

Fading Away: Remembering to Forget What Theatre Was

John Freeman

This positional paper sets out to explore something of the ways in which memory is linked to cinema, in contradiction to theatrical performance, which, it will be suggested, is in danger of being arrested by its own past. In part, the following paragraphs create a peg on which to hang a series of often subjective notions of performance, ranging from installation through to body art. In so doing, the obsessive pre-occupation with the live body in late-twentieth-century performance emerges as the sole referent capable of being pinned down in an otherwise unstable and fragmented age of theatrical art and identity. Some well rehearsed links and ruptures between modernism and postmodernism are revisited. These are used to read the ways in which installation art betrayed the intentions of its own modernist makers, creating a postmodern site of subjective spectatorship.

This paper then is about the body, memory, and space. Those elements, which begin separately, will be brought together as the paper develops. Like many of this journal's readers and contributors, this writer's professional life is an often interchangeable blend of teaching, talking about, deconstructing, and creating performance. It is from the perspective created by the interface between the academic and the artist that this paper is written.

Before things begin to deconstruct, we can start with some facts, with the faux emphasis of certainty. Cinema is named after the Greek word *kinema*; if the word denotes "motion," we can say that the connotation is also with "emotion." Theatre (like theory) has its etymology in *theatron*, meaning "where you view." Theatre is thus about looking,¹ whereas cinema is about movement and transport: the transporting to elsewhere via emotion. With film we are carried away by emotion. Perhaps the closest word we can find for this phenomenon is the Italian *trasporto*, which encompasses the attraction of humans to one another. It is about a going from and a coming to. This is the reason why love in the movies is about cinematic space and movement and emotion, both on the screen and in the viewer.

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It is in this way that film moves us as it moves. It is a geography of light and shade, of memory and hope, of community and loneliness.

The Latin root of the word “emotion” stems from *emovere*, an active verb composed of *movere* (“to move”) and *e* (“out”). It speaks of a moving force. Emotion then is about a moving out, the transferring from one place—or one state—to another. From what we see to what we feel. The word “feel” is possessed of currency that is both emotional and tactile. Feelings affect us physically. Emotion is of the heart and of the mind and of the body. Passive watching is as oxymoronic as passive loving. When we care about what we watch, we come to care all the more through the watching. We care about cinema because it transports us to someplace else: to a new world to view. The particles of light shone at 24 frames per second transform the flatness of the screen into a type of fantasy-as-fact where stillness is always an impossible dream. By contrast, theatre—despite its own best efforts—serves too often to root us to the spot. This is as metaphorical as it is literal, through the cut and cost of our spectatorial dressing up as much as through the numbering and status loading of specific areas of seating. Theatre is the space where we view no more or less than it is the place where our standing within a social hierarchy is writ large and viewed. It was ever the case. The very anonymity of the cinema space allows us to see without being seen, nor to care less if we were . . . the fourth wall of the theatre serves as no more, ultimately, than a mirror that allows us to watch ourselves in the act of watching and of being watched.

Guilio Camillo’s sixteenth century *Memory Theatre*, with its intention of presenting performatively that which would otherwise remain unseen, was a precursor to the films of Wim Wenders as much as to the theatre work of the likes of Tadeusz Kantor. For it is cinema that most emphatically articulates our need to link the present with the past. If the connection here is obvious, inasmuch as the film we view is always of the gone, the done, the dead, and the remembered, it is also more obliquely linked to the notion of the ways in which memory works. As the revolutionary Soviet film director Dziga Vertov explained, cinema—like memory—frees us from the boundaries of time and space, enabling the co-ordination of any and all points of view to be posited in any way one chooses. Vertov’s take on film was that it led towards the creation of a fresh perception . . . of the explanation in a new way of a world that would otherwise remain unseen and unknown. If the invention of the camera changed the way the world was viewed, it did so in ways that already existed in dreams and recall.

