

DUMB TYPE SYMPOSIUM – THE BIRTH OF NEW MEDIA DRAMATURGY

-ABSTRACTS-

WEDNESDAY, 3 APRIL 2013

2.00 P.M.-3.30 P.M. PANEL #2

Interweaving Performance Cultures: Bodies that Matter, *S/N* and Activism

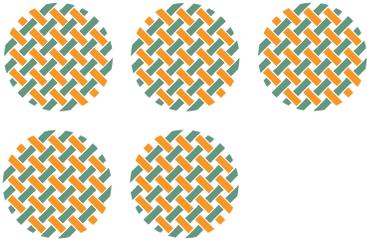
Fran Lloyd

The opening scene of Dumb Type's *S/N* performance is about bodies—how they try to perform, enunciate, and how they are labelled. Central to the performance are questions about language, constraints of nationality and borders, gender, sexuality, race, 'normative' bodies and, most poignantly, HIV. "I am sorry to tell you we are not actors. We are this... And... how are you?" This address to the audience is interwoven throughout the performance and makes a vital link between the bodies of the performers and those of the audience. Interconnected through the swift moving plethora of sound, movement, text and corporeal projections that disturb fixity, these bodies are a vital medium of the performance, the site of enactment, disruption, disappearance, and questioning orientated toward the future. Reflecting on the transformative affects of *S/N* for the Dumb Type collective and individuals, this paper focuses on the interweaving of the personal and the political realised through the art activities and collaborative performances of BuBu de la Madeleine and Cho Yukio in the late 1990s.

Corporeal Projections and Ocular Demands: *Lovers*

Stephen Barber

This paper will examine Teiji Furuhashi's installation *Lovers*—exhibited in art venues around the world since 1994, including Tokyo's Spiral Hall in 1998—in conjunction with two previous performance experiments in the immersive projection of moving-images of spectral, intersecting bodies. Firstly, it will look at the recently-rediscovered celluloid-film documents subsisting from Tatsumi Hijikata's choreographic



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performance *The Birth*, created using experimental camera-technologies in Hokkaido and projected in a 360-degree immersive environment in the Green Pavilion at Osaka Expo 70. Secondly, the paper will examine the originating site for all spatial projections of moving-image sequences of human bodies: Eadweard Muybridge's glass-disc projections within his specially constructed, proto-cinematic Zoopraxographical Hall at the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition. The paper will explore the enduring, wide-ranging spectatorial demands entailed in immersive moving-image projections of corporeal transmutations.

Turning Catastrophe into Art: On Dumb Type, *S/N* and Tadasu Takamine, *Cool Japan*

Shintaro Fujii

In this presentation, I will take two examples—*S/N* (1994), a performance by Dumb Type, created after the members were told that Teiji Furuhashi, its principal member, had developed AIDS (and before he died of it), and *Cool Japan* (2012), a visual art exhibition by Tadasu Takamine, a former Dumb Type member, focusing on the state of post-Fukushima Japanese culture and society—in order to discuss how, notwithstanding the differences of the form, these can be interpreted in the same light in terms of their relation to catastrophe (AIDS for *S/N* and nuclear crisis for *Cool Japan*) and to the mainstream imagery with regard to these.

Both works deal with the politics of the visible and the invisible regarding catastrophe, be this public or, above all, a personal one, as in *S/N*. They both quote texts and images from mainstream discourses to question their own legitimacy; they look at (media representations of) a visible crisis with an invisible cause (virus and radioactivity), and how this is all the more unsettling because of the invisibility that serves as a screen in order to mask what does not fit into its framework, divert public attention from the undesirable object, and further marginalise the already marginalised voices of the minority. In this sense, they share the characteristic of being works of art created as a response to catastrophe (personal or social), constituting an auto-reflexive and political critique of the visible and using artistic means to make us imagine the invisible.