

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH & LEARNING

IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

SYMPOSIUM

6th May 2011

at the

**Centre for Creative Collaboration
London**



**PALATINE
Dance, Drama
and Music**



PROJECT PROFILE

Participatory research, also referred to as 'insider research', is a familiar model in ethnomusicology. The student of music learns about the music of an unfamiliar culture by studying an instrument (or vocal style) and playing alongside experienced practitioners. This competency allows the student-researcher to write about the 'musical culture' in question in terms of process, not only product. A researcher is also able to 'learn about learning' and gain insights into practices with limited associated verbal explanation. Participation has a place in the study and research of other performing arts as well. Through work-based learning schemes and artists-in-residence, students learn slowly 'to interpret and respond to cues and events as they take part in social practices. Learners [...] make use of the meanings and actions of more expert members of the practice community'. (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk Last accessed 20 September 2010) Researchers experience and observe their own and others' co-participation within artistic encounters.

This inter-disciplinary symposium, part of a PALATINE-funded project on participatory learning and research in the performing arts led by investigators Matthew Isaac Cohen (Drama, RHUL), Tina K. Ramnarine (Music, RHUL) and Henry Stobart (Music, RHUL), is intended to bring together academics from around the UK who use this model for researching and teaching the arts.

The symposium will examine how participatory learning and research is embedded in university curricula and is practiced as a methodology in fieldwork-based studies across the performing arts. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on best practice for participatory learning and research through the scrutiny of case studies, both individual research projects as well as modules and courses using participatory learning and research as a primary methodology. The symposium will investigate the challenges in combining ethnographic and practice-led research and through highlighting apprenticeship-based models of learning question the dominant understanding that students must 'subvert' or 'challenge' received structures. Major aims are to facilitate the development of participatory learning modules and courses, and develop new possibilities for dialogue between academia and artistic communities outside the university environment.

PROGRAMME

10.00 WELCOME TEA & COFFEE

11.00 **Introduction**

Matthew Isaac Cohen; Tina K. Ramnarine and Henry Stobart

SESSION ONE

11.15 **Presentation**

John Baily (Goldsmiths, Department of Music)

Lessons from Rahim: An experience of long-term participatory research with an Afghan rubab master

12.00 **Round Table Discussion**

Libby Worth (Royal Holloway, Drama Department)

Windows: Seeing through Reflection

12.30 **Presentation/Discussion**

Dick McCaw (Royal Holloway, Drama Department)

An Exercise in Soft Focus

13.00 LUNCH

SESSION TWO

14.00 **Presentation**

Susan Melrose (Middlesex University, School of Arts)

A Cautionary Note or Two, Amid the Pleasures and Pains of Participation in Performance-making as Research

14.45 **Presentation**

Carol Muller (University of Pennsylvania, Department of Music)

"Deliberative Ethnomusicology": Developing a Model for Community Partnership Research.

15.30 TEA BREAK

SESSION THREE

16.00 **Round Table Discussion**

Ruth Hellier-Tinoco (Winchester University, Department of Performing Arts)

On Experience, Memory, And Becoming-In-The World Through Participatory Research And Learning.

16.30 **Performance**

Sally Dean

Improvisation Excerpt from Somatic Movement & Costume Research

17.00 **Final Discussion**

17.30 END OF SYMPOSIUM

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

JOHN BAILY

Presentation

Lessons from Rahim: An experience of long-term participatory research with an Afghan rubab master

Biography

John Baily is Emeritus Professor of Ethnomusicology and Head of the Afghanistan Music Unit at Goldsmiths. His research on the music of Afghanistan began in 1973, with two years' fieldwork in the city of Herat, and continues to this day with work in the Afghan diaspora, most recently in Australia. From the outset Baily attached great importance to learning to perform the music he was studying. His main publications in this field are "Learning to perform as a research technique in ethnomusicology", *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*, 2001, and "Ethnomusicology, intermusability, and performance practice", in Henry Stobart (ed) *The New (Ethno)musicologies*.

