

~~and notes “that matter (the matter of trees and bodies) is an on-going process of materialization and of meaning and value-making” (Casid 2011, 98). For her landscaping performatives or periperformatives do not mean “a turn from landscaping to its representation understood as some sort of second-order remove from the real dirt and raking muck in the scaping of land.” (Casid 2011, 101) She notes traditional verb forms, to landscape as depicting or representing a landscape, and to landscape as laying something out as a landscape (like for example a garden) and distinguishes the thing (something to be landscaped), its representation (what it requires to appear as a landscape) and the process of its conversion. For Casid “this transit between thing, representation, and process should also remind that landscape’s complex temporality – its many and interconnected tense forms – inheres already in the tensive action of being and becoming ‘as landscape’” (Casid 2011, 101). Her theses, which she discusses in detail, are the following:~~

- ~~1. Landscape is.~~
- ~~2. Landscape is landscaped.~~
- ~~3. Landscape is landscaping.~~
- ~~4. Landscape landscapes.~~
- ~~5. I landscape.~~
- ~~6. Utopia will have been landscaped.~~
- ~~7. Landscape. (Landscape period.) Or (to put landscape in the imperative more strongly) Landscape!~~
- ~~8. She landscaped, they landscaped, it was landscaped. There is no simple past.~~
- ~~9. It was being landscaped when ... is progressive and continuous in name only.~~
- ~~10. Landscaped is not just a simple present or simple presence.~~
- ~~n+1. If it were landscaped in X way, then... (Casid 2011, 101–111)~~

~~She exemplifies her statements with a wide range of works by women artists, and shows through them how landscape continuously matters.~~

#### 1.4 ON PLACE AND PERFORMANCE

Place and site are more commonly used concepts than landscape in the context of performance.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps speaking of outdoor places rather than landscape would better describe my interests. In her text “A Global Sense of Place” geographer Doreen

8 This section is based on “Kohtaamispaikka, epäpaikka, vastapaikka ja performanssi” [Meeting place, non-place, counter-site, performance] in Lea Kantonen (ed.) *Ankaraa ja myötätuntoista kuuntelua - keskustelemaa kirjoitusta paikkasidonmaisesta taiteesta*, [Listening with rigour and compassion – dialogical writing on site-specific art], Academy of Fine Art, Helsinki 2010, 86–94 (Arlander 2010 b).

Massey (1994, 146–56) noted that we live in a world dominated by time-space compression, where the idea of the local, of place and its specificity is hard to maintain. Searching for place and seeking a sense of place might inevitably seem to be reactionary phenomena; like looking for comfort in the past or some imaginary rootedness. Massey wanted to challenge this view. She tried to create an understanding of place not as self-closing and defensive but as outward looking, as a meeting place for various influences rather than defined through its borders. She presented an alternative interpretation of place, one that allows for a sense of place, which is extroverted, a crossroads of influences:

*[T]hen each 'place' can be seen as a particular, unique point of their intersection. It is indeed a meeting place. Instead of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings... constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself. (Massey 1994, 7)*

An understanding of place as a meeting place enables a “sense of place which is extroverted, which includes the consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive sense the global and the local.” (Massey 1994, 7)

Massey mentions several aspects, which are helpful in developing a more dynamic concept of place. First of all places are processes, just as the social interactions which they tie together are processes. Secondly, places do not have boundaries that would be necessary for their definition; they can be understood not in opposition to an outside but through their particular links with that outside. Thirdly, places do not have single “identities” but are full of internal conflicts (about their past as well as their future). Fourthly, the specificity of a place is continually reproduced, by the globalisation of social relations (and uneven development) and from layers of different sets of linkages. The character of a place can only be constructed by linking that place to places beyond.<sup>9</sup> We need a global sense of the local, she concludes, a global sense of place. (Massey 1994, 7–8)

