

Lauren Goode's presentation outline and notes

for the first event in the Artist review series on 20 Sept 2006

The presentation is in three parts

- welcome and introduction to the series
- introduction to the live art garden initiative
- introduction to my practice: immersivity and immersive arts practice

Meanwhile there will be a dvd projection of edited documentation from in-situ collaborative performance research. [The practice session shows Maria Llanderas and me experimenting in Greenwich Park in 2005. The experimentation takes place in a particular location by two trees on three occasions: on a very cold winters day and then on 2 days in Spring a week apart. Maria and I went on to develop work in a different location in Greenwich Park which was shown as five durational performance events in June 2005 and of which there is also documentation, which may be shown later in the series. There is also documentation of collaborative practice sessions in a woodland vicinity at Heathmount School with Maria and I, and Charlotte Bernstein, which draws out different aspects of experimentation, and extracts of which may be shown later in the series, However, I have decided to show this particular practices session documentation, as an introduction, because of how it gives a clearer indication of my interest in working with realtime environmental and atmospheric factors and unfolding movements.]

1. Welcome and introduction to the series

Welcome everyone... as this is the first meeting in the series

I'd like to acknowledge the funding support of the Networking Artists' Networks Initiative (NAN) through a-n The Artist Information Company (Artist Newsletter)

I received small bursary that I have rather stretched hence I want to make clear that the bursary support is being accompanied by, very much appreciated, support through the participation of a wonderful group of presenters to whom my thanks and I hope the audiences appreciation goes.

Additionally, thanks go to Dr John Levack Drever and Ian Stonehouse of the Electronic Music Studios who have kindly welcomed hosting the series and supporting the technical needs; and also, beyond this, through their encouragement and input through discussion, have contributed to its development; and who will also be co-chairs throughout the series, which is great.

About the series itself ...

- it is intended to develop the Live Art Garden Initiative and facilitate artists and researchers to share the concerns that they find important and timely and with which they are engaging in their ongoing practice (and at which they are at different research stages)
Although some participating presenters are clearly well-recognised and distinguished for their work and obviously have extensive experience, I want to emphasise that in many cases presenters will be sharing work-in-progress for review, feedback and critical exchange and the series is intended to provide a supportive and informal atmosphere for this.
- I see the series also as an opportunity for realising an experimental research process as a live knowledge process.
- this is a trans-interdisciplinary series which realises a conditioning process of potential interest itself
Its relevant to consider what one might be 'doing' by engaging in this process, for instance:-
 - not taking for granted that these meetings are for example about 'discussion' as opposed to 'digression';
 - or considering that, the way in which we share knowledge, is potentially, intensively operative, just like the ways in which one reads a book produces an implosion of affects
 - or thinking about terms, as infinitely multifaceted and capable of operating the conveyance of different sets of tangible (and intangible) ideas and concepts, within different registers or disciplines
 - and perhaps realising that struggling to align, via a translation, terms across disciplines (to reach consensus) can be a way of producing an impoverished reduction from knowledge processes, whereas there are alternative approaches...
 - I'm drawing from Deleuze and Guattari in 'What is philosophy' – the following extract seems relevant to quote
'Concepts are centers of vibrations, each in itself and every one in relation to all the others. This is why they all resonate rather than cohere or correspond with each other. There is no reason why concepts should cohere. As fragmentary totalities, concepts are not even pieces of a puzzle, for their irregular contours do not correspond to each other. They do form a wall, but it is a dry-stone wall, and everything holds together only along diverging lines. Even bridges from one concept to another are still junctions, or detours, which do not define any discursive whole. They are movable bridges. From this point of view, philosophy can be seen as being in a perpetual state of digression or digressiveness.' (Page 23, Chpt. 'What Is a Concept?'.)

2. An introduction to the live art garden initiative

Who: firstly in case you would like to speak to the associate artists involved with the initiative in the break, I'll point them out...(Further information is online <http://www.liveartgardeninitiative.org.uk/artists.html> and on the intro leaflets available). (Associate artists: Charlotte Bernstein, Maria Llanderas, Fabrizio Manco, Helen Palmer and Carla Vendramin).

My background is in fine arts practice and I have moved from concentrating on site specific, mixed media, sculptural installation work to site-specific live art practice which encompasses durational works and which are currently meditative and movement based. Mostly sites have been gardens, parks or other so-called natural environments but it is my dissatisfaction with particular sites limits which confine my practice which is in part the impetus for the creation of new garden environments. (Also there are wider political and way of life issues that lead me to focussing on a long term site project).

What, in summary:

The Initiative is to conceive of, set-up and develop an art, architecture, sound and ecology project. The project will involve the creation of new garden environments *in* which site-specific live arts will be *created* and *receive* an audience.

(It is a long-term and large scale site project eg, over 15 acres but ideally around 100-300 acres – it is not a domestic garden scale project).