LIBBY WORTH

Round Table Discussion

Windows: Seeing through Reflection

The recent interview with Tina Carter undertaken for this current Palatine research project reminded me forcefully, once again, how significant is the act of speaking about practice during and just after rehearsals and performances. In undergraduate and postgraduate practical assessments for theatre/dance performance, there are frequently requirements for a form of reflective writing to help moderate the marking of the practice. All too often these logs or critiques fall short of both the practical element offered and the level of perception and engagement evident during post rehearsal or post performance discussions/vivas. In this panel I wish to open a discussion on the fragility of this window of opportunity to 'engage with' rather than 'talk about' practices of rehearsal and performance. How might we support students to draw effectively on this 'window' and how does this relate to the ethnographic use of field notes written contemporaneously as compared to recollected later?

Biography

Dr Libby Worth is a Senior Lecturer in Theatre Practice in the Department of Drama and Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. Her background is in dance teaching and performance, specialising in site responsive performance, collective creative processes and the use of scores and scoring techniques in dance and theatre making. She trained with Anna Halprin and recently qualified as a Feldenkrais Practitioner. Her research and publications have focused on cross arts collaborations, especially on the relationship between dance and theatre texts. These include a co-authored book with Helen Poyner on Anna Halprin and articles on Jenny Kemp, Caryl Churchill, Rosemary Butcher and most recently Mabel Todd. She is currently writing a book with a dance theatre director and choreographer and is co-editing the proceedings from the recent conference at the Royal Ballet School on Ninette de Valois.

DICK McCAW

Presentation/Discussion

An Exercise in Soft Focus

This is a session in which six people can participate in a practical experiment whilst the rest of the delegates observe. During the experiment I shall give the background to this work and how it has led to a research project with two cognitive psychologists. Questions from the floor will be taken in the final ten minutes. For obvious reasons details of the experiment will not be disclosed until the session begins!

Biography

Dick McCaw was co-founder of the Actors Touring Company in 1978 and of the Medieval Players in 1981. Between 1993 and 2001 he was Director of the International Workshop Festival for whom he curated 9 festivals featuring major figures in the performing arts (documentations of some of the workshops can be accessed through the Exeter Digital Archive). Since 2002 he has been an independent researcher and senior lecturer at Royal Holloway, University of London. He has just completed the *Laban Sourcebook* for Routledge which will be published later this year.

SUSAN MELROSE

Presentation

A Cautionary Note or Two, Amid the Pleasures and Pains of Participation in Performance-making as Research

Susan Melrose is Acting Associate Dean for Research in the School of Arts and Education, Middlesex University. Over the past decade she has addressed issues in the field of practice-led research in the performing arts, exploring the key question of the differences between practitioner-centred mixed-mode-theoretical research practices, in the university, and the still-dominant expert-spectatorial research writing. Identifying the interface between expert-intuitive process and the discipline-specific logics of production as central to creative decision-making, she argues for the elaboration of an epistemics of performance-making process that takes the specificity of expert decision-making as its focus.

CAROL MULLER

Presentation

"Deliberative Ethnomusicology": Developing a Model for Community Partnership Research.

My presentation will examine ethnomusicological research performed by graduate and undergraduate students in partnership with members of faith based organizations in Philadelphia, USA. I discuss the challenges, methods, and products of this research. I propose the notion of "deliberative ethnomusicology" after the writings of Gutmann and Thompson in their book *Why Deliberative Democracy* (Princeton, 2004), to flesh out the implications of this work for contemporary ethnomusicology.

Biography

Carol Muller is a Professor of Music (ethnomusicology), who has published widely on South African music, both at home and in exile. Her intellectual interests include the relationship between music, gender and religious studies, migration and diaspora studies, and critical

ethnography. *Musical Echoes: South African Women Thinking in Jazz* (Duke Fall 2011) with Sathima Bea Benjamin; *Shembe Hymns* (Univ. of KwaZulu Natal 2010); *Focus: South African Music* (Routledge 2008); *Rituals of Fertility and the Sacrifice of Desire: Nazarite Women's Performance in South Africa* (Chicago 1999) are some of the books she has authored and edited. Muller has published on South African jazz, religious performance, traditional and popular musics in a variety of journals that represent her interdisciplinary interests. Since coming to Penn, her graduate students have conducted research and are teaching in several countries, including the United States. Muller has also pioneered two forms of pedagogy—in Civic Engagement (partnering with the Netter Center for Community Partnerships, see www.sas.upenn.edu/music/westphillymusic) and online learning. Her Music 50, Introduction to World Music and Cultures class is the largest live class in the Music department, and the most popular online class taught in LPS. She is Director of the Penn in Grahamstown and the Interdisciplinary Music Minor in Jazz and Popular Music Studies. This year (2011) Muller will lead a combined online and live summer abroad program in South Africa at one of the world's largest arts festivals. Muller is also a seasoned gumboot dancer.

