to ask him to consider some changes to broaden the scope and appeal of the Festival [...] he had trouble returning the call, of course". He went on "[w]e had those discussions over the weekend with Peter. His view is that he would be happy to broaden the scope, but he would need more funds, and the realistic view at the moment is that there are no more funds." Sellars resigned over the phone then sent a statement from Paris which read: "It appears that my presence is an impediment to the realisation of the 2002 Adelaide Festival. In order to preserve and protect the Festival, therefore, it is with profound regret that I resign as Artistic Director." He admitted that he had "made [his] share of mistakes since coming to Adelaide two and a half years ago", but he stated: "I deeply believe in the principles for which this Festival stands. I will now step aside with the assurance that the Australians who conceived this Festival can present the first seeds and seedlings of two years of debate, discussion, reflection, imagination and commitment."[714]

At the time, Sellars was careful to imply that it was a conflict based on budgeting rather than a stonewalling by the board, but there were many who thought he was pushed to leave by a panicky and conservative board, deeply suspicious of his vision for Adelaide and unwilling to support community-based art.[715] US composer John Adams, for example, who has worked with Sellars on a series of projects including the new opera *El Nino* which had been scheduled to open at the Festival, claimed

[711] Raymond Gill, "Resigned to Moving On," *The Age*, November 26, 2001, Today section, 5.
[712] Wilkinson, "Peter Sellars and Performance Efficacy: An Investigation into Peter Sellars' Artistic Production and His Plans for the 2002 Adelaide Festival".
[713] Gill, "Resigned to Moving On," 5.
[714] , "A Statement from Peter Sellars".
[715] Australian Democrats (S.A), "Did He Jump or Was He Pushed?," Media release, November 12, 2001, http://sa.democrats.org.au/Media/ (accessed October 12, 2002).

that "political interference led to Peter Sellars departure". He added: "It's always a frustration when art and politics collide like this […] It's hard to believe that the people who hired him didn't know what they were going to get, knowing his history and his political sympathies".[716] Sue Nattrass, however who replaced Sellars as artistic director, insisted that "the [only] pressure was the adverse reaction to the program".[717] In a debrief session after the Festival Sellars acknowledged the very real pressure on him. "There are many reasons looking back for me to believe that a lot of people decided this Festival would be essentially strangled in its cradle and not allowed to live," he said. "The opposition has actually been quite intense in certain quarters."[718] Whatever the exact pressures, Sellars left the Festival, failing to realise his program.

Sellars's resignation was perhaps the clearest symbol that, despite artistic and academic support for his project, and the many external and local pressures which adversely affected the smooth management of this particular development process, Sellars was ultimately outnumbered by powerful local figures with vested artistic and economic interests. His plans for the Festival exposed the many communities whose voice was ignored in the usual development of the Adelaide Festival program. Internationally-renowned theatre and film director and board member Jim Sharman also resigned in protest over Sellars's treatment. For Sharman, Sellars's resignation signalled that the South Australian government and the Festival organisation were unwilling to take the risks to let the Festival develop new ways of engaging these hidden voices, despite the fact that they had been willing to take many more financial and artistic risks in earlier years when the payoff was international arts acclaim and publicity for Adelaide as a tourist destination. This debate at management level exposed publicly the way the Festival was organised, highlighted the conservative political sympathies of many of the staff for the first time, and exposed major problems with the accessibility, economy and the efficiency of the Festival. This was a surprising result of Sellars's desire to provoke debate which would not have occurred had the process "succeeded".

Debate in the Media

The second major form of debate as performance occurred in the Australian and international media in the prelude and aftermath of the Festival. The performance of

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[716] Tony Love, "Composer's Broadside over Sellars," *The Advertiser*, February 13, 2002.
[717] Nattrass quoted in Ibid.
[718] Penelope Debelle, "Sellars Tells Adelaide Like It Is," *The Age*, March 13, 2002, The Arts section.

debate in the media was particularly prevalent during the development phase of the Festival. Newspapers, magazines, economist publications, online sources, radio and TV programs across Australia published pieces on this regional festival.[719] *The New York Times* and *CNN* also published features and subsequent updates on the progress of the controversy.[720] Most Australian press critiqued Sellars's project with reference to previous Festivals, despite its radically different theme and structure. Even national media outlets which attempted to respond to his social and political aims, still bewailed the lack of definable "product".[721] Critics did not regard the many community workshops, ceremonies, symposia and development processes as "art" and missed the fact that the radical upheaval inside the Festival, within and between arts organisations and communities was evidence of a "conceptual performance" in its own right.[722] As had occurred in LA in 1990 and 1993, there were very few attempts in the mainstream media to assess the Festival on anything but its box-office success or its ability to contribute to the mainstream arts-world through European, US or Asian opera, theatre and music premieres. Peter Sellars, as the controversial foreigner and eccentric figurehead became an easy target for disappointed arts critics who has been denied the usual bill of fare. This performance of debate was hardly the type of debate over the arts that Sellars envisioned. It certainly provoked discussion and influenced the work of new artists, but it also led to personal attacks, pressure on the directors and the cancellation of promising new community programs. It was clear evidence that social experiments are difficult to control.

The local media had the most vehement and surprising response to the Festival instability. In "Has Sellars bequeathed Page a poisoned chalice", critic Penelope Debelle cites media as historically extremely influential on the Adelaide Festival process in this relatively small regional city. Debelle states "One festival insider blames the daily Adelaide paper, *The Advertiser*, where influential writers such as former arts editor Samela Harris, the daughter of author and columnist Max Harris,

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[719] The Adelaide Festival controversy featured for example, in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth daily papers, in small regional publications in towns as far from Adelaide as Darwin, on national ABC Radio and ABC Television and commercial talkback radio and on local news and arts television programs across the country.
[720] Sellars, "Australia's Arts Unfettered," "Peter Sellars Quits as Director of Arts Festival in Australia " *The NY Times*, November 13, 2001, The Arts Cultural Desk section and "Hitler Images Cost Arts Festival Funding," *cnn.com*, October 28, 2001, World section, Asia edition
[721] Penelope Debelle, "Has Sellars Bequeathed Page a Poisoned Chalice?," *The Age*, March 22, 2002.
[722] , "Earnest Festival Not Good Box Office," *Eastern Courier Messenger*, November 21, 2001, Murray Bramwell, "The Future of Adelaide's Festival of Arts: Stodgy or Staggering," *Flinders Journal* (2004), http://www.flinders.edu.au/news/journal04.php and Anthony Steel, "Inside Festivals: Was It Ever About Art?" (paper presented at the Currency House Seminar, Currency House, Sydney, 1st June, 2003).

were unimpressed by Sellars and his repositioning of festival art. '*The Advertiser* is the dead hand on this city no one can withstand,' *The Age* was told. 'They decided early on Peter should go.' "[723]

The Advertiser management and reporters *were* particularly vitriolic in their attacks on the difference between what they saw as Sellars's promises and the results of his artistic direction. After the notorious full feature "Festival Disaster" in sister paper *The Messenger*, *The Advertiser* reported, "Downsized to nothing", "Program for truckers", "Sellars talking – but not saying much" amongst others, as well as the infamous "Goodbye Peter Sellars" which criticised Sellars's haircut, his clothes, his hugs, his political visions and his "arrogance", "incompetence", "stupidity" and "irrelevance". It concluded with the statement: "So much for our 'meaningful social participation' and a festival of 'healing and recognition'. We have recognised what the problem was, Mr Sellars. And, now it is gone, we feel healed."[724] In the case of both newspapers, the overall response was disdain for the perceived lack of economic benefits accruing from the Festival, its inability to bring Adelaide a good reputation as an arts city, and the lack of imported cutting-edge international artwork to premiere in Adelaide. These are the standards to which Sellars's program was judged, and found wanting, despite the fact that these were not the standards that Sellars had set for his festival.

Why this vitriolic personal response? Like with the relationship between the *LA Times* and the LA Arts Festivals,[725] there has always been a close relationship between the local press and the Festival in Adelaide. This relationship is based on the ability of the Festivals to bring both economic benefit and cultural recognition to the town, as well as their capacity to produce a host of interesting international stories to boost the profile of these local papers. In Adelaide, this relationship can also be partly traced to the long history of involvement of the Advertiser paper in the management of the commercial Festivals of Adelaide. Indeed the first Adelaide Festival was dreamt up in 1958 by Sir Lloyd Dumas, who was at the time managing director of the Adelaide Advertiser. Dumas was very clear that the Adelaide Festival was attempting to emulate the Edinburgh Festival and that its job was to bring Adelaide closer to the culture of Britain and Europe by showcasing internationally respected art.[726] Peter Sellars's repositioning of the arts as multicultural and not driven by economics, or

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[723] Debelle, "Has Sellars Bequeathed Page a Poisoned Chalice?".
[724] Harris, "Goodbye Peter Sellars".
[725] Ito, "The 1993 Los Angeles Festival: The Use of an Arts Organization as the Basis for Intercultural Contact and Communication."
[726] "History of the Festival – How it all started". *Adelaide Festival of Arts Homepage* (2007), http://www.adelaidefestival.com.au/ (accessed January 4, 2007)

European standards of artistic excellence threatened the very fabric of the history of the Festival. Those who held on to a vision of Adelaide as a centre of European culture were being dislodged from positions of power, and this paper, despite being dismissed by some national reviewers as an "irrelevant sensationalist rag"[727] still had the influence to fight this process of change and to challenge Sellars's radically different vision of art "product". The response to the Festival showed that Sellars's social experiment both threatened and solidified this incestuous relationship between paper and Festival.

Problems with the Performance of Provocation

> [T]he knives started flashing and the teeth started to bite. And as so often in Adelaide both, once bared, were sharp. Not enough 'substance' to the programming, not enough program period. In the 'genius/loony' debate, 'genius' started taking a back seat. Peter Sellars 'resigned' and Sue Nattrass was given the unenviable task of finalising a festival with only months to go. That's the background and there have been pages and pages written, airwaves filled to bursting points, and everyone has at least one view [...] 728

> Stephen Spence- "The 2002 Adelaide Festival – Democratisation or
> Amateur Hour?" Artwork Magazine (2002)

> It's not a good idea; it's bad for international relations; and it's a little bit stupid.[729]

> Peter Sellars, at a debrief meeting following the festival, in reference to vitriolic media reports and board decisions during his tenure. (2003)

It is difficult to judge exactly how the vitriolic debates on the board and in the media affected the final planning stages of the 2002 Festival. It is certainly undeniable that Sue Nattrass was influenced in some way by media statements and debate, as she rushed to pull together a program for the final event. Associate director Gay Billson's art/food program, for example was particularly vehemently derided in news and online arts sources as a "Festival of Soups",[730] and subsequently only one of the six

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[727] John McCallum, (theatre reviewer for *The Australian*) in discussion with the author, University of New South Wales, Sydney, March 1, 2005.
[728] Stephen Spence, "The 2002 Adelaide Festival – Democratisation or Amateur Hour?," in *Adelaide Festival 2002: Three Differing Perspectives of the Adelaide Festival 2002*, ed. Lockie McDonald, Stephen Spence, and Don Chapman (Artwork Magazine, 2002).
[729] Peter Sellars, at a debrief meeting following the festival, discussing his treatment by the local media and the board of management for the Festival. Debelle, "Has Sellars Bequeathed Page a Poisoned Chalice?".
[730] Tony Love, "Festival Food Event in Doubt," *The Advertiser*, December 5, 2001.

planned food/art events made it into the final program.[731] This was despite the fact that one of the events *Intimate Riches* had the potential to make a lot of money for the Festival. The media and board pressured Nattrass to return to previous recipes for box-office success, with international imports, high tickets prices and recognisable arts product. Very little attention was paid to the community participants who wanted her to continue to fight for Sellars's initial vision or to those artists whose programs were in danger of cancellation due to the board's decision to change the program. The debate in the media during this crucial time was thus very one-sided. In this case, it could be argued, discussion over the purpose of arts actually directed new media pressures on the artistic direction of the Festival which ultimately limited the amount of community-based works that would be funded and supported to completion. This provocation of public debate did, however, expose the political affiliations and agendas of many reporters, artists and board members and highlighted the fact that there are still many communities in Adelaide which are not given a voice in public debate. This public controversy also, as Sellars suggested, promoted Australia internationally as parochial and close-minded, a reputation which continues to affect collaborative projects with international artists.[732]

It is also difficult to measure exactly how much damage was done within Australia to the profile of community arts by the critical and at times patronising media reports about the developing community projects.[733] It is true that the Adelaide Festival itself quickly returned to its earlier formula. The 2004 and 2006 "Adelaide Bank Adelaide Festivals" had very few community-based works and it is unlikely that management will risk involving complex community negotiations in planning future Festivals. All media reports suggest the government is returning as quickly as possible to the "traditional model" for the Festival, a model that produces benefits for the local media, SA governments, business leaders and tourism operators, but little to the local communities who are denied a voice in the process.[734] How much more do community practitioners need to do in order to convince arts institutions to open their doors to more democratic artwork in the face of the public Adelaide Festival saga?

[731] Ibid.
[732] Sellars stated "Obviously it is embarrassing when you bring one of the biggest international fish you have ever had in your fish tank and treat them the way I was treated. I just hope you never, ever treat anyone this way again. It's not a good idea, it's bad for international relations". Tom Peyser, "Will Epater Les Bourgeois for Food," *Reason Magazine Online*, June 19, 2003.
http://www.reason.com/news/show/32832.html. (accessed July 4, 2004). Susan Sontag also cancelled her attendance at the Writers Festival at Adelaide because of Sellars poor treatment. Penelope Debelle, "Sontag a Casualty of Festival Dispute," *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 24, 2001.
[733] See particularly Elizabeth Silsbury et al., "Critics' Festival Wrap," *The Advertiser*, March 12, 2002.
[734] Penelope Debelle, "Festival Takes Time to Reflect," *The Age*, July 27, 2005.

Did the community, artistic, management and media-based debates over the purpose of arts during this project actually decrease the chances that Australian post-structured communities have to access artistic solutions to social justice problems? Or, as community arts worker Don Chapman suggests, have these debates and these "failures" actually strengthened the Australian community-arts sector by allowing it to critically examine itself, its relationship to more mainstream arts and how it works on behalf of those who are disadvantaged and silenced?[735] Both of these points of view have some validity, and both highlight the risks and benefits inherent in guerrilla activity which provokes public debate to such a degree.

PART THREE

THE "SUCCESSES" AND "FAILURES" OF THE FINAL PROGRAM

Program Summary

Parts of the final program seemed to have "successfully" responded to Peter Sellars's plans for the support of community-based performances which contribute to social debate. Other parts signalled clear "failure" of the Festival's initial goals. To summarise, the final Festival ran for ten days and included commissioned Australian ceremonies, performances, visual arts and film, as well as cultural-exchange projects with Indonesian, Aotearoan, Papua New Guinean, Central American and Asian artists. There was a series of conferences and debates that dealt with the interactions between performance, visual arts, film, science, politics, welfare and new technologies. The program also included foreign events added after Sellars's resignation. The Festival received a total of 8 million dollars in funding from the SA government, as well as sponsorship from a variety of corporate sources and federal government project funding for some of the individual companies, workshops and exhibitions. Box-office receipts totalled AUS$1.7 million and the overall loss for the Festival including all contributions, sponsorships and the debts from previous years' Festivals, came to AUS$200,000.[736]

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[735] Don Chapman, "Critical Comment – Letter to the Editor," in *Adelaide Festival 2002: Three Differing Perspectives of the Adelaide Festival 2002*, ed. Lockie McDonald, Stephen Spence, and Don Chapman (Adelaide: Artwork Magazine, 2002).
[736] Penelope Debelle, "Please Help, Debt-Laden Adelaide Festival Asks State," *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 6, 2003.

Program High Points

All of the performance events from the Sellars's program foregrounded site/concept/place and contemporary communities. Some utilised and challenged everyday spaces. These included the events at the central Adelaide Victoria Square/ Tarndanyungga, the interactive visual arts and food program inside and in the grounds of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the performance events, arts residencies and workshops held inside the community centres in economically disadvantaged western Adelaide suburbs such as The Parks. Others brought together new audiences and local communities such as performance event *Shiska-car* at the Riverside Motor Speedway in Murray Bridge and installation *Stories from the Marketplace* at Adelaide's central market. Many events aimed to reconcile past and the present sites, conceptual territories and places in regional areas of South Australia. Others took the Festival into locations elsewhere in the state. These included the expansion of the Port Adelaide program to include workshops, demonstrations and performances. One particularly remote event—at Oak Valley, in the far west of the state—was made with the community of the Maralinga Tjarutja people who "decided to return to their lands in the 1980s, some 30 years after British atomic testing forced their re-location away from their traditional lands".[737] The events at Oak Valley responded to the new site of the community, the conceptual territory of "the Maralinga test zone" and to the histories of the displaced Indigenous people and Maralinga veterans, through mentoring site-specific painting, exhibition and video projects with local residents.

Other site-specific shows evoked contesting or hidden histories and structures of conceptual space and place such as the evocation of the vibrant landscape of the Tjuntjuntjara peoples in theatre production, *The Career Highlights of the Mamu*, or the recreation of the pre 1940s Adelaide Glenelg seashore in the choral theatre work *My Life, My Love*, or the ghost like landscapes of Pacific history in the fragmented post-modern Butoh performance *Bone Flute*. Community was shown to be an intimate network of transient connections, histories and identities which provided important contact, communication and political focus for groups of Australian people who had been denied basic social justice, representation and support, including new and ancient Indigenous communities, people in isolated regional areas, those with

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[737] , "Focus on Adelaide," *Arts Yarn Up* Winter, no. 15 (2002), http://www.ozco.gov.au/arts_resources/ (accessed May 12, 2003).

important environmental concerns, refugees, young people, disabled people and the elderly.

One of Sellars's unique decisions to commission six new Australian films for the Festival, was considered very successful, and has remained an enduring legacy of the Festival.[738] The films went on to win major awards and inspired the Australian film commission to make the unprecedented move of investing AUS$1 million every two years to commission new works, all of which focus on Australian communities and many of which have gone on to international acclaim. Sellars has repeated this model in Vienna at his New Crowned Hope Festival, and recently gave Adelaide permission to show the films developed for the Vienna festival at the Adelaide Film Festival in 2007.[739] These films continued the theme of post-structured community and international social justice and are evidence that the 2002 Adelaide Festival model has had some effect on international community-based arts.

 The Indigenous involvement at every level of the Festival management is also considered one of the major successes of the 2002 program. Indigenous participation eclipsed that of any previous Festival. Every event planned prior to Sellars's resignation included Indigenous consultation or participation on some level. This resulted in new partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous companies and artists, evidenced by events such as the outdoor concert and film series in the central Victoria Square/ Tarndanyungga, the Cross-Connection Indigenous Hip-Hop Symposia and other Indigenous conferences, and many theatre productions, new film commissions and arts installations . The Indigenous program also supported the growth of new Indigenous companies such as Red Dust Theatre Company. There were events which brought together Indigenous tribes who have not met for over a hundred years and there were state-wide Indigenous-only ceremonies which focussed on cleansing, remembering, reconciliation and new spiritual communion. Indigenous associate director Karl Telfer referred to the whole program as evidence of a "circle of healing, joining for the first time in over two hundred years".[740]

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[738] Sellars and his team controversially screened these films inside a converted central theatre, *Her Majesty's Theatre.* This was a comment on the way film has become the theatre of the masses in the twenty-first century. See Peter Goers, "Goodbye Mr Sellars - on with the Show," *The Sunday Mail*, November 18, 2001.

[739] See Louise Nunn, "Look Who's Back - and This Time We Should Be Thankful," *The Advertiser*, February 17, 2007, Entertainment section.

[740] Karl Telfer, "Whose Festival? Can a Flagship Arts Festival Embrace Community Cultural Development?" (paper presented at the *Art of Dissent Workshop and Seminar*, Adelaide Masonic Centre, March 8, 2002).

Problems with the Final Program

The problems in the development phase, however, resulted in many events which directly contrasted Sellars's vision for a free and accessible, local, site-specific Festival which rejected the supermarket model of the import art festival and allowed art to respond directly to local events, cultural and spiritual traditions and social issues. The final Festival program featured a selection of inappropriate, imported or previously shown works, added at the last moment.[741] Also in the final program were Australian shows which were expensive and difficult to reconcile with Sellars's vision, including a comedy banquet entitled "You're dreaming- The Prime Minister's Cultural Convention" hosted by Australian stand-up Max Gilles at AUS$250 per ticket, as well as a large rock concert by Australian gothic icon, Nick Cave. All of these imported shows and lavish Australian events were staged in inner-city, high-art venues.

The program did not fulfil Sellars's goal of a locally specific, state-wide celebration. Sellars had initially wanted to take his festival to the rest of South Australia by having giant screens installed in local parks and beaming live footage across Australian TV. This did not occur.[742] Many performance, visual arts and multimedia events scheduled to occur in other parts of Adelaide and South Australia, including the closing ceremony, were cancelled partway through development, or in the final weeks before the final program was decided. This was distressing to community participants. The site-specific installation work *Talking Country* caused particular distress when it was cut, as it was eighteen months into development and dealt with sensitive relations between farmers and traditional Indigenous land owners. This cut caused major breaches of trust amongst the performance makers, cast and local residents.[743] Some companies like the Indigenous dance company *Bangarra* showed big budget polished works that had been previously commissioned and shown in other cities already, rather than premiering any new full length works. Many events were poorly attended and very few events met their expected attendance quotas. This may have been partly due to the fact that the official Festival program was difficult to follow, had poor maps and unclear directions to venues and contained

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[741] These included Broadway songs by US musical star Barbara Cook, *Stand-up Opera* by US comedian and opera singer B.J Ward, UK playwright David Hare's solo work *Via Dolorosa*, a solo performance by Japanese-American Brenda Wong Aoki and a hip-hop play *Ill Children* by US hip-hop superstars Chosen.

[742] See Des Ryan, "Notes on Peter Sellars Presentation," *The Idler,* (2002), http://www.the-idler.com.