The acute sense of cultural displacement we currently feel is a central aspect of contemporary art and performance; and be it zenith or nadir this displacement finds its home in the marriage of film and live theatre. As film emerged historically from theatre, so theatre now aspires to film. The employment of film, video, and, more recently, computer technology in the work of the Wooster Group—not least their 2002 production *To You, the Birdie*—has its antecedents in Piscator’s 1927

production of Yvan Goll's *Methusalem*, and in its own way extends the potential of live performance at the same time as it tampers, ground-shiftingly, with those Aristotelian ideas of unity that modernism, for all its innovation and inventiveness, seemed always to return to. Walter Benjamin understood film as a medium more akin to surgery than alchemy, as something with the potential to reveal an optical unconscious. Benjamin's views were posited between, on the one hand, a view of film as being governed by psychoanalysis and, on the other, the more overtly political idea of film revealing that which is otherwise concealed in the social order of things. In this way, film occupies the space between Artaud's faith in embodied actions working through sensation on the bodily perception of the spectator and Brecht's famed use of montage as a strategy for revealing the inner workings of a given situation. When Brecht deployed montage in order to focus spectatorial attention upon the dialectical tension between the narrative thrust of a scene and its structure, his relationship to the cinema of Eisenstein was immediately apparent.

Memory is the cartography of experience and the borders of memory are the edges of our screen's ability to resurrect the past. In 1934 Benjamin wrote that he had for years considered the idea of setting out the sphere of his life graphically, on a map. Jorge Luis Borges once wrote a poem in which all of the journeys made during a person's lifetime mapped the lines of his protagonist's own face. As far back as 1654 Madeline de Scudery had published a fictional map as part of her novel *Clelie*. She called this map a "Carte du pays de Tendre": a topography of the land of tenderness. The emotional material of the novel was given a visual identity, inasmuch as the exterior landscape was used to depict the interior world of the characters. Like Camillo before her, de Scudery aimed to imbue the unseen and the emotional with legible form. Through the Lake of Indifference, the Dangerous Sea, and a town called Negligence, the visual—the optic—and the sensory—the haptic—were brought together. It is hard to regard de Scudery's work now as anything other than a paradigm for the ways in which art is approached and understood.

As it is with our comprehension of the fictional protagonist of *Clelie*, so it is that we make sense of the internal world of art through our visual comprehension of that which the artist chooses to make shown. The geography of art leads us to the core of our selves. But this is an awkward geography and an elusive self. When Alex Kelly, from the European performance collective Third Angel, writes that the company makes "work that strays into the grey area between the truth and fiction, memory and imagination . . . work that incorporates documentary detail and fiction but doesn't bother to point out which is which," she articulates the absence of fixity in both the navigator and the route that turns the art of performance into an act of detection.²

Geography is the site where emotion meets memory. In the first century A.D., Quintilian wrote of memories as architecture, with image-filled rooms of the mind triggering thoughts. In order to move our minds from room to room, these images

need to be affectively and emotionally charged. We need to care enough to take the time to make the trip. Like these invented rooms, actual spaces and places are loaded with the power to make us recollect. And as memory (like film) is never still and never rests, so the remembered and the act of remembering, the trigger and the triggered, overlap and build and deepen. What we remember we change in the act of remembrance: the room of the imagination stays the same; it is we who visit who have always changed. And if these rooms have an optic quality, that quality is also always haptic. Haptic refers to being able to come into contact with, and, in this, it is art's form, function, and reception no less than it is a function of memory.

Like the *English Patient* out of Michael Ondaatje and Anthony Minghella, we drift between memories and dreams as seamlessly as wrinkled sand dunes seen from the sky melt into love-crumpled sheets, as effortlessly as a mountain range becomes a lover's back. Haptic articulates a sensory function: a function that is as much of the body as it is of the mind. Haptic also refers to kinesthesia, to the ability our bodies have to sense their own movement in space. When we live we move, and the less we move the more we want the eye to flicker. Gallery-goers can gaze forever at the stillness of paint precisely because the movement they crave is in their own hands and in their own feet. In the gallery we stop, we shuffle, we step closer, and we then step back. Accordingly, ideas of elsewhere are always in our gift. We walk away and we return. "Elsewhere" in the theatre—that necessary need for visual movement—is the function of clumsy and outmoded metaphor. The limits of the stage become the limits of our seeing world. Sight lines hem us in, forcing our gaze down channels no wider than the wooden boards. If what we see is what we get then theatre rarely gives us as much as we need.

As the chorus of Greek theatre has been replaced by the gossip-mongering of characters from small box soap-operas—where the venomous asides provide a running commentary on the action—so our narrative fix is provided now by television and cinema. And it does so at the mainstream theatre's expense. We no longer need the story lines of Chekhov played out à la Stanislavsky, anymore than we are drawn to the theatre as a space for education and enlightenment. More fundamental than this, however, is the possibility that in the memory game of art, theatre has been left behind. This is no mere wordplay. The grim legacy of postmodernism is that the only future we can look forward to is the past that has already been lived. As postmodernism grips us in its rigor mortis vice of selective eclecticism, the temptation to withdraw into modernism is strong.