What could be the opposite of place – placelessness or utopia? Philosopher Michel Foucault introduced the term heterotopia, to denote real and existing counter sites that differ from their surroundings, as the opposite of utopia, a non-existent place. These heterotopias include places related to crises or deviation like hospi-

9 I have discussed Massey’s ideas of space and place more extensively in “Performing Time Through Place”, published in Riku Roihankorpi and Teemu Paavolainen (eds.) *SPACE–EVENT–AGENCY–EXPERIENCE* (Arlander 2012 a). The text is a development of a paper “Private performances in public space” presented at PSi #16, Performing Publics, in Toronto, 9–13.6.2010. (Arlander 2010 d)

tals and prisons, but also theatres, brothels, and gardens. Some heterotopias, like museums, libraries, amusement parks or holiday camps, are linked to a break in time as well as in space. (Foucault 1986) Or perhaps non-places? Sociologist Marc Augé presented a useful distinction between anthropological (communal) places and non-places, which he calls semi-public spaces of transport and commerce like airports, highways, shopping malls and other spaces of transit, which are contractual, based on anonymity and produce a sense of shared solitude rather than community. (Augé, 1995, 101-103)

A live performance takes place as a space (Arlander 1998 a, 12) and it takes place in a space or place as well. In *The Poetics of Space* philosopher Gaston Bachelard connects our early memories with memories of a home, a house or a building (Bachelard 1994, 8, quoted in Hill & Paris 2006, xiii). In a similar fashion our first memories of theatre are often connected with memories of theatre buildings, halls and buildings, as performance scholars Leslie Hill and Helen Paris observe in their anthology *Performance and Place* (2006, xiii). Contemporary dance and theatre is presented in the most varied venues; Live Art and performance art mostly take place outside the white or black cubes, galleries or studios. How performances are placed, how curators and producers place them in various spaces and contexts, define who will experience them. (Hill in Hill and Paris 2006, 6)

Other approaches to performance and place introduced by Hill and Paris concern the relationship between the embodied and the virtual, which has been explored in various technologically elaborate performances ranging from multimedia experiments in empty coal mines to contemporary dance with cosmonauts in zero gravity (Hill and Paris 2006, 47-59). Particular problems are generated by performances in very specific environments, like the hyper reality of Las Vegas or the monument memorizing the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (Hill and Paris 2006, 101-147). Places with border conflicts provide the starting point for activist artists like Billionaires for Bush or experiments like the performance of a Shakespeare play to produce a sees fire in the warzone between two favelas in Rio de Janeiro (Hill and Paris 2006, 151-206).

When speaking of places, sites and site-specificity it is equally important to consider placelessness; when speaking of space we should consider lack of space as well. Hill asks, whether we have already completely lost or overcome our sense of place, is cyber space the only space left to be conquered and colonized? According to her, American culture has developed placelessness into its extreme. Vito Acconci claimed that public space begins when you leave home, but this is not true if you leave by car, she adds. Most Americans have lived a placeless life for three generations, so they

do not even notice it but concentrate instead on turning the rest of the globe placeless as well. (Hill in Hill and Paris 2006, 4-5)

Questions of place and placelessness in performance have roots in antiquity; in classicism the unities of time, place and action characterise a good play, with the action unfolding in real time in a specific place. Traditional performance art follows this classical unity, stressing real time and real space rather than fictional or narrative space-time. Hill compares the uniqueness of real time and real space with Walter Benjamin's notion of the cult status of a singular artwork existing in a specific place, which is destroyed by copying. Performance art events, which mostly take place only once, still have a similar cult status compared to cinema. An encounter between an artist and the audience in real time and real space ties a performance strongly to its site. But seen from a fine art perspective performance art is placeless; it is not fixed as an object (except in documentation). One cannot travel anywhere to see some legendary performance art work, like "Interior Scroll" by Carolee Schneeman. If you wanted to experience it you had to be there at that time, in that place. Thus place really matters. (Hill 2006, 5-6)