[743] *Talking Country* was to be directed by community cultural development artist Malcolm McKinnon, co-written by historian Peter Read and coordinated by Adelaide-based Don Chapman. It was to be presented at two of South Australia's historic colonial buildings in the mid-north - Burra and Bungaree Station (near Clare). After six months of developmental work involving almost a hundred people this project was dropped from the program due to unforeseen Festival budget strictures.

incorrect or inadequate descriptions of artists and events. The major commissioned theatre and multimedia events from the original program were also all staged in central city theatre and music venues instead of local sites, most at the Festival Centre Complex and cost over AUS$40 to attend. The location of the venues in the inner-city and the inflated ticket prices limited access and kept audiences inside commercial arts venues rather than allowing them to engage and participate in the construction of Adelaide's everyday spaces, as had been originally intended. Symposia and conferences ranged from AUS$40 to $450. All of these last-minute cancellations, pricing and venue choices contrasted strikingly with Sellars's vision for accessible debate on issue of importance to Adelaide.

All of these highpoints and "failures" could be read in a number of ways. For every disappointing element of an event, or cancellation of a project, there were several surprising new moments when relations of power were placed under contestation. In my notes and my memories, this Festival seemed partial, broken and, instead of me connecting with a new Adelaide, I felt isolated and frustrated for much of the time I spent at the Festival. Somehow, however these events still managed to challenge ownership and access to arts and to Adelaide spaces in surprising ways. Walking through my memories of the Festival helps to detail how Sellars's experimental community-based work caused new interactions to occur between post-structured communities and shows how I became part of the recreation of site/concept/place.

Walking My Memories: Community and Site/Concept/Place

Adelaide: Under Construction

> Before colonies, there was respectful travel; there was peaceful trade and exchange; there were systems of law; there were kinship structures; there were systems of living; there was ecological stability; there was conflict but peaceful settlement between Aboriginal people. In Kaurna Palti Meyunna the ancient knowledge of the Kaurna people will be drawn upon to clear pathways for future generations to travel [744]
>
> Karl Telfer and Waiata Telfer- Indigenous Associate Directors of the Festival

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[744] *2002 Adelaide Festival of Arts Program* (Adelaide: The Adelaide Festival of Arts, 2002).

I became part of the opening ceremony, named *Kaurna Palti Meyunna*, as a participant. In the local Indigenous language of the Kaurna people *Kaurna Palti Meyunna* means "Kaurna gathering to dance and welcome". On my first day in Adelaide, I followed the instructions in the Festival Program to gather at 6.00 p.m. at Whitmore, Hurtle, Light or Hindmarsh Squares to walk into Victoria Square. I left my backpackers' hostel early as I was anxious about finding the park, especially since there were no directions in the program. On arrival at Hindmarsh Square, I met a local, an older lady named Edith who was also alone and also a little confused as to what we should be doing. She was wearing a Scottish tartan ribbon pinned to an outfit more suited to attending an opera than sitting around at an outdoor event. Slowly people began to dribble in to the chill park. As we waited, Edith told me that the tartan pin had belonged to her recently deceased husband, and that she wore it because she was responding to calls in the media by the Festival organisers to bring any symbols of history or culture with you to the march. She then told me in a soft, breaking voice that she missed her Scottish husband very much and that when she wore his pin she felt as if he was walking beside her. I reached out tentatively to this stranger and touched her arm in sympathy and she turned to me and shook her head, embarrassed but appreciative. We sat in silence, together. I did not bear any markers of my culture or history, outside my body, my voice and my clothes. Where had this request to bring cultural markers been published? A local paper? Perhaps this was a sign that this procession was more for local Adelaideans? Was I, from the North Coast of NSW via Sydney, intruding here? I did not understand the local structures of history and feeling that fed this Festival. Despite this transitory, intimate contact with Edith, I was once again out of my "place".

A group of middle-aged Aboriginal women were painting their bodies with ochre, in preparation for the procession and performances. There was something comforting in their sitting naked to the waist, unpretentiously getting on with the business of preparing, incongruous, mixed in with the gathering crowd in daylight in this public park. Some people stared at the bare-chested women, others engaged in their own preparations, others played or talked or ate takeaway food at the wooden benches. A group of younger, sober looking women in plain, long black skirts, gloves and white blouses were gathering behind a tapestry banner onto which the word "Croatia" was embroidered. According to program notes, our group would also include some Zuni people from New Mexico and the Lardil people from (Australia's) Mornington Island, but I did not how I would recognise them. Some people wore jeans and carried musical instruments; others like Edith wore makeup and jewellery. I assumed the

Indigenous woman performers sitting in front of me belonged to the South Australian Adyamathana people but I did not want to interrupt their busy private/public preparations to ask. A large group of chattering excited school children also were being marshalled into a group so as to be counted by a worried parent, some swinging smoking baskets containing coals of the sacred fire which had apparently been ignited in an Indigenous-only ceremony earlier. The sacred fire baskets were to be carried by the children to form part of the opening ceremony rituals at the final destination of our march, the centrally-located Victoria Square. There were many social groups, many communities represented here. These Indigenous groups were facets of Australian culture which have been underrepresented in the Adelaide Festival and in the media. Other groups, like the Croatian women and the Zuni people, were members of postcolonial and economically disadvantaged nations who had been fighting for their existence in recent civil wars and bloody battles over human rights. These were all post-structured communities about which I knew very little. Sellars and his team therefore had community under contestation from my first moment of engagement with the 2002 Festival.

The procession started at about 7.00 p.m. We wove through the alien landscape of the skyscrapers in the almost empty Central Business District, stared at by a few solitary business men and women in suits, interrupted on their way out of the office. How did this disparate crowd relate to these silent empty buildings and the major highways which crossed this small regional capital? The group was waved on by bored police who held back the busy peak-hour traffic. The codes of behaviour in this central, economic district were being temporarily suspended. I liked the hidden strings here; unlike other mass street processions, marches or street parties I had been to, no one was telling me where to go or what was expected. There were no slogans, no loud speakers and no street-theatre performers in gaudy costumes. The guidance and planning was obvious, but my part of the procession was slow, unwieldy, fluid, stopped often and had no centre or obvious leader. None of us seemed to know exactly what should be happening: it was slightly awkward. Was this a site-specific celebration of Adelaide, or a memorial march for the endangered state of Australian multiculturalism? We passed through the empty CBD like murmuring ghosts. Such a quiet crowd. We were all uncertain, all waiting for something to happen. Were we reclaiming Adelaide, this site/concept/place or were we looking at it anew? Was this city perhaps just something in our way, to be negotiated and remade?

I lost Edith along the way, but Peter Sellars walked next to me during part of the procession. We had met (and hugged in his characteristic way) on five separate occasions prior to this, but as on the previous occasions, he did not remember me, and we "met" again. I observed as he chatted to three women who walked beside us with their children in prams. They did not have any knowledge, or it seemed, interest in the rest of the Festival. They had come to free outdoor family entertainment, which had been mentioned on the TV. When Sellars asked how they were enjoying the Festival so far, they smiled politely at this American stranger and exchanged awkward small talk. Unlike those involved in the arts scene, or following the outcry in the local papers, these women seemed uninterested in who Sellars was and quite unaware of his history. This made me wonder how far this festival really had reached out to local residents. Did these particular women have any ownership of this publicly-funded festival? This exchange was interrupted by an excited and aggressive young man who loudly identified himself as "a community radio journalist" and, using a hand-held microphone, forcibly interviewed Sellars about his return to Australia. Sellars sighed at the intrusion, but replied that he was incredibly excited and moved to be back in Adelaide and looking forward to seeing what the Festival had become, but didn't think it was an appropriate time or place to discuss his resignation. He was polite and enthusiastic, but much quieter than his normal exuberant public presence. The journalist was visibly deflated and left quickly. Did these two contrasting interactions say something about the difference in Adelaide opinion? Was there a divide between the inflated media response to this event and the quieter, humbler moments of public interaction which occurred throughout the Festival? Was this quiet walk through the streets with this diverse cross-section of Adelaide's citizens a symbol that even without fulfilling the hype -filled public goals of Sellars himself, local people were still willing to engage with this unwieldy, half completed project? Was it a sign that this town was re-engaging with the notion of community to recreate the sites, conceptual spaces and places of Adelaide in the pursuit of a more equitable city?

An extremely controversial public artwork was placed at the edge of the square for the duration of the Festival. It was a large banner painted by the Indonesian activist arts group Taring Padi (teeth of the rice plant) and commissioned by IAUA (Indonesia Australia United Artists), in support of Peter Sellars and his vision of creating a

Festival event which explores "our global truths".[745] Large, impossible to ignore and facing the busy inner-city streets, its themes of major capitalistic greed crushing individual spirit could have been placed to contrast the economies of Adelaide as represented by this busy CBD. As a participant in a Festival of collaboration and reconciliation, however, I was not sure what to do with such a provocative, didactic overtly Marxist challenge. I felt dwarfed by the artists' obvious personal experience with grassroots activism against oppressive governments and the awful working conditions depicted in the artwork. It was aggressive and preached at the viewer like a medieval portrait of heaven and hell. Anger had its place amongst all the other voices, but was this site-specific work, so reminiscent of the guerrilla poster-art popular in the 1960s and '70s, interacting with this space or preaching to it? I saw one businessman loo and angrily shake his head. Where was the local community interaction, dialogue and communication here? Our group walked by in silence.

Sellars often spoke out loud. To himself? To me? To everyone near by? To the memory of his friends, Indigenous associate directors Karl Telfer and Waiata Telfer, who were responsible for this event? He responded loudly and with joy when we reached the spectacular water fountains and fire sculptures around it which marked the edge of the newly remodelled Victoria Square, "The fire and water together, fire over water", Sellars said "It's all here. Oh wow" and "Look at that, just look at that". He was just as surprised and delighted as those around him. This was not his event, yet it had responded to his vision. Earth from different regions of SA had been transported into the square, red, and orange, yellow, brown. The colours were vivid and striking and swept up to make a gently sweeping multicoloured mound in the centre of the park. Victoria Square, which was usually a few scraps of central park, bordered and crossed by the four major roadways out of the CBD, was now an open park, the roads diverted to avoid it. Major public infrastructure changes, just for the Festival, remade an impressive square of new and old earth and grass in the heart of the city. This massive rerouting of traffic, public transport and the major earth-moving work on this large public space produced an expectation that this space would become some sort of hub to the Festival. The centre of the city was thus expensively and controversially remade by the artistic process. This was a site-specific challenge to the notion of public space, a new vision for Adelaide's centre which responded to Sellars's vision of the reclamation of space, community and art as publicly-owned creative expressions of modern life.

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[745] Heidi Arbuckle, "Taring Padi: Indonesian Artists and Political Change," *Artwork Magazine*, no. 45 (1999).

In contrast to the didactic poster art of Taring Padi, the space designed for the evening by Alison Page (Visual Designer) and Stephen Page (choreographer) was dreamlike and emotional. Arcing flames from fire sculptures reflected in the water features in the gathering dark. Some, like the Victoria Square Fountain (1963), were original features of this space, others were water installations added especially for this evening. Our groups arrived into the Square first and watched the other three street processions arrive. The next group to arrive contained representatives of the Mighty Zulu Nation who were singing and shouting call-and-response with the other participants, much brighter than our subdued crowd. From the northwest I could also hear the distinctive vocal tones of the Gyuto Monks who walked with the group from Light Square, and the Maori chants echoing from the group in the southeast. In all of the processions, Australian communities merged with Indigenous and postcolonial groups from overseas, families with performers, musicians with audience, once again placing post-structured community in the centre of this Festival. When all four processions had arrived in the square, the site changed from a silent, artistically designed ceremonial space to an expressive, bubbling public site, built by the bodies, colours, voices and connections of the many communities who converged on it from all directions.

The performance that began was part-ceremony, part-concert, part-welcoming, part-cleansing, and part-party. All the groups of performers from each of the processions were welcomed onto the stage and each performed a short piece. In a contemporary dance performance by Indigenous group Bangarra, the sombre bronze statue of Queen Victoria, which had stood in Victoria Square since 1894, was gently wrapped and rewrapped in white gauze and red, yellow and black satin, leaving just the head exposed. Bangarra's performance acknowledged and destabilised the colonial history of the public space we stood in. Queen Victoria, like Australia's colonial history, was washed, wrapped and temporarily cloaked in the smoke of a traditional cleansing ceremony, but never defaced, toppled or denied. In this ceremony a new inner-city site, an Indigenous and local sense of place and conceptual visions of Adelaide's colonial history and its multicultural future all collided and merged. My experience of that night was one of community spectacle and site-specific ceremony, profoundly moving and oddly terrifying. It is rare for me to feel so alone in a crowd, but perhaps as an outsider to Adelaide, this was actually the most appropriate feeling? This was not my town, my home; I was a visitor on this ancient land.

Eight free evening events were planned for this space in Victoria Square/Tarndanyungga during the Festival, under the umbrella title *Home/Lands*. These included the opening ceremony, a showing of the popular 1976 film *Storm Boy*, a corroboree [traditional dance and spirituality event] of South Australian Aboriginal tribes and international visitors called *Inheritance*, a showcase of Indigenous and international hip-hop, a night of new Australian symphony music, responding to Indigenous constellation stories and performed by The Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and a concert of Indigenous and non-Indigenous country and western music.[746] These were events made by and designed for very different post-structured Indigenous communities and also aimed at creating new connections between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. For some residents these events were not popular enough to justify the massive infrastructure changes and capital works at Victoria Square or the building of a new venue with its imposing new stage and multiple pathways lined with food and information outlets.[747] For me, it seemed to be an important way to make room for new voices and bring disparate communities of choice, geography, disadvantage, taste and function together. The events however, were poorly publicised and attended by disappointedly small audiences.

Despite the potential for this site to become the central hub of the Festival, people did not seem to gather here in any numbers apart from at the evening events, and the small crowds at the evening shows seemed to me to be dwarfed in this massive space. The square had a recent history of being a gathering place for the cities fringe-dwellers, for the homeless and for those drinking alcohol. Perhaps it was this that contributed to the emptiness of the area at night. Whatever the reason, as I walked to and from each of the events, or passed through the square on my way to other venues, it was a dark, eerily empty site and I did not always feel safe there.

For others the place had an older history. It was a traditional gathering place for the Kaurna owners and there were some powerful moments in Victoria Square/Tarndanyungga which seemed able to reclaim this ancient history. During the *Inheritance* evening, for example, a local Kaurna man told an awed crowd that this corroboree of six traditional Indigenous tribes, who had historically met regularly together, was the first to take place in over a hundred years. History was being

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[746] The symphony work was controversially moved to the Adelaide Town Hall prior to the opening of the festival.
[747] Murray Bramwell, "The Festival That Was," *The Adelaide Review* 223, no. April (2002), http://dspace.flinders.edu.au/dspace/handle/2328/225 (accessed March 16, 2005).

altered, broken relationships were beginning to mend, Indigenous place was being recreated and at moments like this, I felt honoured to be part of this process.

One surprising "result" of the conceptual spatial reclaiming of Victoria Square/Tarndanyungga as an Indigenous space came on March 9, when anonymous guerrilla art collective Public Art Action Coalition replaced fifty percent of the street signs reading "Victoria Square" with signs reading "Tarndanyungga", its name in the language of the Kaurna owners of this place. Unfortunately, the Tarndanyungga signs were removed only days after they appeared and the ones reading Victoria Square were anonymously returned to the Adelaide City Council. Some of these were reinstalled several weeks later. The signposts remained empty for those weeks.[748]The website for the anonymous group states "On 27 May 2002, the Adelaide City Council passed a formal resolution to recognise both Tarndanyungga and Victoria Square as names for the heart of the city of Adelaide [...] .To date no signage acknowledges this resolution. It should be noted, however, that part of the history to these decisions was that the Adelaide City Council had established a Reconciliation Committee and have implemented a Reconciliation vision".[749] Through a creative collaborative and provocative process the space was reconceived, reshaped and perhaps partially reclaimed.

The capital works in Victoria Square also gave the area back a sense of a public square and reminded all Adelaide residents what it could be like to have this as a new open park without dangerous major roads intersecting it. In 2002, Dutch architect, Gehl, was commissioned by the Adelaide City Council to study new uses for this space. Like him, many saw that keeping this square as a no-traffic park was a positive move for Adelaide. Gehl's designs opposed the change be made permanent. Unfortunately, these designs have since become public bargaining chips in petty council squabbles and state politics and have never been implemented.[750] I could see the changes this new space made to the city of Adelaide that I remembered from previous festivals. Instead of a thoroughfare through the city centre, Victoria Square/ Tarndanyungga opened new visions for a shared space where the cities fringe-dwellers could mix with families and business people, where new collaborative visions for Adelaide could be lived in the everyday interactions of its residents. The Festival had temporarily brought about the reclamation of a picnic space which had

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[748] Public Art Action Coalition Homepage.
[749] Ibid.
[750] Michael Robinson, "Gehl Plans Left to Gather Dust," *The Adelaide Review* (2004), http://www.adelaidereview.com.au/archives/ (accessed November 12, 2007).

been previously governed by traffic rules and road-safety signs and it offered the communities and families of Adelaide the chance to create a new conceptual and physical centre to the city. The Festival site and the way it was used as a gathering place, temporarily worked to reconcile the many Victoria Squares, the many histories and the many sites, conceptual spaces and places that made up this area

Despite the lingering elation of the opening ceremony, to me pacing the empty walkways of the Square by myself during the Festival or being a part of small audiences at events also seemed to be a metaphor. Did these empty, temporary public boulevards represent potential not quite realised, major change not carried through to completion, the triumph of isolation and alienation over the hope of new group, intimacy and interaction? I felt frustrated that the potential for exciting and encompassing community work, highlighted by Sellars himself at the start of the development process was not being met by large crowds and city-wide celebrations. Only now am I beginning to see how the controversy, economic failures and political agendas of the development process broke with the initial vision of state-wide reconciliation of site/concept/place and the celebration of post-structured community, while simultaneously bringing out new themes of contesting communities, challenging ownership of spaces and highlighting the specific entrenched economic barriers to community-based guerrilla art and social justice.

I found myself in the midst of a different sort of capital works from those at Victoria Square when, on the morning after the opening ceremony, I went to the Adelaide Festival Centre to pick up my tickets. The Festival Centre Complex, comprising three large theatres, a ticket outlet and a landscaped paved outdoor area, was usually a shiny commercial centre. During the Kosky and Archer Festivals, it had become a nightclub and Festival hub. Today it was covered in scaffolds and boards, wire and signs warning "Under construction". There were shaky ramps through to the theatres and confusing sign-posts warning "Watch Your Step". The two-year capital works program refurbishing the Festival Centre was taking much longer than expected. This accident of timing made the Festival look poorly planned, but it also encouraged people to reconsider the spaces of Adelaide and recreate the heart of the Festival. It was a beautiful image for art under debate. The site, conceived territories and places of Adelaide were under construction.

Participation

There is little room here to describe my experience and fragmented memories of the many workshops, ceremonies visual arts, music and multimedia events that I participated in during the Festival. I do have a small fish that I made myself out of local sedge grass at a workshop during the Indigenous weaving and exhibition program *Intertwine*, which remains for me a physical reminder of a successful moment of community exchange. I also kept the four public bus tickets that I needed to cross the city to reach the Parks Community Centre from central Adelaide for the performances, artistic residency talks and workshops there, symbols of the distance and the connection between these very different economic and social spaces. The tickets sit with a photograph I took of forty residents of The Parks, including a large group of recently-arrived Sudanese refugees, break dancing, rapping and laughing in an outdoor space at the Community Centre, as part of UTP's production *The Longest Night*. A young pregnant mother in a baggy, blue tracksuit watches through the cyclone fence, rocking her pram with her foot in time with the music, smoking a cigarette and holding her belly. One hand grips the wire, perhaps in a tactile response to the enlivened site/concept/place of hope and fun that was being created in front of her.

Many events were, ironically, too expensive for me to attend. Most were divorced from their community contexts and shown for ticket prices which precluded many, even some of the performers' own families and friends from attending. "Surely this is a failure of Sellars's vision for accessible, meaningful site-specific social participation" I thought, as I returned again and again into Festival Centre theatres, walking over the scaffolding and under the persistent sound of sawing and drilling, to see the few productions which I could afford and which had survived through several rounds of budget cuts

Many community events were housed inside multimillion-dollar inner city venues like the Festival Centre. Even inside these inaccessible venues, however, many of these performances were still site-specific in the way they evoked and challenged Adelaide and South Australian sites and they challenged the codes of spatially-divided behaviour which shaped South Australian history. They evoked the everyday places of transient and fluid contemporary communities, including displaced and disadvantaged Indigenous tribal groups, disenfranchised young people, new refugees and vibrant disability communities; and they engaged with oral histories,

ancient traditions and spiritual beliefs as well as local urban myths, legends and stories. I will not forget, for example, the raucous call-and-response between stage and audience which occurred during the performance of the Holdfast Choir/State Theatre Ensemble collaborative work *My Life/My Love*, or the emotional question and answer session that followed. This whole event was strengthened by the many different types of interaction between the mixed-ability community choir, the state opera ensemble which performed with the choir, and a diverse audience which included a busload of vocal teenagers with physical and mental impairments, all of whom were all demonstrably appreciative of this poignant and funny history of early twentieth-century Adelaide.

Deliberate choices and last-minute decisions, political agendas and accidents and compromises had all led to the location of these performances in air-conditioned, silent spaces. Yet, they also interacted and interfered with the site/concept/place of their high art venues. They unsettled the idea of a passive audience; they demanded both personal interaction and a political response to the social inequities they exposed. At the Big(h)Art /Black Swan production *The Career Highlights of the Mamu*, for example, I stood on a chair to hug and thank a smiling, elderly performer, who carefully, awkwardly knelt on the raised stage to reach across the conceptual and physical divide between us. This potent mix of community art and the site/concept/place of these elitist art institutions made the performers and the audience begin to ask questions as to who had access to these spaces, how the spaces affected the reception of art and how to engage with the vital social justice themes of these community-based performances.

