

IN RESPONSE TO 0101

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December 2009

0101 presents three versions of the same sequence; each is altered repeatedly by duration, light, sound, rhythm, space, and quality of movement, creating a new modality with each incarnation of the sequence.

Although Lynda Gaudreau's vocabulary is directly drawn from every day movement, we are not simply presented with the mundane. The work succeeds at "making the ordinary visible" (Gaudreau – Document 4), yet it does not embellish or overemphasize ordinary or pedestrian movement itself. While the movement language is what we find in our every day: pointing, standing, laying down, lifting arms, jumping and waving, Gaudreau takes on distillation and deconstruction of the conventional elements of situated theatre. All of the traditional theatre conventions are present and they are challenged.

By simplifying and underlining the structural conventions of theatre, the viewer is presented with the familiar, yet is not handed the anticipated experience associated with that familiarity.

Sociologist Erving Goffman discusses these expectations for consistency, not only in relation to and between different performances, but also towards elements such as setting, appearance and manner within the same performance. About this logic he states, "Such coherence represents an ideal type that provides us with a means of stimulating our attention to and interest in exceptions."

(Goffman –The Presentation of Self In Every Day Life p.25)

MOVEMENT:

Underlying, inexplicable activity is visible, as the movers appear to be deliberating, considering, and thinking. Intervals between substantial visible movements allow space for a series of diminutive moments as the movers respond to Gaudreau's "space of action" (Gaudreau – Document 4). The acuity with which information is organized and then executed signifies a distinct tactic for the generation of movement. These tactics and the reasoning behind the parameters of the tasks and activities themselves remain pieces of information not privy to the viewer.

NARRATIVE:

No narrative enforces an order or structure upon the work, while the simplicity, spaciousness, and care to form and line nods to a modernist aesthetic. Yet this setting is not used to propel a storyline or to indulge the viewer with a familiar environment. Like the circuitous route of Monsieur Hulot in Jacques Tati's *Playtime*, her performers are presented as the people they are rather than characters. They move according to their environment, and not necessarily in relation to each other. It is the playful organization of this movement in relation to duration and quality of execution that points to Tati and his use of visual gags and absurdity in the relationships between humans and their constructed environment.

The work appears as the results of a study rather than a narrative or fiction. This study involves tasks, memorization, adapting, and constant learning. Stripped of sentimentality, the work maintains a quiet humour, and a playfulness that touches on the absurd.

While the act of concentration or execution provides a meaning for the artists involved, the work exists within the realm of the research. What is extended to the act of the performance is the common experience of being engaged in activity.

COSTUMING AND SETTING

A sort of standard issue clothing, suggesting a uniform, the costumes do not speak to any particular time or place yet are at once familiar. As the only gender specific element of the work, where we find the men in pants and woman in a skirt, gender is acknowledged and promptly discarded. It does not speak to broader or anticipated societal gender roles. While costume changes occur with each new modality, this appears to be simply an adjustment rather than a significant change. As opposed to using costuming as a means of indicating character development or transformation within a narrative, Gaudreau humorously whittles away at this notion by re-introducing the interpreters as themselves each time they return to the stage.

The stage setting is minimal, fragmented into clearly delegated areas for different activities. The floor is divided by white and black. Upon the white space, in the centre, activities understood to belong on the stage occur, and the black space lends itself to being a liminal and transitory space, bookending the centre. Upon the black spaces, interpreters re-configure and re-set – often an activity reserved for the backstage yet her onstage aesthetic and care to form and order remain. No one doubts that they are still performing. The spatial shifts in bodies are consistent with the modalities in which the interpreters are engaged, without indulging in additional fanfare or spectacle. This is consistent in the use of lighting throughout the work. Lighting shifts occur with each new modality, yet are primarily used to indicate beginning and end rather than to create dramatic effect.

SOUND

Gaudreau playfully engages the positioning and role of a live musician, a drummer, whose presence is mostly architectural and aesthetic in nature. Providing rhythm that creates interconnectivity between the interpreters, his participation is executed in a perfunctory manner. We are never presented with virtuosic drumming. With the onset of each new section, the sound of an electronic hum, reminiscent of a bug zapper, fills the theatre. This hum of action is promptly eliminated at the end of each modality. Also consistent with the use of costume and set, the hum acts as an indicator of beginnings and endings, of something new happening, yet refrains from commenting on or augmenting the content.

CONVENTIONAL VIEWERSHIP:

Through her gentle undermining of expectation, presenting the familiar, yet providing a foreign and almost unattainable context, Gaudreau highlights this lack of congruence within each modality presented. The viewer's role in relation to the performers and to the space is brought into question.

"...a performance is 'socialized', molded, and modified to fit into the understanding and expectations of the society in which it is presented."

(Goffman – The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, p.35)