Modernism carried with it—or was carried by—a claim that non-interpretative judgment could be applied to art—and that judgment could thus be universal. As interpretation is innately prejudicial, modernist art—and not least performance—had at its core, the entirely honorable idea of emancipation; because understanding would not be reliant upon the privileging of certain interpretative methodologies over others, the work would be open and accessible to all. Or so at least went

the argument. More than this, the work would contain no vestige whatsoever of concealed dimensions, which could only be uncovered by specific interpretative processes. In this way, the work is what the work is. The art does not require differing forms of completion.

What we the spectators bring to art is a gaze that rests upon the perpetually present aspects of the work. Michael Fried referred to this as the “grace of presentness,”³ suggesting that the perceptual experience of the work is inseparable from the work itself. This idea was developed and subsequently challenged through ostensibly modernist installations, more than through theatrical and theatrically placed performances, and more so even than through painting. When Chris Burden, Vito Acconci, and Marina Abramovic created those installations such as *Five-Day Locker Piece*, *Seedbed*, and *Night Crossing*, which have since become iconic, the object/event was collapsed into the space in a way that was fundamental.⁴ The location became part of the event even when these locations were not fixed.

Louise Bourgeois told us that: “The relation of one person to his surroundings is a continuing preoccupation. It can be casual or blunt. It can be painful or pleasant. Most of all it can be real or imaginary.”⁵ Whatever it is, it is increasingly clear that it cannot be ignored. With the gift of understanding via hindsight, we can see that this was one of the points on which modernism impaled itself. Art events could no longer be seen to transcend interpretation by virtue of the grace of their being or taking place when the very act of installation subverted and exposed the relationship between presence and spectatorship. In one fell swoop, certain key structures of receptivity were disrupted. As the space where the work was presented was central, so too was the internal and interpretative space the viewers carried with them. One could not be important without the other. This proved to be central to modernism’s falling away from favor, as the inclusion of the relationship between art and space—to the relations between art and its conditions of display—ran counter to the assumed authenticity of the work in and of itself.

What is contained within the work is in this way no less relevant than it ever was—or than it was ever thought to be—but a shift took place that showed the perception of the artwork could not be accurately predetermined. Rather, it came into being through a combination of memory and anticipation, location, duration, activity, and experience. We could not then, as we cannot now, approach any work on its own terms precisely because our own terms work so emphatically as agents of determination. The only terms we can ever understand are our own.

Lyotard had it that “[t]he postmodern (art) denies itself the solace of good forms, the consensus of taste.”⁶ Likewise, Donald Judd wrote that art need not be demonstrative of “taste” so much as that it needed to be “interesting.”⁷ The interest that stems from surprise occurs when our autobiographical receptors are confronted with art events that resist or develop our expectations. Indeed, there can be no element of surprise without this trade off between anticipation and realization. When

modernists made their claims that art works could be perceived in ways that were at once authentic, immediate, and articulated via their own grace of presentness, they were in denial as to the presentness of s/he who observed. Art confronts and alters experience, to be sure, but the experience that is confronted can never be pure. The canvas may be blank, or as Peter Brook erroneously suggested, the performance space may be “empty,”⁸ but the spectator is always already filled with histories, estimations, preconceptions, and prejudices. We can see that, as modernism has given ground to the postmodern, so the art of installation has shifted from a focus on the object on display to an exploration of the elasticity of site. Where, after all, is the “object” in Stelarc’s keyboard generated spasticity that is *Movatar*?⁹ And where, come to that, is the site?

John Cage sought to dissolve a number of distinctions between music, sound, and silence. In part we can regard this as an invitation to listen without prejudice. And yet, without prejudice, we would not be able to hear, let alone listen. In fact the legacy of Cage is, like that of Cézanne, Cunningham, Beckett, and Picasso, that his work seduced us into looking above and beyond the borders of our expectations and assumptions. In so doing a number of the conventional divisions we impose on experience begin to fall away—and they’ve been falling ever since.

The gulf between modernism and postmodernism is not so wide as some imagine. Where modernism spoke of and for the universal, postmodernism’s engagement is with relativism. The gulf is not wide between them because each approach is of its time. As postmodern performance (whether it identifies itself as such or not) is constituted out of a rejection of a number of universalizing worldviews, so too is contemporary life—no matter how nostalgic the aims of our age may appear.