An Example of Sellars's vision in practice

Career Highlights of the Mamu is a particularly good example of an event which responded to Sellars vision. It was a co-production between community development theatre company Big(h)Art and Indigenous group Black Swan Theatre Company. This event responded to Sellars's themes of historical and cultural truth and an ongoing process of reconciliation. The performance dealt with the displacement of a group of Aboriginal people, the Tjuntjuntjara people, from the land/place that had been their home for thousands of generations. Atomic testing at South Australia's Maralinga district in the 1950s and 60s had forced them from their homeland which had been deemed uninhabited conceptual space by Australian and British

authorities. The show was a storytelling event with music and dance. It was performed by Indigenous Tjuntjuntjara actor Trevor Jameson with help from elders of his people, Dinny Smith, Roy Underwood, Fred Grant and Stella Wicker, and his brothers Jarman and Milton Hansen, who all sat onstage with him for the entire event. The performance interwove contemporary stories and ancient histories. Roy Underwood, for example, demonstrated how he used to clarify water from rock pools in the area by filtering it through his beard. The stage became the original landscape site, and the performer evoked its physical attributes. He spoke in his native language and Jameson translated for the audience. The elders also generously shared their traditional Emu dance, which had never been seen before outside the Tjuntjuntjara lands. Jameson showed slides and videos of Nagasaki, as he told the audience about his journey to Japan to speak with other communities who had experienced loss due to nuclear devastation. Graphic video footage of the atomic blast in Nagasaki and the test sites in Maralinga were interspersed with video narratives of first person accounts of the Nagasaki attacks that were narrated by Japanese performer Asako Izawa. The event recreated the many spaces/places/sites and communities of Tjuntjuntjara and Japan, both now and then.

Through bi-lingual storytelling, music, autobiography and through involving his elderly kinship group, who sat, sung and spoke onstage in a portrayal of a living history, Trevor Jameson in conjunction with playwright and Big(h)Art facilitator Scott Rankin wove the pain of the past into the present in a visual journey spanning a hundred years and moving from Australia to contemporary Japan. This event was a powerful response to Sellars's vision for work which evoked and recreated the hidden, erased or broken sites, conceptual territories and places of South Australia, whilst also responding to the needs of many different contemporary post-structured communities for reconciliation, recognition, witnessing and healing.

Intimate Contact in Adelaide Spaces

Nourishment came for me in pockets of intimacy and individual encounters, rather than in the onslaught of big group community events as I had expected. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Program, for example, offered me hope for a subtler, humbler type of community interaction than the hype and fanfare of the chaotic Festival development process. Some projects at hospital the were only for patients and not open to the public, and the events held in the hospital grounds which I could attend

did not seem to be programmed to attract controversy, but to engage quietly with the realities, histories and bodies of the people who used the hospital everyday. Community formed in the gentlest of interactions, and this sterile landscape, space, temporarily became site, concept and place through food, visual art and performance.

The Hospitable Cooks patient project, for instance, had fed the patients' bodies as well as their minds in a performance of care. Debelle describes how:

> Instead of an anonymous array of moulded plastic containers, lunch was laid on white linen serviettes. Dukkah, olives, extra virgin olive oil and sourdough bread were followed by chilled tomato soup and a slow roasted chicken salad with Vietnamese mint, ginger and coconut and side serves of rice, eggplant chutney and chili sambal. Dessert, in clear glass to display its colour, was an orange and passionfruit trifle drunk with a tisane of flowers and herbs from the Adelaide Hills.[751]

Gay Bilson apparently stood by a little nervously as patients, some of them seriously ill, tried the soup. "I'm not a great one for cold soup, but this is very good," said David Hill, a leukaemia patient from rural SA. "It takes you away from your daily problems".[752] This program reached out to those who could not attend the Festival and was "as much an exercise in nourishment as it was in exploration".[753]

The *Edible Lei* project, in contrast, engaged artists, patients and Festival goers in workshops and exhibitions of Pacific Island leis made of edible, native Australian nuts, seeds and flowers. I left my final lei hanging over a hospital bench as a whimsical gift to this public space, bright orange and dusky brown, and strangely evocative against the yellowy grey building. Taken out of my own community, I momentarily became part of something experimental, new and fed by the richness of multiple Australian, Torres Strait Islander and Pacific cultures.

I also found myself moved to tears at the Hospital as I watched artist Helen Crawford making a sculpture of a very elderly patients hands. This was part of a final exhibition called *Hands* which was showing inside the outpatients' entrance. At this moment, I was definitely an intruder for this ward was a site/concept/place for patients and their families. I am secretly glad I quietly masqueraded as someone meant to be there, to watch the pieces of old hospital sheets, moulded with wax, slowly shape the shaking hands of a lady whose rheumy eyes seemed transfixed on the moving hands of the

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[751] Penelope Debelle, "Captive Audience Fed New Festival Fare," *The Age*, March 7, 2002, Arts section.
[752] Ibid.
[753] QEH chief executive Peter Campos in Susan Archdall, "A Taste of Culture," *The Advertiser*, March 7, 2002.

artist in the quiet space. The final photographs, videos and sculptures told stories of patient's lives and were evidence of the fragile but important connection between art, communication and care. This project marked the governed, cold hospital space as a place of connection, and memorialised the passing of time and the fragile human body. The whole Queen Elizabeth Hospital program felt like the most precious of human interactions between artist and world, slow, ceremonial, calm, generous. There was no expectation of particular outcomes and no box-office quota. This was a site-specific community-based response to alienation, illness and social isolation, with beautiful moments of peace and collaboration. Throughout the Festival I came to realise that "success" in the Festival was best "measured" by examining the individual moments when site/concept/space was recreated by community and by admitting that the political "outcomes" of the Festival would probably occur in small moments of connection and in surprisingly unpredictable ways.

ADDENDUM

Edible Road

The planned closing ceremony offers an interesting addendum to an analysis of the whole Festival process. The site-specific ceremony, to be called "Edible Road" was initially conceived by Gay Bilson, who as well as being associate director of the Festival, is best known as an Australian restaurateur, food critic, and coordinator of food based arts events.[754] The event was supposed to be a celebratory communal site-specific gathering, uniting communities along the Port Rd, a major thoroughfare through the disadvantaged outer suburbs of Adelaide. Initial budgeting figures are unavailable due to the constantly-shifting economics of the Festival, but when Sellars's resigned, the budget for the show was at $180,000. Previous food-based celebrations at the Adelaide Festival, although less ambitious in scope, had proved popular. These included *Loaves and Fishes* (2000) and *Plenty* (1998). The event was to join four other food based events at the 2002 Festival, although only two made it through media furore and budget cuts.[755]

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[754] For a history of Bilson's work see Gay Bilson, *Plenty* (Sydney: Penguin Books, 2004).
[755] The other projects which showed were "Edible Library," a history project using food in book-like covers, shelved at the Charles Sturt Library, and the *Hospitable Cooks* project at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. "Intimate Riches", a food program at stately old homes was cut, as was the "Edible Road" project.

The initial press release for the "Edible Road" event read: "Gay Bilson […] is looking for good cooks from homes, community organisations and businesses along Port Road to share their particular culture and knowledge through the creation of various soups and breads."[756] The media material goes on to quote Bilson herself:

> One of the issues central to the 2002 Festival is the right to cultural diversity which is most commonly and pleasurably recognised through food. Our aim is to create an event with the public where Adelaide can savour diversity and have a good time. We are asking people to take part by cooking or to bring a bowl and spoon to taste the various cultures that make up the Western region of Adelaide. We hope that this will include the diverse range of cultures in the Port Road area.[757]

The plan for the event was that the Festival chefs would make a basic stock, which would then be distributed to every cook taking part in the event. These community cooks would transform the stock into their own version of fish soup or a culturally appropriate soup. The Festival would have provided all the "foods and fish" required to complete the different soups.

The venue for the event was the 18km-long Port Rd, between Port Adelaide and Adelaide city. The road has quite wide lanes with several sections containing large pedestrian islands, green and paved spaces and bus shelters. It passes through industrial wasteland, as well as economically-disadvantaged suburbs. It was suggested that empty shopfronts would be used as kitchens. One hundred stalls set up along the road would serve the foodstuffs made from this stock by the communities, together with a variety of breads, during a four hour walk. A public area, a "garden of common ground", landscaped and designed by visual artist and designer Fiona Hall from Australian living plant and plant materials would be built at the end of the route as a gathering place for participants. Ethnic/geographical communities in the process of consultation included Somali, Kurdish, Ukrainian, Croatian, Italian, Greek, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Anglo-Saxon communities, although the press release named many more local groups that may have been involved as the project got closer to completion.

The event clearly had significant potential as a vehicle for collaboration, site-specificity and community participation. As a mass free-to-view event it would have brought Festival-goers into new geographical and economic locations, allowed expressive outlets for new Adelaide communities, and allowed more established

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[756] The Adelaide Festival of the Arts, "Edible Road," Press Release, October 22, 2001, http://www.adelaidefestival.com.au/archives/2002/news.asp (accessed November 8, 2001).
[757] Ibid.

cultural groups to link with each other and with the city of Adelaide. By using food as a vehicle for creativity, the event also tied cooking, as part of a highly specific everyday community process, to the creation of site, conceptual territory and place. The event also promoted site-specificity similar to UTP's *TrackWork*, in that it encouraged walkers to recreate the city of Adelaide through participation in a community performance. Participants were offered the opportunity to join the event at any time during the walk, mixing everyday life in the area and new creativity, and foregrounding a sequence of potentially contrasting community narratives, expressed through different ways of eating, cooking and serving.

Closing the Festival

When Sue Nattrass took over the Festival's direction after Sellars's resignation the *Edible Road* event was immediately put in doubt. In response to media enquiries about the food events, the Festival publicist Kyra Hertzfeld said the "entire food program was being reconsidered by Ms Nattrass as part of her restructure [...] Any program with a high risk of expense is being looked at".[758] The local media reports from *The Advertiser* and *The Messenger* as well as other local online arts magazines, had responded to the events with suspicion throughout the Festival process. Popular online e-zine *Crikey* sarcastically observed: "Not since La Archer's concept of mass multi-cultural and same sex weddings in Elder Park [...] have we ever heard of anything quite so weird [...] but really [...] we can only hope Festival organisers have taken out insurance against hepatitis contracted by those trundling along the arterial road with begging bowls slurping soup of dubious origin."[759] *The Advertiser* took a more economic response, suggesting that the event should be judged only on its ability to attract tourism and economic growth. *The Advertiser* article cited an unconvinced business managers' opinion:

> Western Area Business Enterprise Centre general manager Rod Martin was not sure that the idea would work anyway. 'I'm yet to be convinced that it will attract additional business and tourists to the area,' he said. Mr Martin would only support it if it was proven to be good for Port Rd businesses. 'My personal view is that the project should have included [boutique wine and food districts] Unley Rd and Norwood Pde.'[760]

These comments reflect an ignorance of the potential for this site-specific community event to have merit outside economic factors. On January 6, 2002, the second program, revamped by Sue Nattrass in the three months since Sellars's resignation,

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[758] Love, "Festival Food Event in Doubt.," 3.
[759] Thalia Meyerhold, (pseudonym) "Sellars Sacked, Jim Sharman Spits and Nattrass Mops Up," *crikey,* (2001), http://www.crikey.com.au/index.html (accessed October 16, 2005).
[760] Love, "Festival Food Event in Doubt".

omitted the *Edible Road* event. It seems Nattrass had cut the budget from AUS$180,000 to AUS$150,000 and finally on January 5 to an unworkable AUS$30,000.[761]

Bilson was reported as "unhappy with the results of the negotiations",[762] and "bitter about Edible Road being shelved for funding reasons" and claimed that as an organiser she had not been kept informed of the board's intentions.[763] Like the *Talking Country* project, the delicate and complex negotiations of community consultation had already begun when the event was cancelled. The event had been two years in the planning. Its planning and infrastructure for the event had started and its cancellation risked destabilising fragile community relations between the groups involved. Bilson "a veteran of three Adelaide Festivals" was quoted in the Advertiser as saying: "It's been an extraordinary two years but I've lost some very fabulous projects. I feel really sad about that and would like to see them mounted somewhere".[764]

Like the cancelled *Talking Country* project, the controversial failure of the project became a performance in its own right. In this case, Sellars's vision in seeing food as an important type of community communication and Billson's vision for community-based intervention into the space of Port Rd were both derided by the press and the Festival board who were unable to see this sort of interaction as art. There was therefore no closing event for the 2002 Festival at all. However, due to the late cancellation of the event, Nattrass "performed" the Festival's decentralisation project again, by choosing to leave Adelaide for the final evening. Some, like architecture expert Tim Lloyd have cited her decision to spend the final days of the Festival away from Adelaide centre as an emblematic moment for Sellars's new vision for a site-specific community-based state arts Festival.

> Similarly, the decentralisation of the Festival away from its centre is nothing new, but it has reached a new level this year, with director Sue Nattrass spending the final day of her festival at the Oak Valley community in the most remote corner of the state. Perhaps we missed the greatest prize, of a Frank Gehry-designed Environmental Futures Centre, but the Festival has become fair game for large scale social and cultural experiments, and that may be its future shape.[765]

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[761] Penelope Debelle, "Sellars' Moveable Feast," *The Age*, December 6, 2001, 4.
[762] Love, "Festival Food Event in Doubt," 3.
[763] Susan Archdall, "Anger as Edible Road Taken Off Menu," *The Advertiser*, March 6, 2002.
[764] Silsbury et al., "Critics' Festival Wrap".
[765] Ibid.

Eating the City

On Saturday April 3, 2004, two years after the Adelaide Festival, in Melbourne, a new expression of all of this planning, controversy and challenge around *Edible Road* erupted. The performance of the cancellation of the project in Adelaide continued with a new performance in Melbourne. Appropriately named *Eating the City*, a food-art event by Bilson took place in the Birrarung Marr Lower Terrace, and it had many links to the earlier "failed" *Edible Road* project. The sales pitch read: "In celebration of Melbourne's diverse cultural personality... Created by over 20 community groups ... A giant edible map of the city centre ... Feasted upon by you, the citizens of Melbourne: the MELBOURNEPHAGITAS"[766]

The event was conceived and directed by Bilson along with long time collaborator and director of the 2002 Adelaide Festival *Edible Library* project, Alicia Ríos. It was designed and performed with "Aboriginal, Bosnian, Chinese, Croatian, Egyptian, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Filipino, Greek, Indian, Indonesian, Iraqi, Italian, Lebanese, Macedonian, Pacific and South Sea Islander, Serbian, Slovenian, Somalian, Spanish, Sudanese, Syrian, Timorese, Torres Strait Islander, Turkish, Vietnamese, Country Women's Association, Credo Cafe, Regina Coeli and Ozanam House community members"[767].

In a political theatre forum at Melbourne Workers Theatre, political theatre artist Robin Laurie discussed the project as one which moved her immensely.

> Eating the City,[was] a Melbourne City Council project, where twenty different community groups made a map of the City of Melbourne out of foods and then the audience ate it, encouraged the participants to own the city, transformed the sense of what cooks do, that they were not just making food but actively engaged in a creative architectural process. Gay Bilson asked one woman 'What are you cooking?' She said, 'A car park.' It was profound and playful.[768]

This Melbourne work evoked, challenged and rebuilt the city with culturally specific foods and post-structured community narratives and local architectures of body and of site/concept/place.

While obviously made in a different city, with different aims, for a different purpose, this event is certainly a close relation of the *Edible Road* project. Sellars's initial

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[766] Judy Spokes, "Eating the City," *Infoxchange Australia,* (2004), http://www.infoxchange.net.au/.
[767] Ibid.
[768] Robin Laurie, "Australian Political Theatre" (paper presented at the *Melbourne Worker's Theatre Political Theatre Forum*, La Mama Theatre, Melbourne, July 8, 2004).

vision, which had inspired Billson in Adelaide, was realised in Melbourne where different community groups remapped the city through food, creating unique expressive languages and taking the audience through new geographies of site and specific community performance. The Melbourne event shows that the time of these guerrilla events is not linear, that results can occur before the project, as in the media controversy around *Edible Road*, or two years later, as occurred when the planning, conceptualising and artistic collaborations begun at the Adelaide Festival then manifested themselves in new eruptions of post-structured community expression and the diversity of *Eating the City* in Melbourne. With the "failure" of one experiment, another, phoenix-like, is made possible.

Conclusions

Debates over how to judge the success of community art are certainly not new. In Australia they were heard in the 1980s, when arguments arose between those who believed that process was more important then artistic product, and those who believed community art was aesthetically and artistically defunct and needed to engage more with artistic measurements of quality.[769] I do not propose to engage with these debates here. Most community practitioners and scholars in Australia now acknowledge that both process and product are important, and that new artistic solutions arise based on the specific needs of the communities involved.[770] Instead, I see Sellars's work as a reminder that, despite inherent dangers, contemporary community work can gain from experimentation, risk-taking and aggressively entangling itself with mainstream arts institutions. The performances, both social and artistic, which occur during these experiments, can engage with difference ethically by allowing post-structured communities the chance to restructure and remake their sites, conceptual territories and places without forcing them to fulfil imposed expectations of what the "results" should be.

It is nothing new to say that external "standards" for "measuring "the "aesthetic merit" or "positive outcomes" of community-based artwork are problematic and disturbing and at times irrelevant to the way the artwork is made and understood locally. The 2002 Adelaide Festival also reminds us that preserving difference without threat

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[769] For an excellent context around these debates, see Maxwell and Winning, "Towards a Critical Practice: A Model for Talking and Writing About Community Artworks," and Hawkins and Australia Council Community Arts Program., *From Nimbin to Mardi Gras: Constructing Community Arts*.
[770] See Watt and Pitts, "The Imaginary Conference".

requires actively preserving multiple different ways to understand, evaluate and discuss art. What is interesting with differential guerrilla artwork is the ways these events comment on the very nature of what is political in art. When the challenges an event foregrounds are occurring before the "product", or two years later; when the absence of the project has potentially more impact than the actual performance event would have had; when the transience and slipperiness of community artwork invades the commercial boardroom of a major arts festival; perhaps the artwork is doing more than publicising as issue, or challenging a government policy. Perhaps it is instead asking for a radical rethink of what the relationship between art and politics could be. Perhaps, in its profoundly experimental nature, there is something to be learnt about challenging the dominant structures of contemporary lives through engaging with post-structured community without knowing in advance what the results of these challenges will be, or indeed when they will start to have effect. Sellars's Festival reminds us that contemporary politics occurs in momentary challenges to power and in non-linear and surprising recreations of community and space.

All the responses to the Sellars Festival are equally valid. It was both a powerful challenge to the conceptual territories of Adelaide, art and the arts festival, just as it was also a "failure" which resulted in community disempowerment and disillusionment. The challenges which face site-specific community work in the twenty-first century were exposed and engaged with during a process of development, which also temporarily challenged the relations of power within cultural institutions in Australia. The final, uncomfortable mix of expensive high art and half-finished community projects, with powerful sustained community work based on new collaborations, all occurring within a small and badly advertised Festival program of events, was both frustrating and a failure of Sellars's original goals, and a moment of breathtaking possibility. In its half-finished, raw and opaque state, this Festival made possible conversations, debates and passionate attempts at reclamation funding and support for the arts as a vehicle for social change. With his techniques of camouflage, decentralisation and provocation Sellars made mistakes, caused conflict, reinvented the wheel and created new problems. He also inspired many artists to change how they see contemporary community and site/concept/place and encouraged all of Australia to continue to struggle to find new ways to encourage reconciliation, diversity and environmental responsibility through the arts. By supporting post-structured communities and aiding them to recreate site/concept/place inside this experimental context, Peter Sellars gave participants the chance to challenge the intimate relations of power which shape and constrain

them. The "results", while unpredictable and at times distressing, highlighted the important role community-based guerrilla art can play in reshaping inequitable societies.

CONCLUSIONS

The Beginning of a Journey

When I began this research I was still facilitating community-based projects in regional Australia and I aimed to return to practical work again in the future. I saw this project as a means of delving into the complexities of community and site in order to better understand how site-specific, community-based performance engaged with wider concerns in society. Moreover I hoped it would help me not only to negotiate the many ethical problems inherent in work which brings together artists of such radically different backgrounds and in such uneven relations of power, but also allow me to imagine potent new metaphors, frameworks and vocabularies for community, culture and politics. I had the connected aim of illuminating the important community-based art being made in Australia. I wanted to critique the common misconception that community politics are only relevant to and bound by geographical location.

In the course of this research I have been fortunate to become part of a growing return to community in academia and have become involved with an international group of artists and scholars who seek to learn from the ways artists and participants respond and challenge their world through community-based art. I have also realised that there is a place for scholarship in community-based arts outside its immediate application to art-making. This project eventually developed into a wider quest to both contribute to an emerging international bibliography of resources on site-specific, community-based political performance theory, and to outline new ways of understanding the politics of site and community as a starting point for developing new theoretical responses to contemporary culture. By examining critical frameworks and new artistic practices, I have discovered that rather than community art or scholarship being limited to the concerns of local spaces, cultural spaces can in fact be troubled and recreated by artists and theorists willing to engage with post-structured community.

Troubling Spaces

There are, however, some other sorts of troubling spaces in this research project. I have, for example, sacrificed depth on each of the issues and artists I address, in order to achieve breadth across a very wide set of academic areas and artistic

practices. I am very grateful that this research gave me the opportunity to draw connections between many different fields of research, but I am also aware that there are many more spaces to be filled here as there is much more to say on each of the critical perspectives I have explored. Each of the artists I have examined could have also have provided enough material for a single thesis on their own, so I see this research project as just a beginning of new research directions into contemporary conceptions of politics, site and community and into emerging community-based, site-specific art practices.

There are also troubling spaces in this project at a local level. In deciding to search for international and critical perspectives on guerrilla art, for example, I have spent less time on new theory coming from the CCD quarter in Australia. While my work would not perhaps fit into the current concerns around changes to national funding systems or into to the current cultural development themes of the CCD sector, further connections between international site-specific, community-based work and CCD could prove fruitful for both artists and academics and bring to light further important Australian examples of new guerrilla performance. Sadly, these possible connections lay outside the scope of this thesis.