The question of placelessness in the context of performance art is often linked to new technologies and to works that can be experienced in real time over the Internet. Live Art can be created in a site-specific way, producing actions that can be experienced live on site and in real time through the web. Even more placeless are performances with no physical place at all, no "aura". In the words of Hill: "Just as 'mechanical reproduction' changed forever our relationship to works of art through the process of production and commoditization, virtual reality and cyberspace change forever our notions of place, access and aura, breaking with the very notion of an original." (Hill 2006, 49) It can be claimed that cyberspace brings life to the old dream of a dual reality, a distinction between spirit and matter. Others speak for a corporeal, sensory-sensual architecture in order to awaken us from the two-dimensional and almost exclusively visual world of screens to experience the multisensory multidimensionality of the world. Today interactive cinematic works utilize the corporeal qualities of places and strive to activate viewers to participation. (Hill 2006, 51) Interactivity transforms site-specific performances to situation based events.

If we assume that space, time, the body and action are the central elements of performance art (and most performances), and if we substitute place for space, we find place at the heart of performance art. Place, however, has not necessarily been one of the most important elements in performance, because performance art, as an heir to modernism, has been more interested in space (in a general sense) than

in specific places. Likewise performance art has been more interested in a universal (read male) body than in specific instances of corporeality (with the exception of early feminist performances). Today the situation has changed; performance art has developed into the art of identity par excellence, into a field for the most shifting bodily manifestations (Erkkilä 2008). Nevertheless place is often in a peculiar way insignificant, some kind of platform or material that one arguably tries to connect with, for instance by creating site-specific performances or by reacting to performing situations as spontaneously as possible, but which often remains secondary.

Site-specificity and performance art form a strangely unrelated couple, although historically they have a shared heritage in the minimalism of the 1960s, in the aesthetics of immediacy and in conceptual art. In art theory and criticism performance art is often anchored in the intimate corporeality of the artist rather than in the place, context, community or environment. Nonetheless, embodiment inevitably involves place, context and environment and often community as well. An interest in place and environment has been part of performance art, perhaps not the most visible part, but a significant one, in recent developments as well. Spatial practices, interventions in urban public space and interactive actions developed by performance artists and Live Artist have expanded the contact points between site-specific art and performance art. To counterbalance the inevitable locality induced by corporeality and interaction, performance art as a cultural practice is extremely mobile, forming an international community and subculture of its own.

Performance can relate to place in various ways. For example an illustrated anthology *Place* (Dean and Millar 2005) presents various approaches to place in contemporary art with headings like: urban environments, nature, fantastic places, mythical and historical places, places of politics and control, territories, itinerancy between places, heterotopias and non-places. These same starting points we could probably find in performance art and Live Art works. From the perspective of official culture performance art is nevertheless often an art of non-places or counter-sites, a countercultural activity of those gathered in wastelands.

Of course many performance art works considered classic today have had a strong relationship to place, although they might not be discussed as site-specific. The performances by Mierle Laderman Ukeles are one example; she washed the floor of a museum, *Hartford Wash; Washing Tracks – Maintenance inside and Maintenance outside* (1973) and brought attention to the invisible maintenance work of women (Kwon 2002, 19–23). Twenty years later Bobby Baker offered a female perspective on place in her performance *The Kitchen Show* (1991), which she per-

formed in her own kitchen in suburban London (Barrett & Baker 2007). The relationship of autobiographical performance and place has been discussed by Deirdre Heddon, who speaks of writing place through self and writing self through place (Heddon 2008, 90–91).