RUTH HELLIER-TINOCO

Round Table Discussion

On Experience, Memory, And Becoming-In-The World Through Participatory Research And Learning.

Having undertaken research projects in Mexico, the USA, and the UK that involve participatory methods, and having taught a range of undergraduate/graduate courses and modules in Contemporary Performance (Performing Arts), Ethnomusicology, and Applied Drama that engage a) participatory ethnographic fieldwork methods; b) practice-as-research methods; and c) community participation methods, my contribution to this exploration of participatory research and learning concerns a discussion of experiences that these models offer for students, researchers, and the researched. Given that my teaching has encompassed a UK single subject degree model and a USA liberal arts context, I will also address the values that participatory research and learning encompasses in these differing pedagogical frameworks.

Biography

Ruth Hellier-Tinoco, PhD, is a scholar, creator and performer, whose work engages in an interdisciplinary context with the fields of performance studies, ethnomusicology, dance studies, community arts, theatre studies, and Mexican and Latin American studies. Her research projects explore issues of identity, ethnicity and migration; power relations; tourism; gender; embodiment; vocality; and the ethics in/of performance and research. Ruth currently teaches at the University of Winchester, where she is Senior Lecturer in Performing Arts, and at the University of California, Santa Barbara, USA. She holds BA Hons in Music, Drama and Dance, PGCE in Drama in Education; and PhD in Ethnomusicology/Dance Anthropology. Ruth had a successful career as a professional stage and TV actor, and also worked as a community arts facilitator and Head of Music in secondary education. In the field of arts and disability, she directed the *InterAct Theatre Workshop*.

Publications include *Embodying Mexico: Tourism, Nationalism, and Performance* (OUP); chapters in *Performance, Embodiment and Cultural Memory*, and *Music, Power and Politics*; articles in *Performance Research* and *Research in Drama Education*; an edited collection, *Women Singers in Global Contexts* (forthcoming: University of Illinois Press) and *Performing Memory: Contemporary Mexican Theater* (forthcoming: Intellect).

SALLY DEAN

Performance

Improvisation Excerpt from Somatic Movement & Costume Research

This 15 minute movement improvisation piece is a collaboration between performer Sally Dean, costume designer Sandra Arroniz Lacunza, and the site of the Centre for Creative Collaboration. Site, costume and physicality collide – creating a highly visceral and sculptural landscape of poetic imagery and dream-like narratives. Each moment evokes a theatrical "scene." Sally's improvisational performances play on the edge of the magical, the ritualistic, the ordinary and the mundane. Her work is informed by her background in Amerta Movement (Suprpto Suryodarmo), Somatic- Movement (Skinner Releasing), Butoh, and Body-based theatre. This work is an excerpt of Sally's current research into the relationship between "Somatic Movement and Costume."

Biography

Sally Dean is an interdisciplinary performer, choreographer, playwright, and teacher. Over the last 12 years, her work has been performed in New York (NY Musical Theater Festival), London, Java, Prague, Essen, San Francisco, and Seattle. She is the director of Sally E Dean Performing Arts Company and also the cross-cultural performance project Kolaborasi, which facilitates artistic collaborations between South-East and South Asian, British, and American artists. She has taught dance and theatre practices at Laban, Central School of Speech and Drama, Byam Shaw School of Art, Coventry University, Chichester University and the National University of Java. She also offers independent performance making workshops, performance training, and artistic mentoring for professional artists in London. www.sallyedean.com and www.kolaborasi.org.

CENTRE FOR CREATIVE COLLABORATION

We would like to thank the Centre for Creative Collaboration for providing the space for the symposium. The following information comes from their website:

<http://www.creativecollaboration.org.uk/>

The Centre is a neutral place where people from many different backgrounds - universities, large corporates, SMEs, freelancers - can work together on new things in the belief that real innovation happens at the edge and in the gaps between disciplines.

The Centre supports new types of collaboration using the principles of open innovation. This is a groundbreaking project for London delivering collaborative projects and multi disciplinary working in an attractive and flexible space.