I am most troubled by the spaces in my project which occur where the voices of the artists and participants themselves are missing. Undeniably, the many community participants I met and observed through this research project, as well as those who I have worked with in my own artistic practice, have shaped the way that this project developed and where it will travel in the future. However, in order to make room for the critical frameworks I see as so necessary to contributing to new community-based scholarship, I chose to only introduce the artists and the participants's voices to a limited degree. While I stay in communication with the artists and have arranged to make a plain text explanation of this research project, and the dissertation itself, available to all the artists and participants who were involved in my case studies, I look forward to more sustained dialogue with communities in the future as new constellations of international academic and community-based research and practice develop.

Hopeful Places

This thesis has explored the characteristics and politics of "new" guerrilla performance forms. I have sketched out three new theoretical frameworks for political engagement, including guerrilla politics, post-structured community and site/concept/place. I explored the ways in which these political models play out in examples of community-based, site-specific work in Australia. The first case study argued that in the site-specific performance event *TrackWork*, by Urban Theatre Projects, participants challenged stereotype and foregrounded and sustained post-structured communities and recreated Western Sydney sites, conceptual spaces and places. Morganics' community hip-hop pieces "The Block" and "Down River", as well as his solo performance works, were shown to critique stereotype, identity and community and evoke fluid reinterpretations of "haunted" regional and urban spaces. The final chapter on Peter Sellars and the Adelaide Festival of the Arts explored the ways in which post-structured community and site/concept/place can be used to reconnect very different visions of and for a city. This final case study examined the points where challenges to intimate structures of power contested the operations of larger social structures that shaped Adelaide and the Arts Festival. It showed that experimental community-based performance work can be used to promote social justice and that such work helpfully challenges ideas of political "results" and "outcomes".

Site-specific, community-based political performance is a field which is both troubled and troubling. Community-based practitioners all over the world engage with the complex ethics and politics of this sort of work in different ways. The field is necessarily caught up in uneven relations of power, between artists and communities and between community members and wider society. Throughout this project, I have examined how it is possible to acknowledge these inherent imbalances *while* placing oppressive structures of power under pressure. Indeed, I have argued that the ubiquitous, inescapable nature of power makes it possible to contest at the most intimate of levels. By allowing communities to create and change the way they identify and are identified, and by opening site/concept/place to challenge, the artists I examine in this thesis have found new transient and pluralistic ways to engage with politics. I have discovered that the troubled spaces of contemporary community art are hopeful places, where difference is not a threat and where the everyday practices foregrounded in these works reveal hidden and subversive responses to subjugation and social injustice.

APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPT

Excerpt of interview with John Baylis
Interviewed by Rebecca Caines

UTP Office, Bankstown, Sydney. 11am, September 11, 2000.

Rebecca: How long have you been artistic director of Urban Theatre Projects?

John: 3 1/2 years now. I started early in 1997. The company before that had been working with a kind of artistic direction committee with three kinds of programs in it and they had been doing that for about three years and they found that was a bit limited so they decided to go back to an artistic director type arrangement. So, I applied even though even though I'd never done any community-based kind of performance before. All my history had been contemporary performance stretching all the way back to the late 1970s so it was kind of a new area for me.

REBECCA: How long has Urban Theatre Projects been going?

JOHN: The Company's been going since 1980 when it used to be called Death Defying Theatre. When I arrived I suggested that we change the name as it seemed a little bit old-fashioned and didn't really reflect what we did. I think some people, especially from different ethnic communities wondered why we had the word death in the title of our company.

REBECCA: Did they think you were acrobatic?

JOHN: Yeah, it was actually even, it was kind of... the original logic for the title was...Kim Spinks came up with it...Kim Spinks now works for the Ministry of the Arts and she was referencing Peter Brooks' idea of 'deadly theatre', so they decided they make 'anti-deadly theatre' with a kind of circus combination. But, yes, it kind of made it seem like a kind of 'circussy', street theatrey type of group, which the company was to a certain extent in its early years in the Eighties when it was actually a street theatre ensemble. And it remained a street theatre ensemble throughout the Eighties.

Then it began to lose direction a little bit in the late Eighties and they actually began to have meetings to try and decide whether they were actually going to continue. And they decided they would continue but that they would re-focus the company as a community-based company and they would move to Western Sydney. They were originally based around Paddington and Bondi. So they moved to Auburn back in 1991 I think and Fiona Winning took over as artistic director and came down from Brisbane ended up being artistic director. So she was artistic director for about three or four years and when she left that committee kind of was the interim artistic director and then I took over. So as a community-based theatre company, you know, that means primary focused companies been that since 1991.

REBECCA: Where do you rehearse and perform most of your work?

JOHN: Rehearsals? We just rehearse wherever we find space. It depends on the show, you know, if it's a community-based production, it depends where that is geographically located or the type of people that we're trying to attract, so, you know, when we did a project with the Aboriginal community out in Western Sydney we went to the places where, you know, they tended to be... out west of Liverpool. When we rehearsed Chay nloc Duong? we rehearsed that in Cabramatta and Bankstown. And, when we rehearsed Track Work, well, because that was far far -flung work, we eventually had three rehearsal sites going, one in Fairfield, one in Auburn, and one here in Bankstown. We had three different groups. But, it always depends, yeah, we have no base... our area is, not really Western Sydney more South West Sydney, bounded by Auburn, Bankstown and then out to Liverpool, that kind of triangle. We don't really do much work beyond Parramatta, Blacktown, Mt Druitt We don't really do much work outside there. So this is really our territory, so even though we are based in Bankstown, we're not like a local Bankstown company. We move all over the place.

REBECCA: Are your performers all from that area as well?

JOHN: Mostly. I mean, that's where we target them, you know, with community shows, some community shows, you know, are very tightly targeted like one from the Aboriginal community, you know, if anyone had wanted to be involved, they could have been even though it was targeted to Aboriginal people, same as the Vietnamese community show. There are other projects like Track Work, like Subtopia which have no specific geographical, ethnic, or whatever target. And those, we still

target Western Sydney but the publicity still goes elsewhere and if anyone wants to be involved, they can, it's not as is they're always workshopped in Western Sydney. Poor Julietta[Boscolo] had to come all the way from Kensington or wherever.

REBECCA;   I think there were a few people from the UNSW wasn't there?

JOHN: Yes

REBECCA: How would you define the work UTP does out here?

JOHN: Well, there are kind of, you know, a couple of different strands to it. The most important work we do though are the life-scale community shows. They are usually site-specific, they involve a large number of people - 50 to 100 - and, you know, the audience moves around for something like that, you know moves outside or something like that. The staging is usually [...] well we decide on the staging to fit the kind of idea of the piece. So, that's the format of our most distinctive pieces. I mean, a lot of people in the past, and currently also, do site-specific work. I guess what makes ours a little bit different is that there is a community involved in it, but also that we, it's not a spectacle in the sense of kind of making large objects. We rarely kind of actually make any thing to put in the spaces. We use the actual spaces as they are, for all the connotations they have so, you know, some of the, you know, the pioneers of community-theatre in England like Welfare State or whatever make huge structures and, you know, their work is fabulous, but we don't do that kind of stuff. We actually deliberately, if we do a work in a shopping centre, we use the shopping centre itself, you know, we use that location and we like the fact that that there are the people who are in the space anyway plus an audience and plus the performers and the resonances of mixing those three together. And those resonances are what we work with.

REBECCA: How did you personally get interested in community work?

JOHN: Well, I wasn't, for most of my career. I'd been involved in contemporary performance with the more experimental edge of it and I guess that came to an end when the company I was with... we decided to fold... and partly it was that, I mean, I personally felt that we'd exhausted kind of the line of inquiry in that style of work, in that kind of thing that you can do inside of theatres, that you can do with an audience that has come to be shocked or, you know, excited or exhilarated. It was limited.

That's what I felt at the time. I'm not sure I feel that now, but, at the time I felt that, you know, this isn't, this isn't where the next type of performance is going to come from. It's too circular. It only references itself in the end and there was no challenge in it because you could do anything, there was no context, there was nothing to bounce off . So, I was interested in the community context. Because I wanted to put some of those ideas that we'd worked on before into different contexts to see if they still had meanings, if they could, you know, generate the exhilaration, the sense of looking at things anew in the light that you hope an art work has. And community-theatre practice itself, you know to a large extent being either, kind of, very narrative driven or story telling driven, you know, where community tells *its* story, or it had been an outdoor spectacle thing. So I wanted to find a new model for that too, whether there was some way. Which we inevitably, in the end, we called 'intimate spectacle' was a tag we gave, a tag we gave to Speed Street, in particular, but it seemed to sum up a lot of our work, in that they're epic in a sense, in the kind of scale of them and the numbers of people involved. But the audience isn't just positioned as you know onlookers, going ooh aah to something that happens in front of them, the focus always changes from something that's far away and kind of 'wide vision' to something that's right next to you, something that's telling you a story, to you alone. So we wanted that kind of quality to it.

REBECCA: The word community is thrown around a lot, do you feel like you have a definition for it?

JOHN: Not particularly. It's kind of, it's [long pause] it's, I mean... it's [longer pause, laughter] it can mean so many different things that it's frightening term to use, you know, because as we wrote in our handbook this year because when someone talks about community values, something you can serve to politicians [laughter] and, yet, other people talk about community like the s11 down in Melbourne are talking from a different you know so what exactly does it mean? Everybody kind of makes it mean what they want it to mean. It can have the sense of that kind of silent majority thing where, you know, one person pretends to be talking on behalf of these other people who they call their community and, you know, my own experience and I think most people's experience is the fact that they kind of live in many different communities and there are crossing between those communities and they have different strategies and whether that is communities, you know, a community value that was handed to you by your family or ethnicity or a community that you chose a community you drifted into, a community you desperately want to escape from.[laughter] Community

itself doesn't mean anything useful to me. Community doesn't mean good, it doesn't mean bad, it's kind of just means a connectedness between people. So in some of our works you know, we're almost self-consciously creating a community, you know, like in Track Work we'd just realised there's no sense of a community work, in that expressing the Western community. There is no Western Sydney community, you know, it's too many people for Western Sydney.

REBECCA: And that was clear, that came through in the work.

JOHN: So we kind of wanted to make something where... I guess feeling those senses of connection were there, you know, feeling that there are, um ah I don't know [long pause] a guess ultimately they're wanting people to have a certain respect for other people's language, other people's defined their community or the like, so that ultimately people have this broader vision of what an Australian community could be made up, a lot of overlapping communities, none of which kind of has kind of... all of which have good things and bad things in them but the people have chosen to identify with them. And now I'm just waffling on now.... I guess I'm trying to talk about what is the value that we see in our work, you know, what is the useful for? And yeah that the sense of enhanced sense of the possibilities that people have, not as individuals, but as people coexisting and relating to other people, that's more or less it, without defining what that might be and some communities can be a community of 10 people, you know, and there are communities of 200,000 people.

REBECCA: Do you think community has to be tied to a specific location or sense of place?

JOHN: No, no, not at all actually. Some communities are obviously defined by ethnicity or religion, or some are geographical or some are like in Subtopia...Subtopia was deliberately a piece about people's own choices in the community that they identified with, so it was about sub -cultures, you know, goths, punks, ravers, revheads, rappers, so there, some of those communities have other communities, kind of impinging on them, you know Arab boys love rap whereas you know Arab boys wouldn't be seen dead doing rockabilly stuff so there are other things that impinge, but in the end there are a variety of choices and people make their choices about the community that they will identify with and then they start to collect the kind

of insignia of that community. And, you know, [break in conversation to turn tape over].

REBECCA: And so you are sort of talking about building a community in the performance work.

JOHN: Yeah ... yeah ...yeah. I've been, because of the work we're doing at the end of the year is about you know making a piece of political theatre, self-consciously trying to work out exactly what is a piece of political theatre in post modern times so I've been thinking a bit about what exactly the political edge is and, you know, how work, and in particular in my work, has been criticised a bit from other community arts practitioners who kind of see it as being soft edged or, you know, not full on enough and I personally have a hard time working out how you can make a piece of really issued based theatre which is still a good work of art and I don't just mean that as art being a separate sphere, but a good work of art meaning that it allowed lots of different meanings to kind of be generated rather than come and be educational in the sense of "we know something and we're going to teach you this something so that you will then more politically aware". I just find that model really kind of problematic.

REBECCA: It's limited, it's very limited.

JOHN: Yeah, and I don't think in the end its politically liberating because it is based on positioning an audience as someone with a lack which you, the people with knowledge, have to fill. So, the kind of work I try and make is, you know, where there is much more, it's much more free flowing the relationship between the audience and the performers and the performers have to negotiate with the audience and the audience have to watch things from different perspectives and they can generate their own meanings and then, of course, I don't just mean a total semiotic free-for-all as obviously there's boundaries to the meanings we want to set loose, but, but where acknowledging that we don't really know completely what to do with all this stuff, but we're going to put it down there and we will, kind of, contemplate it together in this event that we are setting up. So, that's, and that's what I think a political edge on a performance is. It is giving the actual... and actually I've got this phrase from... do you know, have you read anything by Baz Kershaw (?) [Affirmation] Yeah, just reading something of his the other day kind of struck me that that's a little bit what we're trying to achieve, giving the audience of sense of a little democracy in the actual

performance so that they can make choices and they're not constrained by one direction or meaning of the narrative of the piece. There are a number of paths they can take at any stage and I don't just mean that in staging I also mean what they're viewing, the angle they're viewing it from and the meanings they want to generate from what they see, whether that they want to see it as just a hoot or a good time or whether they want to put it into some other framework that they are already bringing to it.

REBECCA: He also talks about the liberated spectator, the person who's actually free while they're in the performance

JOHN: Yeah, and see that's where it connects back to the work I did before because that was one of our aims at Sydney Front was to kind of generate within the four walls of the theatre this kind of strangely liberated space where the audience suddenly feel that anything could happen, that a lot of possibilities that they hadn't dreamed of were, would be open not because you can do that in life, but by having a little sense of that, then when you're looking at your everyday life, the perspective is just a little bit wider, you know, your sense of "well, this doesn't have to be like this, they are other possibilities, its just a little bit enhanced". And I think that's the best that theatre can do or any art, you know, it can just edge out the vision a little bit and then of course it's for people themselves to do with that what they will. So that's the political edge in our work I think.

REBECCA: The performances often trace a network of stations, shops or street areas. How do the people who aren't involved in the performance react to what you are doing?

JOHN: They react in a variety of ways, usually sort of benign indifference [laughter] but sometimes kind of more actively involved and really connecting with it and following it and I think those who do that and there's always like a considerable proportion who do that, because they see this thing happening and they just join on. I think they probably have the best experience of all, because unlike the audience have made the preparation. They have no idea of the context of what there are seeing, so they're making up the meaning of it as they're going along. And, you know, and there are some aggressive reactions where people really resent the fact that the space in which they habitually do these things is being intruded upon and, of

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course, intruded upon... if it was in an approved way, they probably accept it if there were a police cordon and a limousine going past, they probably accept it, because what they are seeing is kind of so messy, so it's unclear. So, yeah, there are aggressive reactions too in all of our performances.

REBECCA: You mentioned that some traditional community groups weren't as interested in your work or weren't as. [...] they were worried about it.

JOHN: Well, I'm talking, community artists not community] groups, different things altogether. But there is a long tradition in community arts of there being an activist type of work where, you know, you take up a particular issue and make the community aware around that issue and our work doesn't do that, usually, so from that perspective therefore our work is part of the depoliticising of contemporary post-modern culture, you know, taking the guts out of it, which maybe true, but my answer to it is in fact [pause] oh well, I don't know. There is a lot of, a lot of political action at that level and I think there is a fine line between how much of it is aimed at a political outcome or how much of it is an assertion by the artists of their political creed and whether it has an outcome or not is not the point, the artists themselves can feel that they have asserted their political creed, so it's much different from the self indulgent avant-garde artists.

REBECCA: What is the process of starting to build a performance work? How do you begin?

JOHN: Hmmmm, well, depending on the show...

REBECCA: Say with, Track Work...

JOHN: Track Work was different in one way in that it was a project that had already been planned when I came into the company and it wasn't planned in any detail beyond the fact that it was going to be an event on trains in Western Sydney. That had been planned and funded, so that structure had come from my predecessors. So, then it's a matter of coming up with what you do with that structure and how you go about making it... There are some, I'm just thinking, there are some common strategies [phone rings] yeah, for developing these big performances. Usually, we kind of, to try and, we try and start with smaller building blocks, often we start with a

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number of different groups who work on different aspects of it. That happened in Track Work where, as I said, there were three different rehearsal groups. They were, and even those three were only working on kind of the through line of what Julietta was doing, the on board entertainment, shall we call it, so they were working on that and on some of the stuff that was happening on the stations and then we had other group things that were happening on the different stations. So they're kind of quite decentralised in that way in that there are a lot of things being prepared in different locations, some of which we, the directors, had only the barest idea of what it would be. All we knew was that they would going to do something and it was scheduled for this time and we just hope that they'd turn up and we wondered what they were going to do, so it had that kind of sense. There was no overall controlling intelligence to the whole thing... in Track Work in particular, and in Subtopia to a certain extent. And that was a deliberate strategy in both those works to kind of undermine the sense of overall aesthetic kind of vision. In Subtopia we did a similar thing with different sub-cultural groups which worked separately, so the goths worked all by themselves, the rockabillies worked all by themselves, with kind of an artist to help them come up with the idea and then they had a location. Subtopia all happened around this area, the Bankstown shops, so every site was within 100 metres of here, so some were empty shops, some were back alleys, car parks. So they all had their location and then the structure of the work the audience going around trying to visit each of those sites. So that idea of it kind of being kind of decentralised, autonomous bits which only ever come together in the performance is probably a key element to a lot of our work, yeah, to deliberately break down the sense of aesthetic whole completeness and allow things to erupt, genuinely allow them to erupt, as directors take your hands off, to be there to kind of keep the whole thing together so that it has beginning and an end, but, beyond that not trying to mould the shape and all the tricks that every theatre director learns to try and take the edges off everything, you know, to make everything neat, so it's to try and undermine our own theatre trade [laughter] .

REBECCA: And do you actively seek out groups to be involved or do you work with who comes to you?

JOHN: Both. Yeah, it's a bit of both. All as shows have... we do community workshops so they're generally advertised so anyone who wants to be involved can come along and be involved through those workshops, usually one or two or three days a week for three months up until the performance, so they always have that. These are the big ones. When we're doing at the show with a particular community

like the Vietnamese community, we didn't have that, but when we're doing these more generalised ones we always have them. And then, so that's a passive process, you know, we kind of actively promote the workshops through all kinds of networks but basically anyone who turns up, they are in it and that's the stuff we work with. But then we might seek out, for example, in Track Work, we decided we wanted a brass band, which I tried desperately everywhere to get a brass band. It's just, I mean, there is no coherent consistent process. It's just kind of like following the leads and kind of imagining, you know, when someone tells you about this group of people who does 'this' and following it up to see if they are interested blah blah so, yeah.

REBECCA: Who makes up the crew for the productions?

JOHN: For those kinds of shows there is normally... if I'm doing it I try to have a co-director, partly just to ease the burden because directing those kind of shows is 90% just logistics and 10% actual creativity. Then there'll be, we normally have a sound artist or composer on or our shows because in that disparateness of it, I find that often the sound can be the thing that does join it together which I know kind of undermines where I said before [rueful laughter] but trying to just to give some through line. Designers, I haven't done much, partly because I usually like what's there and designers have an unpleasant habit of building things to put in front of [laughter] so I don't work but much with designers. Then we'll have a production manager who is in charge of all the logistics and we'll have somewhere between one and six stage managers depending on the type of show it is. So we put a lot of emphasis on the whole productions side of it because again that's what the actual shell, or skeleton of the piece will hold together through the production kind of crew who will make sure that everything works, the sound gear works, it's moved into place. The performers are kind of pushed into place and, yeah, that structure kind of holds firm around this anarchy.

REBECCA: They are just employed here?

JOHN: There brought in specially for the show.

(Further casual discussion and collection of further resource material)

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPT

Excerpt of interview of Fiona Winning
Interviewed by Rebecca Caines

The Performance Space Offices, Redfern, Sydney.
August 4, 2006

(Interview began with background information on Winning's career leading up to the transition into community-based work)

FIONA: So I basically decided that I wasn't so interested in travelling around taking performances to people

REBECCA: Yes

FIONA: And not maintaining or sustaining any kind of relationship with them.

REBECCA: Yes

FIONA: So at the time ... at the time Popular Theatre Troupe. I ended up moving up to Cairns after that and ... I worked, ah, I worked at a lot of jobs up there but one of the jobs that I did was, ... excuse me, was working at ... ... Cairns TAFE, and they just started an access course with Aboriginal and Torres Strait island students. And ... I was lucky enough to get to work with those students to make shows. And this was ... and this was a really wonderful experience and ... and a really wonderful kind of intercultural exchange and I ... when I went back to Brisbane, I went to live overseas for a couple of years, but when I came back to Brisbane ... Street Arts Community Theatre had been set up, and ... and I knew all those people and ... was kind of really interested in what they were doing, and they were interested, you know, there was a lot of dialogue around Brisbane at the time about, you know, the model between popular theatre troupe and street arts, and you know, there was a lot of argument about that. ... and I ended up starting to work with Street Arts and starting to do freelance, ... community based projects that I really enjoyed, ... and after doing

a project called *Woman in the West* in rural Queensland ... which was a really interesting, sort of model, which was somewhere between the two. Somewhere between the participatory and the, and the ... the professional piece we moved to Sydney and started to work with what was then Death Defying Theatre. So I worked with them for five years, and I stayed with them, sort of, they didn't replace me as artistic director though. They wanted to. They ended up going with an artistic directorate and I was on that directorate and when John was appointed. After two years of that directorate, he asked me to work with him on *TrackWork*. *TrackWork* was something that the artistic directorate had come up with. So Monica Barone had this idea about making it work on trains. And Harley Stumm and I had developed that idea into this concept of *TrackWork*. And ... and yeah, so John, you know, when he started it was his first big show with the company and he was keen that I co-direct it with him. So that's what happened.