The classic work by Marina Abramovic and Ulay *The Lovers – The Great Wall Walk* (1988), with the artists walking the Chinese wall in order to meet midway, is clearly and literally a site-specific performance. It could not be realized anywhere else without considerable changes. More than on the level of place the work has evoked questions related to endurance, the performance capacity of human beings and the relationship of man and woman, although it is obvious that the site, the Great Wall, and the situation, a couple who plans a walk in order to marry but performs the walk and splits up, are both crucial. (Ulay & Abramovic 1997) A similar “endurance performance” is Tsching Shieh’s *One year performance 1981–1982*, where he spent one year living outdoors in the streets of New York and mapped his route daily. (Heathfield and Hsieh 2009) This performance, more than most performances, is site-specific and site-dependent, literally focused on the site through the mapping, but time is nevertheless the central aspect of the work; it is a part of Hsieh’s series of one-year performances, and it is mostly interpreted and discussed as a durational work. An element common to both of these performances is walking; performance is linked to a dynamic notion of site and process is combined with embodied activity. In these and many other cases we could ask which one has the leading role, performance or place, and often the answer is undeniably: performance. Place functions as material, support, background, task or reflecting surface, although performance art, like other performances and events, is a phenomenon that takes place in spaces and places, in the world.

In my own artistic work, for instance in my weekly performances for camera on the island of Harakka, I have tried to give place and environment the leading role, but have nevertheless often ended up displaying myself in one way or another; ideally the human being and the environment form a continuum in the video works. The same situation is repeated in many performances’ relationship to their environment. The artist’s body is the real site of action. If place, according to Massey, can be thought of as a meeting place, and imagined as articulated moments in the network of social relations and understandings, the same can be applied to the artist as a corporeal being, as a body, as a place. Thus a challenge could be how to create a sense of place and a sense of body, which is extroverted and conscious of its links with the wider world. Or rather, how to create a performance, which breathes in the place and of the place in which it takes place.

Art historian Miwon Kwon (2002, 29-30) observes that the understanding of site has changed in site-specific art during the past thirty (or forty) years.<sup>10</sup> Initially, site-specific art was based on a phenomenological or experiential understanding of the site as defined by the actual physical attributes of a particular location. Later on, materialist investigations and institutional critique reconfigured the site as a network of interrelated spaces and economies, not only as a physical arena but one constituted through social, economic and political processes. In recent site-oriented and project-based art, the site has been further redefined and extended into non-art realms and into broader cultural, social and discursive fields. (Kwon 2002, 3) These three paradigms of site specificity – phenomenological, social/institutional, and discursive – are not to be understood as stages in a linear historical development but, as Kwon observes, rather as “competing definitions, overlapping with one another and operating simultaneously in various cultural practices today (or even within a single artist’s single project)”. (Kwon 2002, 20) Perhaps we could speak of a dimension of the sensual-experiential, a dimension of production and a dimension of cultural meanings. Kwon’s ideas I discuss also in chapter six. Here I relate her ideas to developments in performance art.

Performance art developing in the 1960’s and 70’s in the wake of minimalism understood the artist (and also the viewer) as an embodied, sensing, corporeal and more or less universal bodily being. And we could say that the performance or action, like the art object or event “was to be singularly experienced in the here-and-now through the bodily presence of each viewing subject, in a sensorial immediacy of spatial extension and temporal duration.” (Kwon 2002, 11) Exceeding the limitations of traditional media and their institutional setting, relocating meaning from within the art object to its context, restructuring the subject from a Cartesian model to a phenomenological one of lived bodily experience, resisting the market economy, which circulates artworks as commodity goods – all these strivings came together in the attachment of the work to the site (Kwon 2002, 11) – and also in transforming the artwork into a performance, an action, a happening or a shared event.

In the 1980’s and the 1990’s various forms of institutional critique and conceptual art developed a different model. The site was increasingly conceived “not only in physical and spatial terms but also as a cultural framework defined by the institutions of art.” (Kwon 2002, 12) While “minimalism returned to the viewing subject a physical corporeal body, institutional critique insisted on the social

10 This section is based on sequences of “Is performance art self-portraiture? – Me or other people as medium” in Annette Arlander (ed.) *Converging Perspectives – Writings on Performance Art* Episodi 3, Teak 2011, 8-25 (Arlander 2011 a).

matrix of class, race, gender and sexuality of the viewing subject” (Kwon 2002, 13) and adopted strategies that were anti-visual (informational, textual, expository, didactic) or immaterial (gestures, events or performances). Instead of being a noun, an object, the artwork sought to be a verb, a process, “provoking the viewer’s critical (not just physical) acuity regarding the ideological conditions of their viewing.” (Kwon 2002, 24) The specific relationship between an artwork and its site was not based on the physical permanence of that relationship but “on the recognition of its unfixed impermanence, to be experienced as an unrepeatable and fleeting situation.” (Kwon 2002, 24.) Actions, interventions and performances were much used strategies.