That there are no absolutes in our world is the sole absolute of twenty-first-century life. Truth, authenticity, and beauty—the triangular frame that was used to encompass and identify much art of the past—are now all up for grabs, and they are just a little too slippery to hold. Baudrillard’s simulacrum is writ large in Jeff Koons’s million dollar copies of worthless originals, while “beauty” has emerged as an unstable and increasingly suspect category for the identification and valuation of art. “Beautiful” might be used to describe a particular staging by Robert Wilson, or even of the way that Ron Athey’s punctured skin is bathed in light, but the term is unlikely to be possessed of such currency when applied to the work of Blast Theory, Orlan, or Fura del Baus. To search for beauty is, we often find, to miss the point. We do well to remember, however, that there are distinctions between a concentration on beauty and a consideration of aesthetics. Wherever and whenever decisions are taken about the ways in which an artwork is presented, we witness an aesthetic articulation—albeit one that is used as a means to an end rather than as an end unto itself.

Where modernist beauty has come to stand for a type of complacency—an ultimately facile exercise—a postmodern sense of aesthetics remains central to the way we negotiate a response to art. One could argue that the more work moves from the excesses of theatricality towards the minimalism-as-naiveté of “is it performance or isn’t it?” the more important a sense of aesthetic arrangement becomes in distinguishing art and art making from general behavior.¹⁰ Art is always spectatorial (even when the only spectator is the artist in the act of making) because the activity of art making will always involve a consideration of aesthetics. Deciding not to care how something looks (quite apart from being an aesthetic decision in itself) is art’s falsest claim, and it goes hand-in-glove with the idea of “art for art’s sake” as some sort of cultural cancer: as a wholly negative act of self-contemplation and consumption.

For the postmodernist no less than the modernist “art for art’s sake” is shorthand for the deterioration of art into meaninglessness. But the term also suggests that art has moved beyond the point of having to shroud itself in justification. Art is independent and its values are not reliant upon the patronage of external scrutiny, even as artists seek endlessly to make themselves subject to it. Art for art’s sake is no more damning as a concept than pleasure for the sake of pleasure. Pleasure, like art, brings its own rewards and one person’s pleasure is another person’s pain.

If modernism in art stressed feeling over understanding perhaps all that has really changed through postmodernism is that we are more ready to accept that feeling *is* understanding. Liking the work is knowledge enough. Art can no longer make the demands it once did on the spectator’s attention. We have more to look at now. Accordingly we look at art if we so choose, and if and when we choose not, then we look away. In dropping its guise as an instrument of political change art has empowered us all. As Barba and Boal invite us to join in and become spectators, so too can we choose to walk away. Where Brecht *showed* us contradiction theatrically, Boal *exposes* us to it through theatre. In turning spectators into spectactors, Boal gives us the choice to stay or go, to play or to remain passive. The decision becomes ours, art is integrated into life and the illusionist praxis of traditional (modernist) theatre is further challenged.

The segue from modernism to postmodernism is contained in these attitudinal shifts, and they date back forty years. The blank and neutral objects created by artists such as Donald Judd and Robert Morris mirrored by the seen/unseen aspects of Acconci and Burden’s installations stimulated an awareness of the physical presence of the work and beyond this to a consideration of the art/spectator relationship in the *real* spaces of art and performance. Up against this type of concrete reality the artifice of theatre as metaphor for “other” has never really recovered.

Artists make work in the here and now. Because of this all art is contemporary. The harder an artist seeks to recapture the past—whether through revival or imitation—the more powerfully the present pulls through. The interests of the

artist, or art maker, however, are rarely compatible with those of the academic. As art making is in the here and now, the analysis of art tends towards the there and then. The scholar seeks to locate art within a continuum, to make and show connections between what was and what is. Artists make art, academics pick art apart. Like the midwife and the coroner, we view the same phenomena from widely differing perspectives. No small surprise then that most discourses on art have less contact with the complexities of their subject than with the relative simplicities of well-rehearsed thesis and antithesis. Academic papers are interesting (on the few occasions when they are other than love letters to colleagues) primarily because they tell us something about how the particular academic wishes the subject to be seen. They (“we”/“I”) seek to define work through a type of literary depiction that glories most often in its own erudition. Fine and well, but when the role of academics is to prove themselves cleverer and more culturally vital than the artists whose work they explore art emerges as the casualty. If for no more reason than that a coroner is useless without a corpse.