The Initiative is **chiefly an arts project, evolving from arts practice** in contrast to a garden, or farm, *with* add-on art; or *garden art*; or the *art of gardens* or *landscape art*... This is about art and arts practice pursuing particular experiments.

For instance, concerned with: immersivity; and experiments and practices that are relevant to deliberately explore situated in and conditioning a new garden-environment. More specifically, I am proposing new garden-farm environments as a potential medium for an experimental arts practice.

The two main and important aspects to introduce are:

- ideas about the **new garden environments**;
- ideas about **site specific live arts practice and immersivity**.

Ideas about the new garden environments:

The idea is chiefly to envisage a new garden environment **influenced by the philosophy of Deleuze** and **relevant to particular in-situ live arts practice**; but *additionally* to integrate within this a farm environment (and involving a particular farm practice).

Conceiving of new garden environments has involved me considering the following:-

- **what types of garden and landscape traditions are being rejected (or in part rejected) and why:**
For instance, how will the new garden environment differ from other relatively recent UK spaces, such as, Charles Jencks Garden of Cosmic Speculation, Yalding Organic Garden, Gunpowder Park, Kielder Forest, Kingswood Stour Valley Arts, Grizedale Forest Arts, Yorkshire Sculpture Park or community garden projects, such as, Springfield Community Garden.
- **what are the various intentions behind general traditions of garden design categories that are not necessarily being pursued?**
Categories, for instance, might include: the paradise utopia garden (the lost garden), the woodland garden, capability brown landscape (so-called naturalistic landscape), the picturesque, the idyll, the folly, the romantic wilderness, the maze, medicinal herb gardens, pleasure gardens, arboretums, botanical gardens, Victorian civic park space and Winter gardens, recreation grounds, suburban gardens, open-green spaces, etc

Six general intentions (relating to some of the above general categories) – are identified, as examples, and follow.

1. Enchantment;
2. Conservation (of both the built and natural seed heritage);
(serving biodiversity and scientific interests but also colonial collector ethics. Connected issues include intellectual property rights and the safe-guarding of natural seed heritage);
3. Representation (of philosophical, cultural values or scientific ideas for contemplation);
4. Control through participation – (contentiously) eg, disproportionate development of participation in sports or 'leisure' space provision (controlling and restricting potential for the flourishing of perverse pursuits of desire (other/artistic); and profiteering from these deliberate control zones). The notion of park-space as controlled play space where the possibilities for play are prescribed. Or development of gardening as a *past-time*; and of occupational therapeutic community activities (clearly participative activities can be beneficial but I want to stress that 'participation' can be controlling and might be beneficial but might also be driven from more dubious intentions).
5. Regeneration – garden developments as tourist visitor attraction;
6. Demonstration – educational gardens developments eg, of organic domestic scale garden practice;

About the above intentions: They are not in any order of priority. And they are not the drivers behind the new garden environment being proposed – I want to highlight them in distinction to drivers behind the proposed new garden environment, although some eg, conservation, in terms of biodiversity, would clearly remain important to intentions and others one could easily foresee as transpiring.

Asking what these general garden environment traditions are about, control or engender, is relevant *in contrast* to considering a *new garden environment influenced by Deleuzian philosophy...* that involves considering specific sites as providing an architecture that **is a live processing and conditioning of dynamic fields of movement, intensity, energy and affects for immersive arts practice.** (Also, regarding the term *immersive* I'm only using this here as a term to give an indication of my interests, really it is important that particular *arts practice* has the freedom to unfold conditioning its own further directions, which will turn out to be more appropriately named otherwise).

[Also I'm running through my considerations here, but I am anticipating and intending that this series of events will open up, contribute to and change the developing ideas and what is important to consider]

Conceiving of the new garden environments therefore involves considering new garden environments...

- **As multiplicities**
 - **as conditioning spaces for passage(s); for durational affects from movements and technologies of movements**
 - as the spaces of movements – **a garden of dynamic movements fields**
 - as facilitating **experiments with meditative and energy practices;**
(garden-environments about the powerful affects of extremely weak signals – biophysical)
 - as facilitating **experiments with sonic-icity** (particularly **interactive**)
 - as facilitating **experiments with filmic practices**

Conceiving of the new garden environments also involves considering...

- **The integrating of particular farm practice** to progress towards realising a **new live art garden-farm environment** (I say 'progress' – because I'm no farmer so for me there is a huge learning curve involved here). I'm interested in **Mae-Wan Ho's Dream Farm 2 model farm practice** and how this might be incorporated. Briefly this is a very special ecological farm practice informed by biophysics that through the way it integrates sophisticated biogestor technologies and organic farming practice both recycles and

produces energy (food and fuel) and is intended to realise a zero-emission system. (Mae-Wan Ho: 'a model of an integrated zero-emission, zero-waste highly productive farm that maximises the use of renewable energies and turns wastes into food and energy resources...') It is also more than this...