REBECCA: And so how was the process of developing the show for you working with John. I mean what sort of...

FIONA: Ah look, it was really fantastic. It was really difficult because of the logistics where, you know, a kind of dramaturgical challenge at every, ... at every moment really, ... so you know, it's a long time ago now, ... but as I recall it we were fairly consistently struggling with the, excuse me, how it would work on the trains, on the train stations, ... how we would engage the performers. So we basically had, you know, the group of performers that came to series of workshops. And I think we had two of those groups. ... At Casula and at Auburn, or at Fairfield and Auburn maybe? So we had these two, two groups that we were working with. And we knew we wanted them to work on the trains, but we were, kind of not quite sure. We called them the kind of "ensemble" and then we wanted to create this quite surreal ... experiences for people coming of the trains at each of the stations, but we wanted to use the architecture and the kind of space, the transient spaces the train stations offered. ... every time we felt like we cracked something, you know something would change, we would find out we didn't really have access to trains, or we didn't really, probably wouldn't have access to Lidcombe station, or you know, there was *TrackWork*, which was the last, the last terrible realisation and that the, you know when we actually nutted out we had twenty minutes of material. So all these very inexperienced performers, but great people, you know. All, we'd organize this twenty minute piece between Redfern and Lidcombe it must have been. And then to find out

four days before we opened that it was going to be forty five minutes and that the whole train route had changed.

REBECCA: Aaah god.

FIONA: And there was *TrackWork* and really we might have to do it on buses, and it was just like oh god.

REBECCA: And the whole interaction with the public space, sort of, spoke a lot about the site specific ... philosophies of the company at the time.

FIONA: Hmm.

REBECCA: Can you tell me a little bit about the, how you worked with space at UTP, and site.

FIONA: Yeah ... it was quite different. *TrackWork* was the first of the, of the really large ... site based works, you know we had for many years...and I think John really developed that, that after I left really.

REBECCA: Ok.

FIONA: But there were ... there were again really, kind of logistical issues with space in Western Sydney then. It's very different now. I look at the Urban Theatre Projects programme and they can collaborate with the Blacktown Arts Centre, with Parramatta Riverside, with Campbelltown, and it, you know, that just did not exist as a series of options for us in those days. And there also weren't, there weren't even, I mean the Fairfield Theatre was there, but it was, it was an empty theatre. You know, it was like, The Fairfield School of Arts, rather. They had done it up but there was nothing there. But we had used that for shows, but mostly we had literally used church halls, schools halls ... and we had used some sites. We, we *Site the Homebush Bay* show which was done ... after the announcement we had won the Olympics, but a long time before the Olympics was actually based in the stand, in the kind of basement of the stadium. So it was underneath the seats

REBECCA: Yes.

FIONA: Of the stadium. So we did a show there and so I guess we were always really interested ... you know, in that, in that time to use Site as an example, we didn't use the space. ... underneath the seats as, as John or Alyssa might have. We had aspirations to have, but basically didn't have the design base or skill base to do that. So what we ended up doing was to create a space within that space.

REBECCA: Yes

FIONA: But what we, what we had done very consciously was kind of, we wanted people to come to this site that was gonna be so important to Sydney that, that used to be you know a site for drag racing, that used to be a site for pawning that used to be you know all this so we really deliberately where taking, you know, whenever we did shows in different places in different spaces we thought about why we wanted people to come there and why we weren't doing it at the Fairfield School of Arts or somewhere you know. So it was specifically about mapping a Western Sydney that was changing or that people, that was secret. Or you know, whatever. So, so certainly the sort of philosophy about animating space ... public space in the way that John and Alyssa did it was not in our philosophy at that time. And *TrackWork* was probably ... *TrackWork* was also was, was actually conceived not about animating space, so much as about taking people on the journey of this of this demonised space called Western Sydney.

REBECCA: Hmm, So the

FIONA: In the way that many people in Western Sydney travel around it on trains.

REBECCA: Or, Or everyday. You were working with the kind of conceptions of space in and the kind of narratives of space and the way people used space

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: You, you haven't kind of moved on to architectures of

FIONA: Yes.

REBECCA: Space, but maybe it came later.

But that, that kind of relationship between community and space is so important.

FIONA: Yeah, Yeah.

REBECCA: ... and that seemed to be a kind of a thread through the beginning of Urban Theatre Projects. And of Death Defying Theatre

FIONA: Yeah, yeah I think that's right.

REBECCA: And of so much, it's very Interesting. ... do you feel like that kind of work has carried on in Sydney? I mean you've got experience here with working with a lot of contemporary performance practices that, that involve site. Do you feel that kind of relationship between site and community is continuing to be explored, like that?

FIONA: Hmm, probably less so.... Urban Theatre Projects is continuing to do it. I think, hmm I think you know a range of, of artists like Cicely Ponner and Claudia Chidiac will continue to do some of that. I think being involved in those pieces and where they ... you know at very formative times in their sort of artistic development. ... I think it its increasing harder to be honest, ... you know there's, there's been, there's been, ... there's been a closing down of possibilities in relation to public liability, etc. ... and, and just general fear

REBECCA: Of, authority and surveillance

FIONA: Exactly, ... so, you know, I mean I frankly wouldn't even try doing a show in the city of Sydney area, or ... you know, where as actually the smaller councils like Bankstown and ... or you know or the more defined councils like Bankstown and ... Liverpool and a range of other councils may actually be the places to attempt that.

REBECCA: ... I guess I'm I'm really interested also in the combination of contemporise performance strategies and community cultural development that *TrackWork* seemed to be such a good example of. How did you find working with those two kind of different genres or different philosophies?

FIONA: Really fine, Really easy in many ways cause you know, they're not you know, its about applying one set of skills to another context I suppose so that was quite exciting. Again though the actual logistics of ... the carriageway space or the

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carriage space, or you know the moving the audience around consistently interrupted our flow of ideas in a way. So, we constantly had to respond to "Oh actually we can't do that or we had miss remembered stuff about particular sites

REBECCA: It's not that shape after all (laughter)

FIONA: So you would go and do a site inspection, and you'd do this stuff then you'd go away, and have a whole lot of ideas and then you'd go back and you'd go ah...

REBECCA: Ah, Of course

FIONA: Then we'd realised that was there are you know, we didn't remember that was actually stairs going up there

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: and not a ramp or whatever and so ... yes so again my memory of it is this kind of ... consistent dialogue with what was possible. Yeah,....

REBECCA: How do you think that those two strategies worked for the show that kind of, ... fluid contemporary performance not trying to pin down meanings that kind of working communities to allow them room to express themselves. Do you think that they worked together, or?

FIONA: On that show I think it was really difficult actually.

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: I would say that some of the performers found it, ... they didn't, they didn't really some of the performers didn't like it actually, ... and it was difficult because they didn't quite know what they were in. So, some of them were completely relaxed with it, and had no difficulty with it at all, ... but I guess the people that had ... where more, more, had more understanding of theatre where kind of like, well that was nothing, what is it with taking the photos and taking with people. Where as People with no theatre experience you know, totally got that as a strategy

Rebecca: Yeah

FIONA: for communication. That was quite lovely. So, so the more theatrically engaged the participants were the, the harder they found it actually, ... And, and you really see that in the kind of, ... in the performances that were made on the trains with them as the stewards, you know, some people really made those quite theatrical kind of , ... interchanges and some people were quite straight, or quite, you know, quirky in their own way but not theatrical and so, and I, and I quite liked that range actually. I thought that was interesting.

REBECCA: Yes that was great

FIONA: But of course I had the privilege of being, having an overview

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: And actually knowing the four different kinds of performative actions in four different carriages

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: For an audience it's just, they'd get one of the four and so you know, you know how's that gonna read, and what does that mean to people and, and of course we were dealing with the double audience the audience that had come to see *TrackWork* and the audience that happened to be on the train that day, and that was that was for me that was probably actually the most exciting.

REBECCA: Incredibly powerful as an audience member.

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: Being part of something that was so fluid. And you could. People wandered off. People joined in. A new audience appeared all the time

FIONA: And sort of planning for that and knowing you cant really plan for it. That was, you know, that was really fantastic and terrifying

REBECCA: Yeah. What about the communities along the lines. ... how did they cope with the strategies of contemporary performance and community work that you were kind of walking between. I mean you … The Italian Women's Choir and

FIONA: Ah yeah

REBECCA: the bands, and you did they cope with the …

FIONA: So the people outside the ensemble. ... I think they did. I mean I think they, you know John and I were talking about this the other day, and he was saying I still feel a bit of an ethical thing about , you know about people not really knowing what they were in. And I think that's true. And you know I raised the example of Terry Woo in his,

REBECCA: ...

FIONA: Sequin suit, you know.

REBECCA: That was just fantastic!

FIONA: Coming down the, the stairs and singing "Begin the Beguine"

REBECCA: Gorgeous

FIONA: Yeah it was beautiful, and, and Terry is a friend of mine. I've worked with him on a number of shows, and, and I know he didn't know what he was in fully you know. Even though we had explained to him before hand and stuff but I know he was like, but, but on another level. Excuse me. On another level ... he was, he was delighted to have an opportunity to sing to an audience, to perform in public. To be a part of ... of an event that, that was exciting and different.

REBECCA: And of huge space

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: And of a huge kind of entrance which would have been fantastic,

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: To be doing.

FIONA: You know the ballroom dancers or the Italian woman's choir, or ... the Chinese sword guy who did the beautiful Tai Chi sword work ... you know they didn't know the whole thing but they were actually delighted to be part of something which was actually, ... exposing their practice.

REBECCA: Yes

FIONA: And, and that was joyful, you know, and I think there was a sense of joy in that whole, in that whole experience for people. I don't feel there is, I mean I, I have more ethical ambivalence or dilemma about the ensemble performance that we put on the train actually with, with ...

REBECCA: the face to face

FIONA: With the face, with much, much more ... confronting potential. I mean not that we would ever have expected that, that particular incident to happen or want that to happen. Have you seen Eugene's film?

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: Not that I would have ever expected that to happen. And I think that was quite extraordinary ... that they could have been so unlucky to come across somebody who was so aggressive. But, you know I have an ethical problem with having exposing those two young performers to that. I mean they were devastated, it was horrible. And their experience of the whole gig was quite coloured by that.

REBECCA: Yes. There, There were quite a few, When I, my journey though there were quite a few little incidents, that they, that were not part of your show, that still were really informed what I got from it

REBECCA: But they weren't, but they were part of what was amazing about it. Was that I was engaging with a space, and with people that use that space on their own

with no engagement with what you were doing and that was quite powerful so I think ... like that that confrontation was part of travelling the lines

FIONA: ....Yes...

REBECCA: and its part of the experience of catching trains a lot.

FIONA: ...Yes

REBECCA: Which you do, especially the west.

FIONA: ...Yes

REBECCA: And like it was very honest that those type of confrontations occurred. It was just kind of bigger because it was a show,

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: but it was quite powerful that there was those clash moments

FIONA: Yeah, Yeah I just don't think we prepared those young performers well enough.

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: Because I think *we* were naïve. ... And I think that ... you know, that's one of the things John and I were both talking about. You know, working in, in community based practice the other day you know, some, you often do things naively that you look back and go whoa

REBECCA: (Laughs)

FIONA: and mostly you get away with it all, or there's you know something surprising actually emerges from it, but you know but there is always that thing where you can't actually can't plan it in the same way in that ... you can plan other

REBECCA: Contained space (Laughs)

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FIONA: Yeah, That's right.

REBECCA: And actors who are kind of different, it's very different. ... the kind of word communities, that's thrown around alot did you feel at the time you had kind of working definitions of that, or you were kind of engaging people as they came. I mean how did you, sort of define community for yourself?

FIONA: We'd, we'd ... gone through lots of debates about that and I think, you know, we'd just, ... we had worked with communities of interest or communities that were, ... ah supposedly communities because they shared you know, an ethnicity or whatever.

REBECCA: ...mmm

FIONA: And of course there is so much difference in any of in any of those supposed ... you know, community groups, cause there is so much difference in any grouping

REBECCA: ...mmm

FIONA: so, so on *TrackWork* we're really ... we're just, it was it was not any specific community it was people who responded to wanting to be in a show on trains, and that was incredibly diverse, and there you know, were young, young students who were going through UWS who wanted to perform and there were, ... you know people who come out of the woodwork because they thought it sounded fun, all sorts of different people and that was really great.

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: And then of course *we* made the invitations to the Italian woman's choir or the or Terry Woo or you know the people we wanted to perform on the platforms. The, the local . And that was, that was, our original idea for that was actually to, to approach the at Lidcombe for example, the ballroom dancers, the sword Tai Chi work was actually, ... was actually from the local Chinese, the local Chinese Centre which is near the Lidcombe station. So we had approached them to sort of find out what goes on there and ... and had then made the invitation. And so they were, they were animating their own local space.

REBECCA: Yeah,

FIONA: Which I really loved

REBECCA: I loved that too ownership over the modules. you know, all the different pieces it was a kind of celebratory ownership over each little artwork. You know over all it was very powerful, Each little component was quite wonderful on its own which I thought was great. But yet the fluidity kind of kept it ... not being tied down, like you said, to sort of stereotypical ideas of what a grouping is or that was quite amazing. Do you think that the measurement of results, like results, how successful something was, is different between community culture development work and contemporary performance and…

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: Did you find that kind of hard to kind of track with *TrackWork*, how successful the piece was. I mean

REBECCA: Did you feel like

FIONA: Look contemporary performance people loved it. So there was kind of no sense that ... , you know, there was sense of great excitement and a lot of discussion about it, and that was great, ... and some of the community arts workers in Western Sydney, and Community Cultural Development workers hated it

REBECCA: Wahoo

FIONA: And felt like it was, ... you know, they didn't know what to look at and ... you know actually all the things that you're talking about loving it for actually were the reasons that they hated it, ... and sensed it a lack of art about it, which was really interesting and ...

REBECCA: And kind of patronising. (laughs)

FIONA: Indeed, and I think ... I guess, you know that was that was a very interesting moment actually because I was kind of like ash, this is about you know, a history of a

practice that, ... that, that has many traditions in nailing things down, pinning things up for the audience, reflecting them back, ... and you know, at it's very worst ... telling people how to think.

REBECCA: Mmm

FIONA: Which of course, of course this experience of travelling around on the trains is actually a lot about. And, you know I was much more worried about people being a bit bored

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: Than John was. ... But, but then you know the day that we actually did the... when we actually ... So I was kind of abstractly worried about people being bored. ... but the day that we actually, when we'd finally worked out what the route was, and, and we went and actually did it.

FIONA: ... you know obviously there was no performances cause we were actually just tracking it out. The day that we did that I stopped worrying about people being bored cause there's so much to watch (laughs)

REBECCA: Without anything added (laughs)

FIONA: Without anything happening, yeah that's right. So ... So I thought if people are alert to the fact that they're watching for something, you know, they're gonna actually see a lot. And, and I had friends up from Melbourne who don't know Western Sydney, who don't know Sydney, who, who don't know contemporary performance practice or, you know and ah, they happened to be ... there the weekend, or in Sydney the weekend of that it opened, so they came on the opening show, and they just found it fascinating, and they loved the fact that they didn't ... that they didn't, ... that they didn't know what to look at. You know

REBECCA: Mmm

FIONA: So it was ... you know there were very different kind of responses to ... to it's unwieldiness.

REBECCA: I went and caught the trains again, recently, just to try and remember the spaces and to kind of walk back across the line, You know the way that. And from my memory which is, ... And, so I just took a few photos. They're not very artistic, they were just things to try and remember, you know, where things happened. And I just thought you could maybe give me a few responses to some of the spaces. Like things that come to memory from, from working there or ... things you know reminds you of the *TrackWork* process.

FIONA: ... where's that, is that Lidcombe?

REBECCA: Redfern I think.

FIONA: Ah that's Redfern.

REBECCA: But see all the stations have changed so much.

FIONA: Yeah they have actually.

REBECCA: So much surveillance.

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: So much more kind of transit officers,

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: And electronic, you know, new kind of technologies that it was quite amazing how much it had shifted

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: So sometimes they're not they're not almost recognisable some of the places.

FIONA: Yeah. Ah it's weird, Ah Ah look.

REBECCA: How was working at Redfern?

FIONA: Working at Redfern was fine, ... It was ... I mean I'll never forget the first the very first show because we. The, The stewards had to be on the trains when the audience got on in Redfern. So John and I took turns in, him being at Redfern and dealing with the, the first audience, but also in dealing with the performances on, on the Redfern railways station. Where as, I was dealing with the ensemble in the, ... YWCA room. We got a special little dressing room in Central that was giving to us by, the YWCA. Why the YWCA has a room at Central?

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: A little, a little tiny room, or CWA or somebody.

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: ... at Central station so it was a tiny room and there were thirty or something in the ensemble. So all their uniform and hats and so we're already there and all excited, and some of them were pretty crazy, and....

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: you know, trying to sort of wrangle them together so that they were on the right trains in time to welcome the audience.

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: to Redfern was hilarious. So, So my relationship to Redfern station is kind of, you know ... not so intense actually. That was kind of more Johns gig, ... but you know the performances that were on Redfern were again Redfern specifics that was the water, The Waterloo Girls and ... I think there was some hip-hop, ... on the station as well. But certainly Waterloo Girls did their dance work there.

REBECCA: Ah, Cassette player of with the, you know, (laughs)

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: That's just one of the trains, and again I don't know how much they have shifted, the actual trains.

FIONA: Ah yeah, well it depended. There were, were some of these, but there were there were different trains, and different kind of designs within the trains, and seats that moved and didn't move

REBECCA: Ah, and, and did you not know quite what train you were gonna get?

FIONA: No. You never knew what you were gonna get.

REBECCA: Ah, amazing.

FIONA: You just knew what time it was gonna come.

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: And they did come on time I'd have to say.

REBECCA: Actually the timetable when I did the re-walk was very similar.

FIONA: Oh was it?

REBECCA: So I catching trains at the same times.

FIONA: Ah right.

REBECCA: It was winter so it's dark earlier, but it was the same sort of, you know almost exactly to the minute timetable that it was ten years ago. So it was surreal. (laughs)

FIONA: It does remind of a moment on Auburn station actually, that Ian Maxwell witnessed. He was the only person who did witness it, but it was ... again the first show and ... I don't remember how many, how many ... runs we'd had of it, but maybe one or two

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: and ah, and again you know, so John and I were quite separate. We didn't meet up till Cabramatta or somewhere. So we were quite separate doing different things with the different stations and the different ensemble and the ensemble, but I remember this moment at ... at Auburn where we were going back to wherever, and ... the train was two minutes early.

REBECCA: (laughs) Ah no.

FIONA: And I stood there absolutely panicking and, and I went up to the, I went up, and I can't remember if I got on to the driver, and I was standing right at the head of the train. And I had people, And I had people lined up along here.

REBECCA: Wahoo

FIONA: ready to get on, but all going it's early, and looking at me and ... and ... ah, and I was trying to find out if this was the train, but it was just 2mins early. If this was THE train.

REBECCA: The right one.

FIONA: And I was completely, and Ian Maxwell was, you know, Ian. So the audience must have been there as well, you know, waiting to be. The performers were trying to work out whether this was the audience, they wanted to take the audience on. And ... and Ian Maxwell just saw me, and just was hysterical laughing and looking at me trying to kind of, trying to get this information out of this person who did not give a toss.

REBECCA: And didn't know who you were.

FIONA: And who just was like, you know, get on the train, if this is your train. You know.

REBECCA: (laughs) Hysterical. This is like ... I don't know how much Redfern has changed. It felt a lot bigger, this time.

FIONA: Yeah it has, they built all this

REBECCA: but I was very young, and they built all this new

FIONA: So, it was tiny. Redfern was so tiny, there was just that

REBECCA: That was my memory of it, but I didn't know if I had kind of shrunk it in my head.

FIONA: Yeah I know. All this wasn't built so it was just that, that front bit that's still there. That in fact they never go in, cause I go in that side now, but now, now they've closed it off after the Redfern, after the riots at Everleigh but ... the, the little space that you used to go, that you still go in and buy your tickets, and then there are the, the, ... what do you call it, the machines there. We had the tables, I can't remember, we had the tables with the, with the suitcases all set up there. All piled up.

REBECCA: ....Yes

FIONA: ... the suitcases that had, what did they have water, a flower,

REBECCA: an apple,

FIONA: yeah

REBECCA: They were gorgeous.

FIONA: (laughs)

REBECCA: I think, I don't know again whether this has changed, it just seemed to be signage everywhere, all over the stations, with what was the property of state rail, what wasn't the property of state rail

FIONA: ...

REBECCA: What you could do on the stations. how you could, you know, leave certain ways and not other ways. Did that effect the performance or is that kind of come

FIONA: It's much more intense now.

REBECCA: Yeah.

FIONA: Yeah...

REBECCA: Kind of restriction of traffic.

FIONA: We did, we did have to obey all that stuff though. I mean we were not, we were not left to run rampant by any means. ... but, but no, and, and you know people were, peoples kind of ... you know, pre-terror ... persona's on the railways were very relaxed.

REBECCA: ...mmm

FIONA: You know in fact very non communicative. ... you know, uninterested really, (laughs) which was quite useful.

REBECCA: I was very concerned about taking photographs and writing notes on this four hour journey around Sydney

FIONA: Oh really?

REBECCA: I was like, I look a bit suspicious now, you think I would have been fine. I think that's Cabramatta, at the end of, at the edge of Cabramatta. ... this is the Berala? Waiting room

FIONA: Oh God, yes

REBECCA: I don't know that I actually saw what was set up in there. Was, Was there an installation in there? Or?

FIONA: There was. I can't remember what it was, to tell you the truth.

REBECCA: How was working at Berala?