We use Body Art as a term for work that locates the body as subject, object, focus, and site. The body has been utilized by a steadily growing number of significant contemporary artists. We saw this development particularly in the 1960s and 70s, where the body was used as form and site of protest, and we see it now in the twenty-first century, when the body is articulated as the battleground for extremity and a declared opposition to those ideological constraints imposed by the dominant culture. This is evidenced today in the work of Stelarc, Orlan, Tracey Emin, and Franko B, as it was thirty years ago by the likes of Carolee Schneemann, Chris Burden, and Vito Acconci. The body has not become outmoded or obsolete simply because it has been used by earlier generations of artists. Twenty-first-century practitioners come from different cultures, and they work in different ways to those who came before, just as visual artists, writers, and musicians are working differently to those who came before them. In this way the body can be regarded as the canvas on which ideas are given form and also as the form in itself. As the page, the ink, and the writer; as the instrument, the sound, and the musician.

On 31 December 1999—on his 49th birthday—Teching Hsieh concluded a thirteen-year performance that was never presented to the public. Like his April–April *One Year Performance* of 1980–81, all that the art “contained” was the body of the artist. Our trust in the artist’s integrity is what separates art from artifice: not a suspension of disbelief on our part so much as an act of belief. In body art the self is problematized. It is often doubled, idealized, made subject to acts of transgression and obsession, transformation and duration. The artists’ bodies are regarded as matter, as the raw material of their work. This raw matter is, in some way, transformed—made strange, as Brecht would have had it. The body strives for articulation through a type of exhibition . . . even when this is the exhibition

of absence. The body strives for difference, even when this distinction is made manifest via a re-framing of the humdrum and the everyday.

Art that has a focus on the body often runs counter to issues of morality. The British artist Damien Hirst has it that his work is neither moral nor immoral, so much as it is an invitation to the viewer to take a holiday from morality.¹¹ In a similar way, we find that emphasis is often placed on the ability or desire to transcend the values of current morality, whether this be through Orlan's apparent disfigurement as a consequence of plastic surgery, Ron Athey's blood-soaked and supposedly HIV infected cloths suspended above spectators, or Annie Sprinkle's *Public Cervix Announcement*. This poses specific challenges to those of us who make art under the auspices of a university. Notwithstanding this, the ability to recognize that morality amounts to no more or less than a shared and subsequently imposed set of conventions is a key feature of much body art, and it is an area that is well nigh impossible to avoid. The question of who owns the body is no less pertinent today than it was in 1971 when Chris Burden made himself a target to be shot at.

Body art tends towards the presentational rather than the representational. In this, the artist is likely to function as both story and character—as subject and object. The artist positions herself as object since she is conscious of the processes in which she is involved. This is a tendency, not a rule.

Nothing dates like the nearly new. In dealing with the contemporary, we need to be aware of what has gone before. In all but the rarest cases, body art (performance art/live art, call it what we will) is about investigation rather than homage. It looks to the present rather than the past. This is how art is most often made. As academics our art is unable to function within a denial of concept and context. We need to know the past in order not only to avoid it, but also to locate our own processes within an academically appropriate frame. It is not enough for us to say that the art can speak for itself. We have the obligation, at times, to speak for our art. Tutors cannot easily (or effectively) function as academic assessors of work if students do not present that work in ways that facilitate this academic response. And so, as students ask that tutors be more than receivers of their work, so tutors ask that students be more than its makers. We may be assessing the why of the work as much as the how, and this necessitates an understanding of the context within which the work has been made.

It may be that it is only through an acute consideration and concentration on self that we are able to understand others. Catharsis—inasmuch as we can find a use for the term—exists as much within the domain of the artist as the spectator. When in the 1960s Bruce Naumann made sound and video recordings of his body, his work was part of an identifiable cultural shift that encompassed events, such as Tom Marioni's *The Act of Drinking Beer with Friends is the Highest Form of Art*, alongside Chris Burden's *Five-Day Locker Piece*, and Vito Acconci's masturbation-as-art that resulted in *Seedbed*. It was clear then, as now, that the self—one's biology,

no less than one's psychology—has currency as art. And this currency is the currency of truth. The body as real, the body as non-illusion, the body as evidence of its own being. If the psychological drama of Western tradition subjugates the body to the word and to the mind, making it abstract and discursive, postmodernism relocates the body as an ideogram that is embodied and innately performative.

