



School: Bath School of Art

Researcher: John Wood

Project Title: Very Clear Instructions

UOA: D32 Art and Design - History, Practice and Theory

300-Word Statement

The project was a cross-disciplinary piece which saw John Wood and Paul Harrison working with the Vancouver Contemporary Art Gallery (CAG) and Ballet BC. Harrison and Wood's work is collaborative and all roles within it are equally shared. Harrison and Wood worked intensively with 16 dancers using a process of improvisation which was video recorded. From this footage Harrison and Wood devised and directed a 30-minute live performance work entitled 'Very Clear Instructions'.

The aim was to investigate the human figure as a sculptural object in relation to the immediate surrounding space and architecture. This originality of this work lies in the way it explores the question of how to incorporate everyday human movements and gestures into a form of dance language to be presented in a gallery context as opposed to in a theatre.

This new performance was structured as ten episodes including, "Falling", "Right angles" or "Leaning", combining much of Harrison and Wood's ongoing preoccupations with humour and reflections on human endeavour. Harrison and Wood worked with the dancers to engage with attributes such as trust, cause, effect, action and reaction, and to imaginatively engage with the physical arena and dimensions in which movement and gesture occur with distinctive observations in which the familiar is made strange, altering our perceptions and knowledge of those moments encountered as we move through the world. This performance represented a significant advance in interdisciplinary practice specifically pertaining to dance and performance studies and an innovative methodology in the process of its production.

Commissioned by the Contemporary Art Gallery with Ballet BC and produced in partnership with The Polygon Gallery. Support for the research and development phase was provided by the Kickstarter community in partnership with Art Basel Crowdfunding Initiative.

The premiere was performed at The Polygon Gallery, Vancouver, on the 20/04/2018.