FIONA: Berala was really hard, only because it felt really ... it always felt empty.

REBECCA: Yeah.

FIONA: There was, there was just ... that was one of the ones that we really struggled with what we would do there.

REBECCA: Mmmm

FIONA: ... we wanted, we wanted to do something quite big there actually and it was just, and we didn't have the resources to do it, but ... I don't remember what the installation was actually which is terrible, but ... but I remember that we had ... an opera singer up one end

REBECCA: I loved that.

FIONA: And a guy who was ... who was a really a great community participant but very, but clinically very mad, and ... who was a performance poet and he came out of the rubbish bin and did this performance.

REBECCA: Ahhh

FIONA: But he had a freak out. I think he only did one or two performances

REBECCA: Oh really?

FIONA: and we couldn't get him back

REBECCA: It's too hard for him.

FIONA: Something, something happened and he was, felt really upset about it, and

REBECCA: Yes

FIONA: And didn't come back...

REBECCA: Is Berala where the brides were?

FIONA: and the brides

REBECCA: and the brides

FIONA: Yeah so, and the brides you know coming, being tossed out of the limousine. It was gorgeous. And that was PACT off course, that was you know

REBECCA: Yup. It felt so ... so more so of regional Berala

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: Than the other stations in terms of what was around the station, and where the houses were in relation to the trains

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: Felt more like you were in people cul-de-sacs.

FIONA: Yeah,

REBECCA: Than, Than some of the city ones. Did the kind of locals come out and be involved? Or?

FIONA: No, not much. In fact we couldn't get a lot of interest from Berala at all. But, but the days of the performances, The Brides caused a lot of attention.

REBECCA: Ah good.

FIONA: And so people just kind of came out, came out to their back yards or front yards, and just looked. Or cars would stop and people would get out. So there's that kind of stuff. But yeah the station itself was always really quite desolate.

REBECCA: ....mmm

FIONA: It was very different.

REBECCA: Mmmm

FIONA: It was very interesting.

REBECCA: I think that the difference between the Redfern kind of technology (laughs)

FIONA: Ah, Yeah.

REBECCA: And Berala still got the old

FIONA: Yeah I love that.

REBECCA: Yeah.

FIONA: I think that technology was still at Redfern though,

REBECCA: Yeah.

FIONA: when we did the show.

REBECCA: Yeah it's more of an inner city thing.

FIONA: Yeah. Yeah.

REBECCA: Did the ... guard coming out flicking the things, And going back

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: Into their little box was really great. (laughs)

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: I didn't remember it from the show, but on the second walk around. These are just pictures of some of it. People. I think that's one of the ones, I remember looking across platforms at quite a lot of stuff. You know.

FIONA: Yeah,

REBECCA: People on a different platform to what were called.

FIONA: Yeah. Yeah, and that was certainly the case at ... at Redfern and ah, and at ... No Grandville were

REBECCA: Yeah Grandville I think with the hip hop and the gravity.

FIONA: Gravity Feed yeah.

REBECCA: Yeah, there was quite great

FIONA: That was, yes

REBECCA: You felt like you were looking through spaces. It was, it was quite great, and sometimes, you know, with a train going by you'd be looking through the

FIONA: Yeah

REBECCA: you'd loose glimpse of the train. And people would suddenly instead of seeing that, and that was quite amazing, and that was the Auburn Street
FIONA: Yeah, the Auburn Streetscape. Powerhouse did their Streetscape

REBECCA: Yeah, how did the ... shop keepers engage with that? Was that something that they.

FIONA: Michael McLaughlin dealt with that actually ...

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: So he, he, you know and that was one of the reasons why it could be such a big, big production really because that you know PACT dealt with their sections and ... and Powerhouse dealt with their sections and we did the rest, and they, they talked with people and they borrowed stuff from shops.

REBECCA: Ah great.

FIONA: So they did actually have a relationship, and explained to people what was

REBECCA: It looked like it did, but I didn't know if it had

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: been a surprise from them as well as us. You know?

FIONA: Well it would have been a surprise for some of the, for the people walking along the street, and probably for some of the shop keepers.

REBECCA: Hmm.

FIONA: but I know that, ... they, they definitely kind of talk to, talk to a few of the shops, and actually make some kind of relationship, and explain what was going on.

REBECCA: That was a moment where I, and there was a guy standing there who wasn't part of the show, but who I didn't know, who got very interested in a bunch of people to perform for really. And started yelling at me. I don't know if you remember this about ... "you don't know what war is, you have no concept of war"

FIONA: Mmm

REBECCA: and that was really amazing because I'm looking down at this great kind of great celebratory multiculturism and then I've got a guy who felt like a veteran but I didn't know anything about him.

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: Sort of just going bunch of people in my space.

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: And I didn't know which was show and which wasn't and that was beautiful. And these are just sort of generally looking out the windows. Sort of down at things. And stairs, And they still have these *TrackWork* posters everywhere.

(laughs). And . I actually went looking for the ..., for the Cabramatta mall that you guys used, and I didn't know where it was cause it was so with the performance.

FIONA: Ah yeah.

REBECCA: I found this other mall that like a Chinese, you know that had dragons and kind of archways and I thought, I don't remember it being like that

FIONA: That's further up, That's further up. So the place where, where we where was not, if you didn't walk so far up, it was just quite a, ... down beat kind of square really. There was

REBECCA: This was how I remembered it, but it was very. I didn't know if had been redone up, or if I had just lost my sense of perspective on what it was

FIONA: Look I haven't been to Cabramatta for quite a few years. So maybe it's not there or its, or you know they've done something else to it.

REBECCA: Yeah

FIONA: And it was certainly a druggy part

REBECCA: Hmmm

FIONA: cause it was, ... yeah there were lots of stories about, ... again I think it was the first performance that the you know, the ... guy on the phone who was in the audience that ... guy on the phone, but without a suitcase, so we knew that he kind of joined the audience, but he just said "nah I'm here I'm here I'm hanging out, nah I'm here, nah I'm watching a play."

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: "Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah got it, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah,Yeah, I've got some for you, Yeah, Yeah," and so it was like this classical drug dealer. Just, you know

REBECCA: Oh my god, in the middle of everything?

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FIONA: talking in the middle of this, you know, very sweet, ... piece.

REBECCA: Amazing, beautiful, did City Moon the piece? that was gorgeous.

FIONA: I was like Oh right, OK. We have interrupted his space, because he was just sitting down on one of the benches.

REBECCA: Doing his business. (laughs) How amazing.

FIONA: Yeah, I mean this stuff, you know unravelled. It was very funny.

REBECCA: The station was Grandville which was the greater, the hip hop, ... and that was one of the best memories for me. Was you used singing with a mad bunch of people across platforms. "Pauline Hanson sucks" (laughs) It was fantastic.

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: and how was that station? Did that kind of being putting stuff more on the station rather than working with the kind of early, or was?

FIONA: Well they were, ... that was, that was more putting stuff on the station, but they were also people who had come out of *Hip-Hopera,* that show

REBECCA: Yup

FIONA: ... so that Bruthablack and Danielle and Ebony WIlliams

REBECCA: Yup

FIONA: and Ebony, and Williamson, and Danielle

REBECCA: Mental blank. (laughs)

FIONA: So they, they were interested in being involved and we were, we were trying to find a spot for them basically. And...

REBECCA: It was a great way to end.

FIONA: It was a great way to end, and we did, we did after the first show have, we, we did the station master there. The only problem we had with content was that, was there.

REBECCA: Whoa

FIONA: When ... we, when people started calling out Paulina Hanson sucks. And ... the station master said, well you know I don't know that this is allowed.

REBECCA: Woo

FIONA: And ... clearly just because he didn't agree with it.

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: And we had this kind of, oh fuck what we gonna do now. And we just though we'll just, we will just see what happens. See if they try to close us down.

REBECCA: Yup

FIONA: And they didn't, they just didn't follow it up. And we decided to not follow him up, you know.

REBECCA: Just let it sit and see what happens.

FIONA: See what happens. And you know I don't, I'd be interested to know if they ever got any complaints, but probably not.

REBECCA: Amazing, cause there was also quite a lot of buskers that used those spaces too.

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: So sometimes I wasn't sure if things were part of the shows or people that, ordinarily go and perform those spaces. Re-walking the tracks there were quite a lot of buskers. So I was still getting a lot of engagement with performers.

FIONA: Hmmm

REBECCA: ... new ones, but that was quite interesting where I thought some stuff you know? I have a list of, of what was in your show but

FIONA: Hmmm

REBECCA: But some of the things I remember may actually have been kind of people who wandered in and found an audience.

FIONA: Hmmm

REBECCA: And then when I finished Granville the kind of remapped city that I had before me was amazing. Did people hang around a lot at Grandville or did you think, did they kind of move on quickly.

FIONA: No, no because it had been quite long, it had been a long experience and ... ah no people kind of, it was a real sense of, a lot of people said this, and I felt it. There was a real sense of ... wanting to go home, but also, ahh, sort of un escorted you know that was kind of disappointment about being left in this place

REBECCA: Very interesting about being left to get home by myself.

FIONA: Yeah.

REBECCA: Yeah. (laughs)

FIONA: People said, People said that they felt a slight sense of abandonment.

REBECCA: (laughs)

FIONA: Which is really funny you know.

REBECCA: but I just felt like I had a whole city that I didn't even know I had. So it was kind of more of a sense of adventure suddenly. It was like I might stop off some of these places, and hang out. You know, but I was exhausted from the whole kind of experience, but it was great.

FIONA: I can't even remember how many shows we did. We must have done four.

REBECCA: It was two weekends wasn't it?

FIONA: Yeah, Saturday and Sunday.

REBECCA: Yeah, I think I went the last night ... yeah. Ok. Thank-you so much. That's the end of what I have.

FIONA: It's all right.

REBECCA: It was a great show Thankyou.

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APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPT

Excerpt of interview with Morgan Lewis (Morganics)

Interviewed by Rebecca Caines

Stamping Ground Dance Festival, Bellingen Memorial Hall, Bellingen, January 14, 2003.

REBECCA: So maybe starting off with what attracted you to working in hip hop and theatre?

MORGAN: Hip Hop and theatre? I first got into theatre

REBECCA: Yes?

MORGAN: When I was eleven. Umm I think it was a third Royal Easter Show with my parents and I came across this stall for the youth theatre company, Australian Theatre for Young People, and I was like yeah I wanta do that, I wanta be Charlie Chaplin. (laugh) I wanta do that, so umm believe it or not I was sorta shy then
and umm so I went to these acting classes and just sorta worked at it and enjoyed it, and umm started acting and you know I think I sort of ... I got a few roles early on. umm and then when I was thirteen you know breaking started and [... coming into Australia in 1984 .....

REBECCA: (loud noise from dancers rehearsing nearby) Talking about classes!

MORGAN: Umm yeah in '84 breakin started to hit Sydney through the TV and stuff and umm I was just pretty immediately taken by it and loved it and just thought wow just sort of learnt it of watching videos on TV and through friends and stuff, and we'd go. You know I'd work out all those shows and I'd go and busk you know on George Street and down at Circular Quay, and umm and really since then you know in one way or another I've sort of combined them.

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: Yeah.

REBECCA: The combination is really interesting.

MORGAN: mmmh huh.

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: Yeah me to

REBECCA: Somebody recently.in an article in RealTime, I don't know if you

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get to read your own press, was talking about cultural activism.

MORGAN: Yeah

REBECCA: Yeah, do you think your work is involved in cultural activism?

MORGAN: Yeah, I think it's a good way to put it. Yeah I think it is. Yeah,

REBECCA: So what do you reckon the politics of what you're doing is?

MORGAN: I think the sort of what I enjoy about what I do is that
there are no real politics. And that I'm not trying to shove an agenda down people's
throats. It's more that I'm just a facilitator.

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: And the communities I get to work with are you know
communities who that generally people who come from rougher backgrounds.

REBECCA: Yeah.

MORGAN: And so they get to speak and tell their stories as diverse as they are.

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: Through the medium of hip hop. You know and umm and that's what
I like about it because, you know, to be able tell you the truth I'm a bit sick of some
people going, "Oh it's so good what you do for aboriginal people".   Without going
aahhh bullshit. I just don't wanta hear that. It's just

REBECCA: Yeah

MORGAN: So ridiculous

REBECCA: Yes it is, and patronising.

MORGAN: Patronising to them and to me and umm yeah like everywhere I go the
things I do I get paid.

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: I'm not like some

REBECCA: Some charity

MORGAN: I'm not a charity. I don't do it as charity.

REBECCA: You're an artist.

MORGAN: I do it as work and umm like some social workers do, I don't go into
communities to try and make friends. As part of the way I approach the work is I
wanta go in and do work. And, you know, if a relationship comes out of that, that's
cool, where as a lot of what I come across is a fair few social workers and arts
workers in different ways who can I understand is different approach umm might be
like, you know, your fascinating, you're an incredible person, da da da da da and

when I try and become peoples friends and stuff like that. And it's like, look realistically, you know, what do I really have in common with a fifteen year old aboriginal girl? You know.

REBECCA: Yeah.

MORGAN: Living out in a small country town. Not a great deal.

REBECCA: Your work.

MORGAN: Yeah, Yeah.

REBECCA: That's what you've got as common ground.

MORGAN: Yeah, and that's where we connect, so just focus on the specifics, and I think they respect that. They're like, "Yeah good, he's not, you know, not trying to piss in their apartment".

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: Not trying to give praise easily.

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: Umm, but so when you do give praise it does mean something. And that way you can build a real relationship in a I think

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: In, in that sense. And, and that's cool.

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: If good things come out then that's great, but it's not the purpose of it.

REBECCA: Yeah right.

MORGAN: Yeah, you don't wanta be [...] There's nothing worse in community work than people who say they'll do something and then don't.

REBECCA: Oh god, yeah.

MORGAN: You know like, over commit. "Oh yeah I'll come back".

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: you know you know, you get that all the time when I'm in communities. "When are you coming back?" And then it's really tough, but you have to say, "I'm not sure, yeah to little kids"

REBECCA: and they remember it, and it's so important to be real, and keep your promises

MORGAN: Yeah, yeah, exactly, so important, but also you must understand it's easy to go, "Ooah, Real soon"

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REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: Or something but, you know, It comes back on you so (Morgan laugh) so you know, "I'll help you out, I'll keep working with you" da da d a da just doesn't work

REBECCA: Yeah.

MORGAN: Well if your not, your not.

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: So you do that time, and say, "great, good and if something else comes up excellent" you know

REBECCA: Yeah. So the lyrics in the MCing and the Beatboxing and the stuff that people talk about.

MORGAN: Hmm.

REBECCA: That's coming from their own experiences. How do you bring that out of people? How do you encourage people to talk?

MORGAN: It's pretty relatively simple in the workshops I'd often play some other tracks from other communities. So this bunch they'd, you know, rap about this, this mob raps about this. You know. You don't have to rap about either of those things, but what I'd like to hear is that: What do you want to rap about? What's happening in your life? What's going on? You know, What do you get in to? What do you like doing? I generally like to keep it reasonably positive. Umm, but things will come up, and it's quite, I mean really, that's where the politics are in your life.

REBECCA: Oh yeah

MORGAN: A lot of them have never written something before.

REBECCA: or never been heard at all.

MORGAN: And never been heard. Yeah, Yeah, that's right. And so, and they will write very candidly, very honestly about their lives, and that's really, umm that's something, you know like, them sharing that with me and thus with the listeners is umm something you know that sort of a responsibility that I try and take seriously and respect, respectfully, so that, you know, your just on with what they're doing.

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: You know really you know as a community artist you're there to facilitate them for them.

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: You're there for them. It's not about me doing exactly the type of hip hop I love.

REBECCA: No

MORGAN: Mmm.

REBECCA: but it is also a dialogue, it's a working with, rather than a working for.

MORGAN: Yeah.

REBECCA: and that's like the best thing about it. You put it together rather than a patronising here I'm gonna give you this thing

MORGAN: This is how you do it, This is what you do exactly. Yeah

REBECCA: Yeah, it comes out together.

MORGAN: Yeah, Yeah, and that's good. That normally happens. Yeah that.

REBECCA: You talk a lot about not using an American voice, or speaking outside an American voice.

MORGAN: Yeah.

REBECCA: Why?

MORGAN: Ah, it's cause I'm not American.

REBECCA: Yeah?

MORGAN: Most people I work with aren't American.

REBECCA: Yeah. I guess there's been an argument, a bit of an argument that aboriginal communities have some sort of solidarity with Black American communities because of the politics and the feeling that they have a brother or a feeling overseas can help them feel they can get out of whatever they're in. What do you think?

MORGAN: Yeah, well I give respect to people like Chuck D from Public Enemy.

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: Umm and Michael Franti to a lesser degree, but with Chuck D I know every time he comes to Sydney well go down to the radio Skid Row and often connect with The Block, and I like that. But I think he's a bit more of the exception that the rule.

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: People like 50cent wouldn't give a shit. Unless they're gonna make money. And yeah they just see a connection, but of course when you break it down the real connection should be with, you know, native Americans.

REBECCA: Yes.

MORGAN: Cause they don't really have anything historically.

REBECCA: There's no connection historically, but the solidarity of feeling of another oppressed group becomes that is

MORGAN: Umm yeah I think they relate to a lot of the African American experience. Racism, poverty, high rate of incarceration frustration, struggle, umm and then a lot of RnB these days is about guys trying to pick up girls, girls trying to pick up guys and they can relate to it on all of those levels. And you know you get guys trying to be tough guys, girls trying to be tough guys.

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: so they can go out to all those different levels

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: People like 2pac and Dre . 2pac is sort of like the bible in every aboriginal community that I've been to, all the teenagers will love 2pac and 50cent

REBECCA: Yes

MORGAN: I don't like either of them …but you know, that's cause I'm white. (laugh)

REBECCA: Where do you come from?

MORGAN: born in Brissie, moved to Sydney when I was 5. My dad's side was Welsh and French going back my Mums is English, Scottish and Spanish.

REBECCA: And do you bring any of that in your work?

MORGAN: I try to, I mean I did with Meta Bass'n'Breath. We all did then.

(Interview continued with details on Morgan's background)

APPENDIX D

DESCRIPTION OF MORGANICS WORKSHOP – "INTRODUCTION TO HIP-HOP AND BREAK"

Stamping Ground Dance Festival
Diggers Tavern, Bellingen
January 12th 2003

(Stamping Ground Dance Festival is the longest running dance festival in Australia and is focussed on supporting male inclusion in dance. Male-only and mixed classes in classical, contemporary, popular and international dance forms as well as in alternative lifestyle workshops, martial arts, circus arts, gymnastics and many other physical disciplines are held across a number of studios and community venues in the small town of Bellingen on the North Coast of NSW, Australia. The annual festival runs for two weeks in January and attracts around six hundred dancers of all levels and backgrounds.)

I walk into the hall at 2pm, via the long way, through the front entrance and Diggers Bar. It smells of stale cigarettes and there is rugby league on the television, although no one seems to be watching it. I remember when this was an RSL (Returned Servicemen's League Club) and I worked here as a nineteen year old, handing out rolls of one dollar coins to pensioners to use on the pokies[slot machines] and serving beer with a rum chaser to old, red-faced men at 11.30am. Nothing much has changed, except the name. Most people enter the hall through the side door and just walk by the edge of the bar. A teenaged boy and the bar-tender exchange hostile eye contact, across the space, and the bar-tender comes out threateningly to block entrance to the bar area. The teenager laughs and goes into the hall. I sense that there is history between these two. These spaces are obviously divided and patrolled. I wonder at the venues that community art utilises: a bar with a dining hall attached becomes a hip-hop workshop studio, last week it was a bingo hall and later a flamenco theatre, the week before a jazz club. In between there is ballroom dancing, acrobatics and children's karate. On Thursdays there are landscape painters easels set up in a circle on pieces of newspaper. This site/concept/space is made and remade daily and I wonder what it will become tomorrow.

I walk through into the back hall. It used to be a ballroom and there is a large circle of wooden floor and a stage at one end. The floor is marked from the scrapes of countless chairs and tables, currently stacked in uneven piles around the walls. Morgan is not here yet and three groups of local young white men stand around waiting. None of them have come to any of the other dance workshops at the festival. Two I recognise as local boys who get drunk in the town park regularly and who are constantly in trouble from the police. There are four kids here, aged between four and ten, of mixed cultural background, some are local, some just here for the dance festival. There are two mothers watching from a corner, perched on a tottering pile of tables. There is one young, local white woman, aged about twenty, warming up in a corner. There is one local, grey haired man in his fifties here to do the class, currently chatting to one of the mothers. It is very hot, the air conditioner struggles with the 40 degree Celsuis heat with the open doors. Morgan rushes in, straight from another class, dripping with sweat and carrying a small amp, a backpack and tiny, tinny CD player, appropriated by festival staff from a local youth centre in a hurry when the larger one broke. I don't feel too uncomfortable watching, as the mothers stay to watch as well.

The groups gather, children and teenagers, men and one woman. Morgan introduces himself, naming his hip-hop lineage with Meta Bass'n'Breath and his tours. He gives a brief history lesson on hip-hop, and then breaks it down into its elements, asking for answers from the audience. I am reminded again how incongruous it seems; this young, geeky looking white Aussie man and the black hip-hop street culture and history he cites. He reminds the class that hip-hop is not just American, that it's active in Germany, in France, in Brazil, in rural Australia. One of the younger Indigenous kids is down on scholarship from the Northern Territory for the dance festival and knows Morgan from workshops he did up there. He obviously idolises him, running to meet him when he arrives, chatting incessantly as Morgan plugs in the player, answering every question with glee. "Mr Morganics, Mr Morganics, Mr Morganics, over here Mr Morganics"

Morgan reminds the class that hip-hop is about who you are, where you come from He tries to play some samples of beat-boxing and raps recorded from other workshops he has done, but it's difficult to hear on the cheap sound system. He doesn't seem phased and takes out a mike from his backpack and plugs it into the amp and holds it up against the tiny CD speakers, making do, as per normal, always making do. He plays Indigenous kids rapping about their lives in "Down River". He

shows them his virtuoso beat box routine "DJ Invisible", miming and beat boxing a DJ set. The class cheers and whistles. He explains that today, since it is a dance festival, he will concentrate on breaking. He then leaves the mike precariously balanced to amplify the music for the class.