Truth in art has always had a doubled status. On the one hand, we crave the certainty that the signature and the artwork amount to a truth; on the other, we accept that art is (for the most part) no more than a representation of the external "truth" it depicts. And (for the most part) this seems reasonable enough. Clive Bell insisted that art should have nothing to do with life. His contemporary Edward Bullough wrote in 1912 that "[e]xplicit references to organic affections, to the material existence of the body, especially to sexual matters, lie normally below the Distance-limit, and can be touched on by Art only with special precautions."¹² At these statements a large part of Euro-American society breathed a sigh of collective relief that all was in order. Bell and Bullough's views, however, were not shared by everyone. At the same time as they were making their claims for art's lofty purpose Marinetti was publishing his *Manifesto of Futurism*, the Dadaists were waiting in the wings, and Duchamp was exhibiting his urinal as a Readymade. The First World War was about to turn the wrath of machinery on its inventors, and art was set to sacrifice its sense of certainty.

We live in an age where nothing is certain. And yet I feel certain of this: if theatre had not been invented we would not be inventing it now. Lost in a world of Reality Television and Quick-Fix Stardom, our collective memories have reinvented theatre as something other than it is. In this age of repackaged nostalgia nothing is more nostalgic than our willingness to sit silently in darkened auditoria whilst pretending to suspend a disbelief we long since learned to control. Rooted to the spot, we root ourselves too firmly in theatre's golden past, remembering what we think we should and choosing to forget that theatre has become a medicine with all of the taste and none of the cure.

Seeing is believing, but that's not the only order in which the words work. Possessing *a priori* belief in theatre only blinds us to the truth of our gaze. Blinds us to the fact that in all but the rarest of cases live theatre has been dead a long time. All that remains are the actors acting, the watchers watching, and the spotlights taking a century to fade away to black.

Notes

1. John Freeman, "The Location and Theory of Looking," *Journal of Dramatic Theory & Criticism* 12.2 (1988) 129-41; here 140.

2. Adrian Heathfield, ed., *Small Acts: Performance, the Millennium and the Marking of Time* (London: Black Dog, 2000) 49.

3. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battock (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1995) 147.

4. See Marina Abramovic and Ulay, *Performances, 1976-1988* (Eindhoven: Stedelijk Van Abbamuseum, 1997); Stedelijk Van Abbamuseum, Eindhoven, 1997; K. Linker, *Vito Acconci* (New York: Rizzoli, 1994); and C. Burden, *Beyond the Limits* (New York: DAP, 1996).

5. Deborah Wye, *Louise Borgeoise* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982) 35.

6. Jean François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984) 55.

7. Donald Judd, "Specific Objects," *Arts Yearbook* 8 (New York: Guggenheim, 1965) 75.

8. Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1968) 11.

9. Stelarc continues to problematize the notion of space through work, such as Movatar. He introduces the concept behind the work thus: "Motion Capture allows a physical body to animate a 3D computer-generated virtual body to perform in comparative space or cyberspace. This is done by markers on the body, which are tracked by cameras, their motions analyzed by a computer and mapped onto the virtual actor. Or it can be done using electromagnetic sensors . . . which indicate position/orientation of limbs and head. Consider, though, a virtual body or an avatar that can access a physical body, actuating its performance in the real world. If the avatar is imbued with an artificial intelligence, becoming increasingly autonomous and unpredictable, then it would become more an AL (Artificial Life) entity performing within a human body in physical space" (<<http://www.stelarc.va.com.au>>).

10. This is not to suggest that distinctions between "art" and "general behaviour" are either fixed or desirable. The days when performance could be defined as Person A representing Person B whilst Person C watches on have long gone. As the likes of Duchamp, Koons, and Hirst have brought notions of the "readymade" into art, so too have a number of practitioners sought to collapse the distinctions between the performative and the everyday. See Philip Auslander, *From Acting to Performance* (London: Routledge, 1997); Rebecca Schneider, *The Explicit Body in Performance* (London: Routledge, 1997); and Amelia Jones and Andrew Stephenson, *Performing the Body, Performing the Text* (London: Routledge, 1999).

11. Freeman 133.

12. Frank A. Tillman and Steven M. Cahn, *Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics, from Plato to Wittgenstein* (New York: Harpers & Row, 1969) 403.

