

Low Lives 4 submission

Angela Bartram and Mary O'Neill

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Proposal for 'O / R'

A woman crushes a stick of black chalk with a pestle and mortar, pinches the ground dust into a pile on the floor, leans down, inhales, exhales and blows the dust across the floor. The process is repeated through a grading spectrum of black to white. A second woman kneels beside her and writes on the floor in matching tones a record of the action taking place. They work in synch and in rhythm: one creates a physical action that the other interprets in words. Once the charcoal set is crushed to exhaustion the woman with the now blackened face sits up. Her documenter follows.

The documentation of 'O / R' is as live as the performance itself. Each mode informs the other and benefits from the particular requirement imposed by a 'site'. The site here is not just the physical location, but includes the artist's body, the anticipated audience, the environment, and the atmosphere. Rather than prioritising one form over another, each manifestation is seen as having generative potential for further creative responses. This reflexivity relies on the observation of each other's movements and decisions throughout, and it is this construct that allows the problem of documentation to be analyzed. With no time to reflect, to square up a shot or rephrase a sentence after the event, the integral nature of the work's document is exposed to complication and chance; it becomes as influential as the action it is intended to record. The 'live' context the work represents becomes threefold when exhibited by networked stream: through action, observation and record, and the mediation of these acts across digital terrain.

'O / R' is a five-minute adaption of 'Oral / Response' and consequently the images and links that support this application relate to this work. 'O / R' will be produced as a new work exclusively for Low Lives 4.

Artist's collaborative statement

Angela Bartram and Mary O'Neill are a collaborative partnership whose work centres on the documentation of performance through situated writing and text that moves beyond formal academic conventions. They offer an alternative creative strategy to the binaries of theory and practice, academic and artist, event and text. The site of their practice is not just the physical location, but includes the artist's body, the anticipated audience, the environment, the document, and the atmosphere. Rather than prioritising one form over another, each manifestation is seen as having generative potential for further creative responses, creating an ongoing work.

Artist's collaborative biography*

BartramO'Neill have exhibited, performed and published nationally and internationally both independently and collaboratively. Most recently they performed at 'BLOP 2012' at Arnolfini Bristol, at 'Action Art Now' for O U I International performance festival in York, 2011, and at 'The Future Can Wait' in London, 2009. They are to be artists in residence at Grace Exhibition Space New York in April 2012. Both are senior lecturers at the University of Lincoln in the department of fine art. Bartram has an expansive independent exhibition profile including 'The Animal Gaze' (2011 and 2008), 'East Goes East,' Krakow (2010), 'East International 2009,' 'Animalism' at the National Media Museum (2009), amongst others. O'Neill has published works on performance, ephemerality, mourning, ethics and contemporary art, and the conditions in the twentieth century which contributed to the development of increasingly transient art forms.

** individual CV's attached for both artists*

Links to artist website/s or other related web destinations

<http://vimeo.com/38050897> for 3 minutes of 'Oral / Response' performed at Action Art Now for OUI Performance, on 8th October 2011 at Space 109 Walmgate, York UK.

www.bartramoneill.com for images and details of collaborative work

www.angelabartram.com for Angela Bartram's work

www.lincoln.ac.uk/ljad/staff/2213.asp for Mary O'Neill's work

www.ouiperformance.org.uk/past/aan1/# for details and images of 'Oral / Response' performed at Action Art Now for OUI Performance, on 8th October 2011 at Space 109 Walmgate, York UK.

www.ouiperformance.org.uk/other/action-art-now-1-review/ for a review by Mark Greenwood of 'Oral / Response' performed at Action Art Now for OUI Performance, on 8th October 2011 at Space 109 Walmgate, York UK.

Location (City, State, Country)

Lincoln, Lincolnshire, UK

Details of attached images

1-4: 'Oral / Response'