Much of the workshop that follows is a standard dance class: the group standing in two lines, dance elements repeated and practiced, short routines learnt, much encouragement. The class is beginners but it is obvious some of the older teenagers have some moves already. Towards the end, however, a circle forms and one at a time people move in to practice moves in the centre, with applause from the circle. There is a sense of achievement, or daring, of anything goes. The ten-year-old has done ballet and mixes it into the hip-hop moves into a strange hybrid of leaps and spins. There are roars of approval. The older man has no fear and his moves are jerky and out of time. He adds in yoga poses and laughs to himself. He is also applauded and patted on the back when he rejoins the circle. The one woman takes a while to enter the circle, but when she does, there are cheers, led by Morgan, and she takes courage to try difficult hand spins and balances, she mock aggressively goes up close to some of the young men and forces them to step back to avoid her. They laugh and put their hands up in submission. The young Northern Territory boy adds in dance moves imitating an emu, a wallaby. These look like traditional Indigenous dance elements and they sit well with the break moves the boy tries, although his thin arms aren't strong enough to hold some of the harder balances and he crumples to the floor repeatedly, laughing, always laughing. The moves in the circle are no longer always recognisable as what Morgan taught. They have become personalised, owned, remade by these bodies in this space. These are not dancers' bodies: some are lean and wiry, others rounded, many scarred, some still growing. All of them enter the circle, all of them claim space and attention and no one avoids the centre.

When the class finishes, the sense of excitement is palpable. Everybody is buzzing, voices are louder than usual, everybody is smiling. Most people leave. "Bye Mr Morganics, I have to go get lunch before the greedy bastards eat it all. Bye Mr Morganics, bye". Morgan stays and jams with four of the older teenage boys. The dining hall is large and empty now, the music from the cheap speakers echoing, the five bodies moving backwards and forwards, five young men in loose baggy trousers, some with no shirts, to the occasional sound of grunts, laughs and catcalls. There is friendly competition here as they try to outdo each other with complex moves. I

realise that for the last half of the workshop, it would not have been clear to a newcomer who was the student and who was the teacher.

I realise it has never mattered.

APPENDIX E

UNPUBLISHED PLAY SCRIPT

From the collection of Morgan Lewis (Morganics)

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CROUCHING BBOY, HIDDEN DREADLOCKS

A One Man Hip-Hop Theatre Show by Morganics

Scene 1. Long Bay Intro
Scene 2. All U Mob video
Scene 3. History of Hip Hop
Scene 4. Beatbox Workshop
Scene 5. DJ Invisible
Scene 6. The Businessman
Scene 7. Jail Arts Worker
Scene 8. Sally
Scene 9. Radio Show
Scene 10. For My Baby
Scene 11. Hip Hop Conference
Scene 12. Long Bay Intro to US video
Scene 13. US video
Scene 14. Bambaata
Scene 15. Nuts
Scene 16. I'm sick of....
Scene 17. Evolve
Scene 18. UTS Student
Scene 19. Maori fella
Scene 20. Nail Polish
Scene 21. Anna - Funky Vibrations
Scene 22. Sony A and R
Scene 23. Pitjanjarra rap
Scene 24. Jiggalong Creek
Scene 25. Freestyle
Scene 26. Crowd cypher
Scene 27. Bathurst
Scene 28. Stand Your Ground/Wetherill/Redfern
Scene 29. Keep Training
Scene 30. HOPE

Scene 1. Long Bay Intro

Is this the right room? Yeah, this is the right one? Cool. You guys are all VPP yeah? You guys must be here as part of the VPP, the Violence Prevention Program yeah? Have you all got your passes? Cool. So I guess that means you are all violent offenders yeah? This is my first time here in Long Bay Jail, doesn't look too bad, you fellas don't look too scary I think we should be allright. Some of you fellas are looking pretty feminine actually, oh well. My name is Morganics and I'm here to run some Hip Hop workshops with you. Any of you fellas into Hip Hop? Aah, come on, you can make more noise than that, any of you fellas like Hip Hop? Sweet. Well I'm gonna be here twice a week for the next six weeks and we're gonna record some Hip Hop tracks together, it should be fun. Let me introduce myself, as I said my name is Morganics, I'm an MC, so I rap, a Bboy, so I breakdance, a beatboxer (short beatbox demo), and I'm a producer as well. I started breaking back in 84 on th! e streets here in Sydney and I used to be in an Australian Hip Hop group MetaBass'n'Breath, we toured a Australia a lot and we spent about eight months in the States in '97, '98 performing at events like The Rocksteady Crew Anniversary. Since that I've been doing solo stuff, I've put out a few albums myself and I'm lucky enough to get to travel around the country teaching Hip Hop in community centres, Aboriginal communities, schools and jails, so I may have seen some of you fellas around if any of you were in Juvey at Cobham, or if you've done time up in Alice Springs, Darwin or Adelaide jail, I might catch you around the place. To give you fellas a bit of an idea of what I do I'd just like to show you a video clip for a track off my first album called All You Mob. Some good mates of mine are in it, Wire MC a Koori fella, a Gumbhangerey man, Stingray who's a Kamilaroi fella and from Maroubra, a Bra Boy and Haille Suspicious from Jamaica via New York now living in Bondi, which is where I live. So lets pump up the Long Bay Imax screen and check it out.

Scene 2. All U Mob Video.

PLAY VIDEO

Scene 3. History of Hip Hop

Give it up for all those fellas. So there you have a real example of some Aussie Hip Hop, but of course as we all know, Hip Hop didn't originate in Australia like most pop music this century, the blues, jazz, funk, rock, it came from another country. I did a workshop the other day at this primary school and I asked them where does Hip Hop come from and this little kid sticks up his hand and says "China!" and I say ok, when? "1637". A good guess but where do you guys think it came from, what country? ....Yes, America, what city?......New York, yes, what suburb?......The Bronx, yes, what part of the Bronx?......The South Bronx, good, now when? When did Hip Hop start?........Yes, the mid 70's. That's where Hip Hop started in the South Bronx in the mid 70's. The Bronx, I've been there, its a crazy neighbourhood, it's very poor, and really mixed, Puerto Rican, Cuban, African America, Russian,

Jamaican, White, Jewish, Turkish, all in this one area. Now I can tell you the first time I went to New York with my crew MetaBass I though "damn! how are they going to take a white guy from Australia rapping?" But they were cool, they were into the Australian accent and they were really supportive, which gave me a lot of strength to keep doing it. These days I get a lot of my inspiration, as you can see from the clip, from working with indigenous communities around the country. Koori, Murray, Noongah, Nunga all over the place, it's an honour to be invited into these different communities and as a white fella I learn heaps. It inspires me to keep evolving my identity as an Australian MC, so I can talk about Australian issues you know. Getting to work with fellas like you who have some amazing stories to tell is an honour too and that's what we're going to be doing is recording your stories in the form of Hip Hop.

Now do you guys know what the "elements" of Hip Hop are? You may not have though of it that way before, but like if you saw a Hip Hop video clip, what are some of the things you might see that are unique to Hip Hop? DJing, yes, like we see in every McDonalds commercial today, DJing as it is today comes from Hip Hop, good, what else? Graffiti? Yes, the first element of Hip Hop, some people say it started back in the sixties, and it's probably what some of you guys are locked up in here for, good and?....Dancing, yes, breakdancing or as we call it Bboying or Bgirling, the b stands for the break, the drum break, and what else? Rapping or as we now call it MCing, yes, that's it, the four main elements of Hip Hop; DJing, graffiti, Bboying and MCing. Now the fifth element is what we are going to cover right now, and that is......beatboxing.

Scene 4. Beatbox Workshop

(In point form)
Stand up....blow raspberries....shake your body out......beatboxing is mimmicking a drum machine, which is in turn mimmicking a drum kit.......kik drum......snare...rimshot....kik and rimshot pattern all together (divide group in half)....hats.....(try kik, rim and hat apattern with whole group).....clicks (Doug E Fresh).....I do a demo "that takes a little more time but you guys can practice that one when you're in lock down ".........DJ scratch......(kik, rim, hats and scratch all together)......scratch a word, eg, Long Bay (normal pitch, high pitch and low pitch)......do you guys all know your own names? Just checking, if I count to four then we all scratch our names at the same time, then no one will hear anyone else and no one will get embarrassed......OK sit back down give yourselves a round of applause....Now beatboxing gets a lot more fun when you use a microphone, so I'd like to show you guys a routine of mine, that I've performed around the place, in the States and ! stuff, what I've done is I actually smuggled this guy in to Long Bay, he's a small guy and he's very hard to see but here he is in Long Bay for you the fellas in green rocking the KT 26, he's only gonna come out if you make a hell of a lot of noise, so fellas make some noise for the one the only.... DJ Invisible!

Scene 5. DJ Invisible

(In point form)
Entrance....set up DJ turntables......scratch "make some noise"....scratch "fellas in Long Bay, you can do better than that, make some noise"....drop the beat....beatjuggle.... Hip Hop.....Dancehall.....Drum'n'Bass.....Slow down the juggle....speed it up.....overload, explode....and from the ashes......computer typing...."www.morganics.info/clicks/download".....into body, legs, lungs, hearbeat, "where did he go?" tongue in mouth.....clicks with bass.....type "take it high"....clicks high.....straight clicks "What's that skippy? clicks He fell down a cliff? clicks He broke his leg and what? clicks his the battery on his laptop has run out....clicks Dre beat......scratch "Don't smoke weed everyday"......"Use oxygen instead".....Darth Vader breathing....."Luke.....Luke...yeah Dad..you must learn to use the pitch bend....OK Dad I'll give it a go.....Star Wars theme...."very good Luke now hit me"......add beat......"knights of the underground table rise" ....."rise up injured war! rior".........."flip it and reverse it" reverse scratch "Morganics"....."oh, oh, oh, oh oh, oh, oh" "Morganics"...."I say, you wanna battle" "you say, I'm walking away"
Give it up for DJ Invisible

Scene 6. The Businessman

(Walk back to desk, turn baseball cap backwards)
Boys, boys, boys, allow me to introduce myself, I am a businessman. Let me tell you, I know what's going on....It's 1984! Where are we......outside Hoyts Cinema, George St, Sydney, what's playing? Beatstreet, Breakdance, Turbo, Electric Boogaloo and that gymnast girl, what's happening in America? Rock Steady Crew, rapdancing, it's hitting the world and I've been watching you boys doing your American backspins, your turtles, your moonwalks for the past couple of hours; you/are/some/of/the/best/rapdancers in Australia today. Boys.......I am a businessman and I am about to open Australia's first national rapdancing school, classes are currently being run down in Woy Woy squash courts and are about to expand nationally, and I am about to make Australia's first instructional rap dancing video, and the host will be none other than....James Reyne. I am looking for the three best rapdancers here to be in that video with Mr Reyne. So I've got twenty bucks right here for the best three to hop up and show me some of your style and I know there's a lot of talent out there, so don't be shy, twenty bucks, check it out, yes, it's invisible, a bit like that DJ, but don't worry it's just a theatrical device. Come on don't be shy I'll get some music going on your little ghetto blaster, I've got just one question for you......are you ready to break? Come on, are you ready to break?

Play Breaking track

Ad lib encourage Bboys
Allright put your hands together for those rapdancers!

Scene 7. Jail Arts Worker

(Take baseball cap off and hold it in his hands)

I just wanted to say......um....thankyou. Thankyou, and thankyou (step out into the crowd and shake people's hands). That was a fantastic workshop that you and Wire MC and Brotha Black and the Elf Immobilizer did just then. Allow me to introduce myself, my name is John and I am the Arts worker here at Adelaide Juvenile Jail, and I'd really like to say that I really appreciated what Wire said about the over use of the word "Bitch". We have a lot of young men in here who use that as every second word, and I really liked Elf Immobilizer's beatbox routine where he was using that bit of Deep Purple, it really took me back. Look, I haven't always worked in jails, I used to teach in High Schools in Sydney but the security issues just got to me, we had students involved in gangs and shootings, we had to lock up the entire playground to stop people getting in and we had boys walking through the corridors with their sleeves over their hands and we didn't know if they had a knife a gun or an iceblock. So I came here to work with a smaller team to try and meet the needs of these young men.....It isn't always pretty, we have one young boy who every year commits some minor crime a couple of weeks before his birthday, so he gets locked up because he knows that at least in here someone will remember his birthday, so each year we give him a cake and some pressies. He got locked up two years ago a couple of weeks before he turned fourteen, a year ago before he turned fifteen and just a few months ago before he turned sixteen. He's a male prostitute, he works down in Hindley St, that's how he makes a living, he's a pretty smart kid, sometimes when I'm down in Rundle Mall I bump into him, we'll go to a cafe, I'll buy him a cup of coffee, we sit down and we have a chat.

Scene 8. Sally

(Put baseball cap back on, sit on chair)

Oh me? Oh, my name is Sally and my favourite part of the show was when you and Brother Black were rapping about whets important to you.....and I just thought well, for me, you know, that's gotta be Jasmine eh? Hey Jassy? That's her new toy that one she loves it, it's her favourite colour, purple. She's fourteen months now and she's what's most important to me, before I had her I was on the goey and she's got a bit of a learning disability now, but she knows I love her, I love her more than anything else in the world. Sure, things have been a bit up and down and I know when we moved in with David that he was older than me and that he had a real temper and that time when he threw that plate and it hit her and it cracked her pelvis, well that's when I put my foot down didn't I? So we moved out and we got our own housing commission house and the bikies down the road really helped out, they said they would take one of the bedrooms and grow hydro in there, you know, grow dope, and ! they would pay for all the electricity and take care of all the security and protect us and give us $11,000 at the end of the year, and they gave me $500 up front so I went into town to celebrate and got myself just a little bit of goey - just cause it makes me a bit more confident you know - and I

got this limited edition Eminem jacket for $300, there are only two in Adelaide, and when they give me the $11,000 at the end of the year you know what I'm gonna do, I'm gonna build Jasmine the most beautiful nursery and you know what colour I'm gonna paint it? .....Purple.

Scene 9. Radio Show

You're tuned into Crouching Bboy Hidden Dreadlocks with myself Morganics here every Monday night on Sydney's Bondi FM, 88 on your dial. Your weekly dose of the yang of the Bboy with the ying of Jah Rastafari, conscious local and international Hip Hop, don't forget you can catch us on the webcam on www.bondifm.com.au. Well I just got back from a couple of weeks of workshops up in Kempsey on the north coast, Dungatti land up there, actually just got back this afternoon, sorry if I'm a bit tired. Hadn't been up there before, it's the biggest Koori population in NSW, didn't know that, bigger than Redfern or Moree. Home of some terrible massacres and the stolen generation but also the home of Slim Dusty and Archie Roach. I was up there with my mate Elf Tranzporter from my old crew MetaBass, we taught some beatboxing, MCing and breakdancing, a bit of R'n'B dance for the girls. I turned up with my laptop and we made some music, some beats with the young people there and then we helped them write some lyrics. This next track is from a young girl by the name of Katherine Toby, she's 14 years old, she just found out she was pregnant and she decided to keep the baby, she wanted to do a song for her baby and she wasn't sure what to call it so I just said why don't you call it For My Baby. So here it is, an exclusive on Crouching Bboy Hidden Dreadlocks, Bondi 88FM, Katherine Toby with her track "For My Baby".

Scene 10. For My Baby

(Play Minidisc "For My Baby" move away from chair, dance, return to chair, song stops)

Scene 11. Hip Hop Conference

OK, allright, allright, you got the article into 3D, got the press release out, OK, the PA should be here by now, don't worry it will be here soon, the stall holders are setting up they should be fine, there's a problem with access to the main hall can you speak to security, clear that one up, yes, yes, my speech is all ready, what time is it? OK, now we're ready to go, yes, I'm all set, press release, PA, stall holders, security, me, what? now, OK, let's go............

Good afternoon and welcome to Australia's first Hip Hop conference. Quick note, those of you who are here for the "Professionalism in Hip Hop" Panel discussion..........running a bit late, but it will be happening soon in room EG03. Those of you who are here for the DJ workshop that's happening in

Room EG02, if anyone has a spare pair of needles for the turntables, that would be great since when I rang the DJ HE WAS STILL CONING ON AT 3PM but that should be fine. Now the graffiti workshop is happening just outside in the alley way on the wall there. It's a legal piece that doesn't mean we've lost credibility but if anyone has come across the box of belton spray cans that we were going to use for the workshop, could you please give them back? AS ALL GRAFFITI ARE NOTHING BUT BLOODY CRIMINALS! Now the Mc-ing workshop will be going ahead but when I last spoke to the MC he was DRUNK! but that will still be happening. And the beatbox competition where we invited all the best beat! boxers from around Australia is unfortunately cancelled as NO ONE ENTERED! But I would like to thank you for coming along and please don't forget........ support ozzie hip hop!

Scene 12. Long Bay intro to U.S. video

Now fella's, don't lose your concentration, what were we up to? We covered beatboxing, I showed you some video from around Australia, yeah? You fella's still with me? good. What I'd like to do now is show you some video of when I went to the states about a year and a half ago. I was performing mostly in San Francisco but I also went to the Rocksteady crew anniversary in New York. Now a lot of people think that hip hop in America is just Snoop Dog, Dre, Eminem and Fifty Cent and Eminem but there is an awesome independent underground scene over there which is much bigger than anything we have here in Australia. So let's flick on the Long Bay Imax screen again and check out the video. The first scene is when I was performing in San Francisco at the DMC DJ championships.

Scene 13. U.S. video

Play video.

Scene 14. Afrika Bambaata

So as you can see, hip hop in America isn't just niggers, bitches, guns, gats, hoes, and bling bling, it's also about the culture of hip hop.......

Peace! What's that? Here, ok..... Peace! What's your name? What is it? Organix? That's tight, Organix.... oh! Morganics, my bad, my bad, oh Morganics...... Hey, I remember you man, you part of that crew....... Um......... Mega bass'n.......Mixed in a basin........ MetaBass'n'Breath. You performed at the Rock Steady crew in '98, you performed that beatboxing routine, that was tight. Oh, ok, Afrika Bambaata (signing an autograph) Peace. I remember we were down lower east side after DJ Spooky was spinning that night, you and I were chatting, what were we chatting about? Oh yeah.... crocodiles. I remember looking at you and you were looking at me thinking damn, here I am talking to Afrika Bambaata, founder of the Zulu Nation, Godfather of hip hop and we're talkin about crocodiles! We'll I'll tell you why Morganics. I don't

just listen to hip hop, I watch discovery channel. I am concerned about the crocodile situation down under in Sydney. See the world is changing and we gotta ! watch out, since September 11 things gone changed. Who is the biggest terrorist in the world today. The US government is the biggest terrorist in the world today. That's what I'm saying to you Morganics, see we gotta get together, white man, black man, Austrian, American, Japanese, whatever you be, we all part of the hip hop nation. we all part of the hip hop nation. we all part of the hip hop nation, and together we gotta unite, we gotta rise up, we gotta overstand and we gotta stick together, and that's what I'm saying my brotha. Peace!

Scene 15. Nuts

Sick cunt!........Sick cunt!......where's my bloody microphone? (grab mike) Newcastle how you bloody going? Make some noise! Who am I? Nuts. What am I? Nuts! Now when I say Newcastle, you say .....Newcastle. OK, Newcastle!......Newcastle!......Now if you enjoyed the Bboys getting up here and busting out, when I say Bboy, you say.....Bboy! Bboy!.......Bboy!..........Allright, Ozzie Hip Hop, I been in this game since you were in bloody nappies, I been bombing trains, doing damage, used to be a big cunt, used to be a bouncer, took out Andrew Johns in my day didn't I? Now I got smaller, got smarter, Ozzie Hip Hop's changed, girls in Hip Hop, Ozzie Hip Hop's changed, girls in Hip Hop, Ozzie Hip Hop's changed, girls in Hip Hop! Girls MCing, writing, DJing even breaking, make some fucking noise for the girls in Ozzie Hip Hop!
Next guy onstage, Morganics...........sick cunt. He performs all around Australia, always gigging, I saw him one time up at The Gold Coast, up onstage rapping away some bloody big bouncer up onstage with him, in walks this bloody muscly roid rager, off his head, starts bagging him out because he's not from Surfers, I mean who gives a fuck! The bouncer tells him to stop, Morganics keeps rapping the guy keeps yelling "go back to Sydney!" the bouncer says "You better stop it" roid rager says "who's gonna make me?" ....Slo-mo....Bouncer goes for the roid rager, roid rager goes for the bouncer, schooner of beer smashes, beer all over Morganics, glass all over Morganics, Morganics keeps rapping, "W-h-e-n I g-r-a-b t-h-e M-i-k-e" Bouncer and roid rager crash into the crowd, chicks go running "Aaaagh!" they wrestle, smack each other, bouncer gets the roid rager in a head lock, deprives him off oxygen, knocks him out, drags him out, kicks him out, comes back in up to Morganics an! d says "Everything's cool, keep rocking" and he does! So Newcastle I want you to make a lot of noise for, direct from Sydney, Morganics!"

Scene 16. I'm sick of...