In performance art identity was more and more in focus. Instead of a universal, sculptural and corporeal body the performance artists, with radical feminists at the forefront, focused attention on the gendered, ethnically and racially defined body, identified by and committed to class or sexual orientation, foregrounding the private experiences of the artist and their political dimensions, or stressed the artists as representatives of their specific communities. With identity politics the interest shifted from presentation to representation in performance art, too, with the representational understood in political terms.

For Kwon, the “dominant drive of site-oriented practices today is the pursuit of a more intense engagement with the outside world and everyday life – a critique of culture that is inclusive of non-art spaces, non-art institutions, and non-art issues. (Kwon 2002, 26) Besides this expansion of art into culture, which diversifies the types of sites that are used, a broader range of disciplines and popular discourses inform site-oriented art. Site and content may overlap, and “the art work’s relationship to the actuality of the location (as site) and the social conditions of the institutional frame (as site) are both subordinate to a *discursively* determined site that is delineated as a field of knowledge, intellectual exchange, or cultural debate.” (Kwon 2002, 26)

Similar developments are visible in performance art as well. After the 1990’s and especially during the decade since 2000, with the ever increasing importance of media and web-culture on one hand and the influence of community oriented, socially engaged or relational forms of art on the other, many performance artists have increasingly emphasized interaction and engagement with the audience, with the viewers or participants present. This has brought to the fore an understanding of the subject as interlinked in various relationships, interdependencies and connections, a self that is a material molded by various encounters, experiences and interactions with others.



These aspects or dimensions – what Kwon calls phenomenological, social-institutional and discursive with regard to site-specific art, and which I would compare with emphasis on presentation, representation or relations in performance art – are clearly not only (perhaps not even mainly) historical. If we think of a sculptural corporeal flesh-body, a culturally, socially and performatively constructed identity and a self or subjectivity continually transformed by encounters, relations and interaction – all these aspects or dimensions are present in almost any performance art work, though with different emphasis.

If I use my own work today, performances for camera, as an example, I could probably find all three dimensions in it, although (in my own opinion) it is fairly evident that the dimension of presentation, showing a “universal” human figure is the dominant one. When I sit or stand in the landscape with my back to the camera, I am first and foremost a sculptural shape. But, at the same time I am of course also a woman who has hidden her body with a scarf and turns her back to the viewer, or, if you wish, invites the viewer to look at the view, directing her gaze into the landscape. The human figure is crucial, not my identity, though inevitably that has some relevance, too. Any idea of a human being “in general” is misleading, just as there can be no landscape in general. Performing landscape necessarily involves engagement with what is contingent and specific.

### ~~1.5 INTRODUCING THE CHAPTERS~~

~~This compilation of texts is focused on how to perform landscape and on the description of specific practices and concerns related to that question, but does not present one answer or recipe, one coherent argument or through-line in response to the issue. The previously published peer reviewed papers included here are practice-based research. My strategy has often been to focus on one question, notion or one specific text and to use my own work as an example to discuss its implications, rather than giving an overview of previous discussions on the topic or proposing a theory, as might be expected from a scholarly paper. The rather eclectically chosen texts I have been inspired or provoked by, I sometimes quote at length, though.~~

~~Because this is a collection of texts from a rather long period of time – more than ten years – my views on and understanding of landscape has changed considerably and the approach varies from chapter to chapter. The texts are not presented in a chronological order, however, although the first chapters deal with older works and form the background and backbone of the collection. I have not tried to update them~~