- Challenging the **separation of roles** eg, those of groundsmen or maintenance workers with those of artists/project workers; or those of gardeners with those of landscape architects. I'm interested in how garden and farm work can be integrated as arts practice.
- Considering... **Complex spatial issues** (division/interconnection/interference); and in relation to concepts of non-linear time (Ref. to Deleuze on 'Aeon' and Chronos – see 'Difference and Repetition' by Deleuze)
 - It is not the intention to create domestic garden room designs eg, mapping to outdoor galleries.
 - Working in a decontained environment with changing vicinities is an important aspect to be explored, however, containment issues may transpire through the programming of simultaneous artworks
- Considering... **Scale** – there is the issue of macro landscape architecture, as a large scale site is envisaged, but also called for are the total **integration of organic ecological methods** and of biophysical-energy knowledge practices, therefore how to work sensitively with technologies at different micro/macro scales (ecosystems) (eg soil and bacteria leading to architectural form through the plant and insect life supported).
- Considering **approaches to planting** involving thinking of populations and life-cycles of plants...
 - the wild-weed garden or the cultivated garden – as dynamic movement fields (and arts practice to engage with these movements that are not just seasonal cycles, but also of longer durational lifetimes/ other resolutions)
 - how habitats and microhabitat/eco-systems affect each other (eg, ecological planting practices at Yalding are of interest but other guiding issues/aesthetics directing, eg garden layout, are not).

There was not time to include and expand upon the following in the presentation:

Is there a particular and current site that I have in mind? No, but I do have a draft initiative plan (attempting to correspond to the requirements of a business/organisation plan) in-progress and work on this continues to raise issues, for instance:-

- **how to configure planning through and in line with an arts practice;** planning as experimental process; experimental process as political act
- **how to avoid capitalistic development** and to be pursuing how to (dismantling the politics of competition) (eg non competitive; non exploitation; working with group dynamics; distribution of power; non management; non administration)
- **a brief run-through of the draft initiative plan...**
- **the problems/impacts of legal trading entities** ...issues: the limitations, including ethics, of structures imposed by entities; and the effects on fluid direction and collaboration. Distributed entities rather than overarching organisation entity as a potential solution.

3. Ideas about site specific live arts practice and immersivity

Lastly, I want to briefly introduce some ideas about site specific live arts practice and immersivity:

By immersivity I am not necessarily intending to refer to the immersive environments of digital virtual realities (eg, digital simulations and game world imaginary environments) – although I am interested in how new media environments can potentially be explored differently in new garden environments. (Sensitive integration of relevant supporting infrastructure at the site is intended and will be important to facilitate this).

I am intending to refer to the immersivity of so-called consciousness and non-consciousness – i'm interested in its live biophysical and hallucinatory affects.

Concerns that have directed my work include ideas about: the non-representational; non-consciousness; the impersonal; and durational energy affects.

I'm interested in exploring immersive practice through

- sensing in structured and unstructured improvisation;
- *in situ* performance of 'operative movement';
- interactions and intensities in complex dynamic environments.

Finally, I view **art as ultimately about a 'liveness'**.

When one asks '**Why pursue foremostly art?**', for me the critical answer is suggested by the question '**why pursue technologies of otherness and becoming?**'...this is a question upon a certain processual kind of life and death.

(Technologies of otherness refers to Johnny Goldings book: *The eight technologies of otherness* and ideas about becoming, difference and repetition are from Deleuze' and, also in relation to 'becoming', more recently, I have been strongly influenced by the work of Mae-Wan Ho – particularly through Ho's book '*The Rainbow and the Worm, The Physics of Organisms*).

I also continue to be strongly influenced by the work of G. Deleuze and J-F. Lyotard. Lyotard refers to how, in one important respect: 'One writes because one does not know what one has to say', which I think has parallels across arts practices, and to end with another quote from Lyotard (from the Chpt: The General Line in Postmodern Fables):

If humanity does not preserve the inhuman region in which we can meet this or that which completely escapes the exercise of rights, we do not merit the rights we have been recognised. Why would we have freedom of expression if we had nothing to say but the already said? And how can we have any chance of finding how to say what we know not how to say if we do not listen at all to the silence of the other within? This silence is the exception to the reciprocity of rights, but it is its legitimation.

[My brief abstract/info about my presentation mentioned that I would include extracts from two of my writings –*Field foci*, and *Dynamics conditioning a live art of movement fields*. I actually decided to frame this short presentation differently, as an introduction, but both these writings are online. *Field foci* is a completed creative writing, but the other writing is still very much a draft paper].

<http://www.liveartgardeninitiative.org.uk/laurenwritings.html>