How you doing Newcastle? Give it up for Nuts! I wanna give a shout out to Blades of Hades, Robotek MCs, Bloody Fist all the Newcastle crews here tonight, my name's Morganics, I'd like to start my set with a spoken word is that cool, an accapella? Cool. Now who here loves Hip Hop? ...that makes three, come on who loves Hip Hop? .....Cool, now I love Hip Hop but there are some things about it that I am sick of. For example....
I'm sick of glamour MCs selling cocaine in the bathroom at the end of their show
I'm sick of sold out promoters paying local acts shit, but that's not it,
I'm sick of Ozzie MCs who love Hip Hop but hate Americans
but I'm sick of Americans who think I drink Fosters
I'm sick of people who pay to see international acts no matter what the cost is
I'm sick of abstract MC's with annoying voices please, you gotta learn to rap
I'm sick of ecko logo's on baseball caps
I'm sick of too many logo's invading hip hop as a matter of fact
I'm sick of power bboys who can't dance, now that's wack
I'm sick of crowds that are too drunk to listen
I'm sick of RnB focusing on all that glistens
I'm sick of stoned unreliable DJ's
I'm sick Howard and his racist ways
I'm sick of struggling to pay my bills day to day
I'm sick of promoting my own shit, booking my own shows, selling my own vinyl, and no that's not final
I'm sick of MC's of MC's who tell me what they're sick of
So let me tell you what I love

I love rockin a show for a crowd that knows
I love an MC with content and flow
I love selling my music direct without the middle man, make a bit more cash now that is grand
I love grassroots community events for all ages
I love reading graffiti on a wall like a books pages
I love the internet and the power that it gives me to build and connect across the sea you see
I love it when a promoter puts their money where their mouth is
I love it when I feel it when I forget it's a biz
I love teaching young children and learning from them
I love meeting mad MC's who become a friend
I love having a toke on a Jay at the end of a show, telling a joke and reminiscing about flows
I love timbaland beats and the founder of this culture
I love hip hop I told ya
I love fresh bboys and bgirls when they throw down
I love making music so I'll never slow down
I love it when people unite to put up a fight and even better to make peace
I love it when I release my rhymes to the ears of my peers
I love it when this culture frees us of our fears

and if you love that then let me hear you cheer

Scene 17. Evolve

Alright Newcastle, when I say
The boost, the kick drum, the snare dictate the speed high hat to rotate to never hesitate,
Revolve the whole planet, revolve the whole planet, you say
Evolve the whole planet. Ok here we go
(play mini disc)

This track features sista native who use to be in the Stiff Gins, make some noise for them. All the ladies make some noise, all the fellas make some noise, here we go.
The boost, the kick drum, the snare dictate the speed high hat to rotate to never hesitate,
Revolve the whole planet, revolve the whole planet, you say
Evolve   the   whole   planet

I made these beats in my bedroom on my desk on my pc make the bass boom
via Soundforge and Cubase I travel to outer space
composing music like mozart cause these days electronic music is folk art
I work for the people and not for the glamour, keep it positive, keep them out of the slammer
or if you're inside, then you gotta stay strong, write your own rhymes to the beat of this song
or rap along with me like karaoke, rarely hanging out in clubs, I keep it low key
bodysurfing on the daily to keep myself healthy
I'm a Brissy born Sydney Bboy get my cash from theatrics, teaching mad tricks to the next generation
my source of inspiration, to develop your skills requires concentration

The boost, the kick drum, the snare dictate the speed high hat to rotate to never hesitate,
Revolve the whole planet, revolve the whole planet, you say
Evolve the whole planet
The boost, the kick drum, the snare dictate the speed high hat to rotate to never hesitate,
Revolve the whole planet, revolve the whole planet, you say
Evolve the whole planet

Allright Newcastle give yourselves a round of applause. If you enjoyed the music tonight, I'm an independent artist, I'm selling copies of my CD and my vinyl after the show. The CD is called Evolve it's a double CD, the first disc is my solo tracks with guest MCs such as Elf Tranzporter, Bas One from Style Elements Crew San Francisco and George Rrurambu from the Warumpi Band. Disc 2 is All You Mob 2, more recordings I've done in Aboriginal communities, community centres and jails around Australia, Long Bay, the

new Wilcannia Mob track, African kids rapping in Arabic from a primary school down in Melbourne, it's $30 in the stores or $25 here and I get all the money. My vinyl is fresh from Czechoslovakia, six tracks from the album including an all beatbox track, and that goes for $15. And if you are interested I've got a few Tshirts on sale too, not this one, because it's too sweaty, but they are $20. Thanks for having me, have a great night Newcastle, my name is Morganics, peace.

Scene 18. UTS student

Oh that was a great set, I just wanted to say thanks heaps, I'm a uni student at UTS, studying communications and I just wanted to say that I think that I think the work you are doing with like The Wilcannia Mob is really important but I just had a question........that baseball cap that you wear, it's um...camouflage...and I was just thinking that we have just had a war with Iraq, that there is so much camouflage being sold these days in General Pants and stuff, don't you think it's just the glamorization of the military?

Scene 19. Maori fella

Yeah bro, I'm from Aotearoa, much respect, you got that beatbox CD?

Scene 20. Nail polish

Hi. That was a great gig, that was really, really awesome, you're hot. I love Hip Hop like that you know, I know Hip Hop, no, I know, I know, I know, I know, I know, no, I know Hip Hop and I just love Hip Hop beats that you know change, you know the ones that just get.....faster. Do you like to live fast? Cause I know what you're doing, you know I know what it's all about for you, it's all about making money hey?.....Yeah me too, hey because I'm going to be releasing my own brand of nail polish soon, and all the packaging is just going to be in my favourite colour, red, and I'm just going to make so much money from it, I live at home with my Mum, my Dad died four years ago and we just live off his investments, don't know how long that will last, I'll put some weight on soon, you know how it is in summer, just been partying too much, a bit too much nose candy, but when I make all this money from my nail polish, I'm gonna buy myself a beautiful apartment that looks over the harbour and I'll just sit on my couch and look out at the view.

Scene 21. Anna - Funky Vibrations

Morganics it's Anna from Funky Vibrations, I took your album into Nova but they said that their listeners aren't ready to hear Hip Hop with an Australian accent, but I took it into Triple J and I've got some good news and some bad news, they are going to feature your album, but not your album. They only want to do Disc 2, not the disc with your tracks, the disc with all the kids. They

loved The Wilcannia Mob, they loved The Wilcannia Mob, they said they are so cute, so cute. What? The track by those Waterloo boys about the Block in Redfern, no they didn't like that one so much. Yes they does mean they wont be playing the songs that you rap on. No they dont want to hear your voice, who? Uncle Martin? that old Aboriginal man, no they don't want to hear him, who? the guy from Long Bay Jail, no that's too tough, look, they just want to hear the cute black voices!

Scene 22. Sony A and R

Allright, allright Morganics, grab yourself a seat, I bet you never thought you'd find yourself here did you? Welcome to the Sony A and R office, let me get you a CD, how bout some Nas, and some Bone Thugs and how about a bit more Nas. Right lets get down to brass tracks, I've listened to the new stuff, I like it, I like it. Better than the first album, more commercial, I like that Phone Sex song, very radio, very radio, just needs to sound bigger, you know, bigger, make the girl sing more, let me know when it's finished. I'm interested, Australian Hip Hops like the UK two years before Roots Manuva, before Dizzy Rascall, know what I mean it's just ready to go. Who's it gonna be? Hilltop Hoods, Downsyde, Koolism, 1200 Techniques, who's ready to blow, who's moving units, 19,000 - who's that a poster of? Oh, we signed her when she was 16, now she's 19, she plays piano or violin or guitar or something, she looks good. A lot of people's jobs are depending on her, Delta Go! odrem, you'll hear of her, she's our great white hope.

Scene 23. Pitjanjarra rap

Kutju, Kujara, Coolilah, Pallye, check out the lingo in Pitjanjarra
Kutju, Kujara, Coolilah, Pallye, check out the lingo in Pitjanjarra
Baya, when you want to shoo the dogs away
wanti, when you want to keep the kids at bay
Uwa means yes, Weea means no
Out in Kultakatjara speaking Pitjanjarra lingo

Now fellas, thats a rap I taught myself when I was out in Kaltakatjara, Docker River, below Uluru, in Pitjanjarra country up there. The kids hardly spoke English and I had to work with a translator, and that's how I taught myself some Pitjanjarra. It's a beautiful little community only about 300 people in this vast Namatjirra landscape, actually reminds of this community I was in just a few weeks ago up in the Pilbara in WA, a place called Jiggalong.

Scene 24. Jiggalong Creek

Only about 300 people there too, it's where that movie Rabbit Proof Fence comes from. I finished a workshop one day and I headed off to try and have a swim at the creek, I hadn't been there before. The flies were everywhere and it was bloody hot, I started getting closer to the creek and I could hear all the

kids yelling and screaming, and I thought, is this cool? I'm the only white fella here, so I slowly walked towards them one of the older boys saw me and gave me a nod, that was cool, then this little girl darted out and grabbed my hand "Mr Morganics you gonna come play with us?" Yeah sure if that's allright "Come on then, the creek she's running really fast today, she's a lovely one" Is she? "Are you Eminem's brother Mr Morganics?" No I'm not Eminem's brother "Put your bag over here we go up this way come on" Kids are jumping into the creek being dragged down stream, climbing ashore and then running full pelt back up the creek to do it again. "Look Bradden gonna do a back! flip off the tree" Woah! That was a - "Up this tree we go, come on, special spot, we all jump together" Me and six kids climb up this tree limb and I shout "OK, here we go, on three, 1, 2, 3!"

Splash! (miming floating underwater, head pops up out of water)
"Come on Mr Morganics we gotta get"
(Back underwater)
"Mr Morganics we go down this way we gotta get out of the "
(Back underwater)
"Mr Morganics we gotta grab one of the tree branches, quickly!"
I grab one of the tree branches, six kids grab onto me, we crawl onto the creek shore, the kids jump up and start running, show me the little mudslide, I slide along on it, get mud all over me, they paint me up with mud, we run back to the creek "Come on we go over the other side!"
We jump in, swim across to the other side, and find some skimming stones "Here Mr Morganics, take this one she's a lovely one" Thanks Kelly, splash, splash, splash, come on lets go back to the other side, c'mon (swim back) I pull myself out of the creek and stand there.......awesome!

Scene 25. Freestyle

Now fellas, if he has to go off for an appointment with the counsellor, that doesn't mean we have to make fun of him OK? Lets keep focussed, you still with me? We were talking about MCing right? Memorised rhymes, writtens and of course as I was just showing you there the other style of rhyming is? What was the other style of rhyming I was demonstrating there when I crossed the river? What stroke was I doing? Of course, freestyle. Ian Thorpe, Australia's king of MCs, master of freestyle. So a freestyle rhyme is one you make up on the spot yeah? A written is one you've memorised. A lot of people think that the only way to freestyle is to do battle rhymes because they've been watching too much of that move 14 kilometres, or, 8 miles yeah? But there is another way to freestyle, if you guy can give me a word, a topic, then I'll kick rhyme about it OK? So what's the word?

(Get a word form the crowd, freestyle rap about it, get another word from the crowd, rap about it)

Scene 26. Crowd cypher

Ok, so this brings us to one of my favourite parts of the workshop, where we get to cypher together. Now a cypher is where MCs gather in a circle and take turns freestyling, normally while the others beatbox for them. So what I'd like to do now is open up the floor, because I'm sure some of you fellas are MCs, you might have been writing rhymes in lockdown, got some things to say, now's the time, to get up and give it a shot. All of us will set up the beatbox rhythm that we did, not too loud so we don't drown any of the MCs out, but we'll get it going a little and then I'd like to invite any MCs to just stand up and give it a shot.

(Ad lib encourage the crowd until at least three MCs have rapped)

Allright I'd really like to thank all of those MCs for sharing their words with us, give it up for them.

Scene 27. Bathurst

Now, I recently did a workshop just like this in Bathurst in NSW, does anyone know where that is? West NSW. It was a cypher section of the workshop just like we did just now, we had a real mix of people from six year old Koori boys to 25 year old Uni students, about twenty people in the room. We got the beatbox going and then the first MC got up to do his thing. He was about 16, wearing one of those plastic yellow Fubu tops and he got up and his rap went something like this

"Yo! You aint nothing but a bitch's bitch bitch
I'd bet you'd fuck a fat bitch in a twitch
While I'm at home fucking your Mum
Anyway you spit it you know I'm number one"

Everyone in the room was just like, whoa, and I'm left standing there, thinking damn! I'm running this workshop, what do I say to him? So I say "Thanks heaps for your energy, I'm glad you got up but to be honest I don't agree with a word you said and I would much rather if you said it in your own voice, not an American accent" So then this sort of feral uni student guy get up next and kicks his rap which goes like this

"Connection, connection, connection, connection
No disrespecting women, we are all connected
Connection, connection, connection"

So the young guy in the yellow tracksuit goes all red in the face and he says "Can I get up again?" and I say "Sure" and I think, watch out, the battle is on. He hops up and he goes....

"I'm 16, been homeless since I was 14

Like a bad dream, you wouldn't believe what I've seen
I used to live in a caravan eating cans of spam with my Mum
now I'm living in a refuge in Orange, just when you though life couldn't get any worse, it does"

(one hand clap)
That was it, the Zen clap. In that moment he switched. For some kids it can take years, but for him it happened in a moment and what he told us was so sad but it was also beautiful that he had the guts to say it and the whole room cheered him.

Scene 28. Stand Your Ground/Wetherill/Redfern

I worked on another project called Stand Your Ground, they gave me a call and asked if I wanted to be Hip Hop director so I was like OK. We were going to work mainly with inner-city Koori kids in Sydney, in Redfern and Waterloo, kids from Clevo St High School. A bunch of the kids were heading up north for a culture camp up to Narrabri, up into Kamilaroi country and they said I should go along to get to know some of the kids. 5pm I meet up with Rebecca the video artist and her brother who has the beaten up old FJ Holden and we head up north from Sydney.

 It's a long drive, 12 midnight we arrive, Land Council stuffed it up there was no food for the kids, so the kids had eaten KFC and they were all in this one huge freezing hall in the middle of winter huddled around one heater all shivering going "Fuck it's cold!". So we jumped in our sleeping bags, tried to sleep through the night going "Fuck it's cold!". 6 30am we wake up cold and sore, one of the more new age teachers says "Time for a cold shower, it's really good to cleanse your chakras" I say "That's great, but I want to have a hot shower" he says "Sorry there are no hot showers". 7 30am we have a cold shower. We head off to our first destination, Uncle Mick's place, he's a sculptor and a hunter and he takes us into his backyard, there's a roo hanging there, he's bleeding it and the hunting dogs are running around. He turns to us and says "If you're lucky, we'll get to go hunting!" I think "Great, I'm a vegetarian, what am I going to hunt? Tofu and tempeh?"

12 noon we arrive at our next destination; a sacred site. Our guide is a 50 year old white guy with a 50 year old book and he's going to show us around. It's a beautiful valley, the kids pile out of the mini bus and I've never seen so much rayon in the bush. I'm talking Nike, Fubu, Dada, Nike, Fubu, Dada, Nike, Fubu, Dada, Fubu, Fubu, Fubu, Dada and a bit more Nike. These inner-city kids start walking through the bush going "fuck you you dirty dog, well suck this you fucking slut, fuck you you cunt, fuck you, fucking, fuck, shit, fuck, shit!" We walk up onto this beautiful mountain and my mate Stingray kicks a mad rap about being a Kamilaroi fella. 4pm we arrive at the next valley where we are going to sleep but The Land Council haven't arranged anything so we walk up onto this hill trying to find somewhere to sleep, from down below in the valley we hear a sound.....someone is trying to start the FJ Holden, 13

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year old Roger is trying to hot rod the FJ. Uncle Bob walks over! to him "What do ya think you're doing you bloody idiot, show some respect, this isn't your car!" (Mime Roger stepping out of the car) Roger walks off and we eventually find some where to sleep. We spend the whole night going "Fuck it's cold!" and at 8am we wake up.

 Pour some hot water on the windscreen to melt the ice off, jump into the old FJ, wave goodbye to the kids and we hit the road. Everything's going well, we're making good time, 11am we are just past Newcastle on the freeway I've got a workshop in Wetherill Park South West Sydney at 4pm, we should be fine, when...we...get....a...flat. We pull over, can't fix it, gotta take it to a mechanic, I can't wait, see you guys later I'm gonna hitch. Old fella turns up in a van with all these test tubes in the back of it, cool, he gives me a lift all the way to Hornsby train station. 1 30pm I hop on the train from Hornsby to Central, 2 30 p.m. I catch a cab to Erskineville and hop in my Holden Camira and drive one hour and forty minutes to my workshop in Wetherill Park.

 I turn up 20 minutes late, there are two cop cars parked out the front and the class which should have 70 teenage boys; Vietnamese, Cambodian, Filipino, Samoan, Tongan, Maori, Assyrian, Lebanese, Anglo and Chilean all in one room is much smaller. There are only 15 nervous teenage boys walking around the room and I say "What's going on?" and they say "Haven't you heard?", I say "What's going on?" and they say "Haven't you heard?", I say "What's going on?" and they say "Haven't you heard?" they say "You know that dickhead guy in the class?" I say " Yeah? " "Well after class last week he punched out some Assyrian guy out there" "Yeah?" "And so the word is out that one of the gangs around here, The Assyrian Kings are going to come around this afternoon and take out the whole breaking class". .....It's 4 30pm.

Ok guys, lets not worry about that, lets concentrate on your top rocks, on your six step. I try to keep teaching the class but there are guys coming and going, more cops turning up, the youth workers are running around the place, we have young men walking through the room with sleeves over their hands and I don't know if they've got a knife, a gun or an ice block there. The tension is almost unbearable, some gang members turn up out the front. 6pm there are 4 cop cars, 8 cops, 50 young men all out the front and my dickhead student is facing one of the Assyrian kings. The older Assyrian youth worker runs out and yells at them in Arabic "Wahid, habib, shokran" Doesn't make much difference. I run out to them and yell at them in Hip Hop "OK fellas we are here to Bboy, don't stuff the class up for everyone else, if you want to beat each other up do it somewhere else!" Doesn't make difference. The crowd starts to dissipate, I follow the main Assyrian guy and my dickhead student a! round the corner and that's when the Assyrian guy threatens to kill my student. That's when I realize things are pretty serious.

6 30pm the youth workers start running around locking up the place "we gotta go we gott a go" I'm like "Cool, yeah, no probs let's go" they say "No you don't understand we've got to go now, those boys could bring back their brothers, their uncles, their fathers, they could shoot up the whole youth centre" I'm like "OK then lets go" The youth workers jump in their cars, drive off into the

distance "seeyalater Morganics!" In front of me 50 teenage boys are walking into Stockland shopping mall followed by 4 cop cars and an ambulance, off to my right,...the sun is setting in the west, off to my left.......the Juice crew, some of the dopest Cambodian, Phillo and Maori Bboys in Sydney, my best students are still breaking on the basketball court. I walk over to them, sit down, we chat, they tell me that this shit happens all the time, the gangs stuff it up for everyone, they just want to break, practice moves, who's got flares, who doesn't, power versus style, who are the top crews! in Sydney, I say, look I gotta go, it's been a long day, I gotta drive back into the city, I'll catch you guys next week.

I hop in my Holden Camira, drive an hour and twenty minutes back into the city, into Redfern, go to the Turkish Pizza joint opposite Redfern Oval, 8pm I step in, I'm hungry and tired, I get myself a vegetarian pide, step out the front door to the set of lights, cop car pulls up, from the back seat I hear ...."Hey Morganics!" It's Roger the boy who tried to hot rod the FJ in Narrabri approximately....28 hours and 35 mins ago. "Hi Roger, how you going?" "Not too bad how bout you?" "Well......." Cop car drives off down the street 13 year old in the back seat of a cop car in Redfern, and I'm left...standing there....trying to eat.....my Turkish Pizza.

Scene 29. Gotta Keep Training

Gotta keep training.....Been locked down twenty months, got 28 to go.......Gotta keep training......Me and the boys were up in Coffs, everything was going fine, doing what we do, you know the style, Ralph Lauren, Ralph Lauren, Nike. Five grand cash in the pockets, five grand cash in the pockets. Doing the easy shit in the malls, they didn't know what hit 'em, doing distracos, you know the girls at the cash register "Oh hi, how can I help you?" one guy asks all the dumb questions "Can you show me how this stereo works" while I slide around the back and grab all the cash...easy

.........training, training.........one time one of the boys comes back, he's got blood...on his ralph lauren, blood....on his ralph lauren, blood...on his nikes, I'm like "What happened there" and he's like "Everything went fine" and I'm like "What happened there" and he's like "Everything went fine" and he says "Well how was I supposed to know?" and I say "What?" and he says "How was I supposed to know?" and I say "What?" and he says "How was I supposed to know she was bloody......pregnant" I say "What?" and he says "How was I supposed to know she was bloody......pregnant". Dirty dog beat the shit out of a pregnant sales assistant. Gotta keep training, gotta keep training, gotta keep training.

Back down Sydney with my missus in the Pub middle of the day, been coning on, on a bit of goey, five grand cash in the pockets, five grand cash in the pockets, playing the pokies. How was I supposed to know? Guy next to us at the pokies was a WOOP! Walk over to the bar, get another Bourbon, guy serving WOOP! Bloody pig, bloody cop undercover, didn't pick him, walked

outside, guy on the footpath, picked him WOOP! another undercover. I start running, he's coming after me, I'm running, he's coming, I get to my car, jump in, turn around drive, he's in the way, Bam! hit him, break his leg, ...Bam! hit him, break his leg, keep going, around the corner, bloody road block, I'm blocked, car's stopped, pulled out, I'm locked......down.....Done 20 months, got 28 to go, gotta keep training.

MCs down Melbourne speaking shit, take em out, every night, every day, eshay.

Scene 30. HOPE

I work in jails, I see how society fails
How people impale themselves on poverty, follow me
If you see the darkness that descends when families end and drugs take over
A young baby's life is almost over before it's started
Domestic violence sparks, a young bone is broken
Teenage mother's choking on tears, so full of fears, cause her choices are limited
 so she's forced to return to her talent for crime that she exhibited
When she was younger, break and enter a rich house and plunder
When she returns to jail, is it any wonder?
I know a small boy, he'll be small for a while
Son of an alcoholic, lack of height is chronic
But his smile is enormous, how could you ignore this
Little fella in the outback, when you rap, speak crap
Kids play that shit back in their own lives
We gotta sow words that save lives, I've tried
and many have tried before and after
Why focus on the aggro
I focus on the laughter

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