

Meaningless Dance 15 (Some Possibilities) - Dialogues on Dance, Philosophy and Performance

Presenters: Tempura Batter (Rohanne Udall and Paul Hughes), independent artists

Title of submission: *Meaningless Dance 15 (Some Possibilities)*

Type of submission: Stage performance, 35mins

Abstract:

Meaningless Dance 15 (Some Possibilities) is a stage work (35 mins) constructed out of 'weak choreographies': simple task-like scores that are easy to perform. Two performers instigate different modes of 'pedestrian' dancing - jogging, walking, bouncing, tapping. Repeated, modified, and traded between them, they iteratively re-propose how they might organise themselves on stage. This rearrangement is as much directed to each other as the audience; they continually question "what about this?" "or this?", extending and reshaping their performance, interrogating how a choreographic work might form.

The work unfolds as a cyclical and speculative enquiry; choreography is both proposed and questioned as a means of philosophical, material and aesthetic reflection. *Meaningless Dance 15 (Some Possibilities)* invites the viewer to perceive action as question, explicitly framing each isolated movement as one possible proposition among others.

The formal simplicity of the work gives space for complexity and ambiguity, for drifts in attention and intention, for an audience to contemplate their own spectating, distractions and desires.

While the performers shift through these choreographic possibilities, they vocally observe their own dancing, the wider work, and the audience's spectating. In its positioning the viewer as an active and speculating agent, the work draws from a lineage of Minimalism; but it advances these artistic strategies by making the dynamic and internal considerations of the dancers as present as the formal structuring of matter and space. However, the performers' comments remain merely another strand of the performance's enquiries; the possible meanings or truth of the work is not reduced to the somatic awareness of the dancers. *Some Possibilities* undertakes a choreographic and philosophical enquiry gives equal position to both the audience's considerations, the performers' awareness, and the overt formal constraints of the piece itself.

Grounded in a material space, this work advances a choreographic practice which sustain a reflexive enquiry into the circumstances of its own economics, spectating, institutional position, and emergence. Departing from traditional forms of philosophical discourse, it equally resists claims of dance or embodiment as a privileged site of non-linguistic knowledge. *Some Possibilities* enquires with an austere poetic, operating with a subtle dynamics of restlessness and fidgeting which corrupts an apparently cool exterior.

Over time, these minor gestures reveal seemingly insignificant asymmetries between the performers; smuggling the minor and rebellious poetry of an awkward and imprecise body.

Meaningless Dance 15 (Some Possibilities) has had one public showing at Michaelis Theatre, University of Roehampton, as part of Paul's MA dissertation undertaken through practice.

Photo documentation for the work can be accessed here:

<https://tempurabatter.wordpress.com/some-possibilities/>

Full video available here:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B0RJwfH_qqWocWhJZmITM2wyWIU

Bio:

Tempura Batter's playful work considers meaning and meaninglessness through oblique gestures. The collaborative practice of Rohanne Udall and Paul Hughes, it takes place across choreographic, performance and visual arts contexts; and speaks to a culture that is saturated in content and subject to endless streams of reference and possibility.

Paul holds an MA Dance Studies (University of Roehampton), and Rohanne MA Fine Art (Edinburgh College of Art). Their work has been presented across the UK, alongside *The International Conference on Artistic Research* (Society for Artistic Research, The Hague) and *Yes Conference* (The Young, ATW Institut, Giessen).

www.tempurabatter.wordpress.com

Technical details:

Meaningless Dance 15 (Some Possibilities) is a 35 minute long performance for the stage. It requires a general wash lighting state from conventional stage lights, and one lighting change. The dimensions of the stage must be at least 6m x 6m.