



School: Bath School of Music & Performing Arts

Researcher: Dr Matthew Sergeant

Project Title: KISS (2014, for solo violin and twine bow)

UOA: 33 - Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies

300-Word Statement

KISS is a 3-5 hour performance-installation commissioned by the Tempting Failure performance art festival and first performed by Emma Lloyd at The Island arts venue, Bristol, on 7 November 2014. The piece has received numerous additional performances with Lloyd, including Studio One (Salford), Tate Gallery (Edinburgh), Sirga Festival (Flix, Spain), New Music North West Festival (Manchester), The Yard Theatre (London), and John Thaw Theatre (Aesthetic Network International Symposium, University of Manchester).

The research draws its wider referential frame from the so-called 'new materialism' where 'matter is no longer imagined [...] as a massive, opaque plenitude but is recognized instead as indeterminate, constantly forming and reforming in unexpected ways. One could conclude accordingly that matter "becomes" rather than matter "is" (Coole & Frost 2010: 10). The temporal aspect of material becoming is explored in the piece by developing a new violin bow specifically for the piece. This 'twine bow' is haired with a layer of coarse garden twine positioned between the horse hair and the strings. At the outset of performance, only the twine comes into contact with the string. It is irregular and knotted, forbidding the consistent stick-slip action that horse hair provides and the bow serves only to filter non-harmonic resonances (noise) in the string. The bow is in almost continual use across the piece's 3-5 hour duration and, as such, the twine layer is gradually worn-through, revealing the horse hair beneath and changing the. The rate and degree of this change is determined by the materiality of the twine and string.