

## **Parallel session Contemporary Art: Who Cares?**

Title **How to perform an artwork?**

Type presentations & discussion

Date, time Wednesday 9th June, 15:00-17:00

Organisation Gaby Wijers, Coordinator of collection, preservation and related research  
Netherlands Media Art Institute / NIMk

Description Currently museums of contemporary art are working on procedures for preserving performance works. What knowledge and new methods for the documentation, transmission and preservation of dance and performance are under construction? What can dance documentation for reconstruction learn from contemporary art and vice versa? The interdisciplinary Inside Movement Knowledge project research group from the Netherlands Media Art Institute (NIMk) will present parallels and differences in preservation, documentation and knowledge transfer in media art and contemporary dance practices. Four lectures are followed by a lively discussion.

### **Part 1 Short presentations**

Speaker 1 Scott deLahunta, researcher, consultant, organiser

Research Fellow Art Theory and Research and Art Practice and Development Research Group, Amsterdam School for the Art

Title Emerging forms of 'knowledge transfer' in Contemporary Dance

Abstract Recreation as a preservation strategy would be a radical decision in art conservation, but dance is recreated each time it is performed. Is this part of the fundamental difference between the ephemeral live-ness of dance and the fixed material art object? If so, do recent choreographer-led developments in the dance field suggest ways to \*rethink\* this fundamental difference? Scott will present some recent developments in the dance field for discussion and debate by the panel.

Biography Scott deLahunta works from his base in Amsterdam as a researcher, writer, consultant and organiser on a range of international projects bringing performing arts with a focus on choreography into conjunction with other disciplines and practices. He is currently Research Fellow with the Art Theory and Research and Art Practice and Development Research Group, Amsterdam School for the Arts. He serves on the editorial boards of Performance Research, Dance Theatre Journal and the International Journal of Performance and Digital Media.

Speaker 2 Annet Dekker , Programme manager, Virtueel Platform

Title What can media art (documentation) learn from performance documentation?

Abstract The nature of media art is often ephemeral and deals with obsolete materials. In order to think about re-installments or preservation, new ways of dealing with documentation are required that include the possibility of change in a more radical way embracing for example variability. Insights from performance documentation could be very helpful to understand and deal with these changes.

Biography Annet Dekker is independent curator and researcher. Subjects of interest are the influence of new media, science and popular culture on art and vice versa. At the moment she organises the Artist in Residence programme at the Netherlands Media Art Institute in Amsterdam, is programme manager at Virtueel Platform and executive producer for Funware, an international touring exhibition in 2010 and 2011 about fun in software. Since 2008 she is writing a PhD on strategies for documenting net art at the Centre for Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths, University of London, under supervision of Matthew Fuller.

Speaker 3 Jan Mot, owner Jan Mot Gallery

Title On Tino Sehgal

Abstract Tino Sehgal (London 1976) does not allow any documentation of his works, he prefers body to body transmission. Jan Mot will present what visual art can learn from knowledge transfer practice in dance in installing this works. Tino Sehgal has a background in dance and economics. His works, which he calls 'constructed situations', break with the most

fundamental convention of the visual arts, namely the material object. Instead of an actual object, Sehgal's works can consist of choreographed movements, words and songs or a conversation with a museum visitor. Sehgal does not allow for any form of documentation, rather the perpetuation of his works rely on memory and body to body transmission. Gallery owner Jan Mot has executed several of Sehgal's works carrying out instructions conceived by the artist and will elaborate on his collaboration with the artist.

#### Biography

Jan Mot obtained an MA in Art History from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Netherlands). In 1993 he started showing art at his home and in 1996 he opened his first gallery space in Brussels (Belgium) representing, among others, Rineke Dijkstra, Tris Vonna-Michell, Pierre Bismuth and Tino Sehgal.

## Part 2

### Discussion moderated by Gaby Wijers & Vivian van Saaze

#### Moderator 1

Gaby Wijers is Coordinator of collection, preservation and related research at the Netherlands Media Art Institute (NIMk), Amsterdam (NL). She coordinated the project Preservation of Video Art in the Netherlands 2001-2003, participated in research projects as 404 Object not found, OASIS archive, Inside Installations, GAMA and currently in Inside Movement Knowledge and Obsolete Equipment. Selected publications: « Strategien und Fallstudien zur Erhaltung von Medienkunst durch das Netherlands Media Art Institute» In: Schweizer Videokunst der 1970er und 1980er Jahre, eine Rekonstruktion. Zürich : jrp|ringier, 2009, Video documentation of installations (online course 2007) » ed. by Gaby Wijers, Karen te Brake-Baldock, Sami Kallinen, «The Sustainability of Video Art : Preservation of Dutch Video Art Collections», ed. by Gaby Wijers a.o., , SBMK : Amsterdam, 2003; since 2005 she edits the online newsletter Monitoring Media Art Preservation and is guest lecturer at the University of Amsterdam. Gaby is since 2008 head of the Steering Committee of the SBMK.

#### Moderator 2

Vivian van Saaze, postdoctoral researcher, Maastricht University

Vivian van Saaze recently completed her Ph.D. thesis Doing Artworks. A Study into the Conservation and Preservation of Installation Artworks at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS), Maastricht University and Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (ICN). In 2009 she obtained a postdoctoral research position at FASoS within the research project 'New Strategies in the Conservation of Contemporary Art'. Her current research - funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) - further explores museum practices of contemporary art conservation by focusing on new concepts of knowledge and documentation strategies. The main question being: How can we understand - in processes of re-execution of contemporary artworks - the relationship between knowledge transfer and procedures of documentation? Comparisons are made with knowledge transfer procedures developed in other art forms relying on re-execution practices, notably contemporary dance.