

know how to raise funds. So although Mitchell wants this to be the handbook that was absent when she was training, it does not fully address the circumstances of young directors. There is, for example, no mention of the National's attachment programme for young directors, or of other schemes in which training or apprenticeship might be undertaken, and for which this handbook will surely be a crucial resource. Its main readership would benefit from more insider tips on how to enter the industry, prior to the practical guidance that assumes production is under way.

Mitchell is a natural explainer and, notwithstanding the clarity of her professional guidance notes, it is her seeming enthusiasm and generosity as a teacher, and her eagerness to demystify, that sets this publication apart from other directors' handbooks.

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***Out of Now: The Lifeworks of Tehching Hsieh* by Adrian Heathfield and Tehching Hsieh**

Cambridge and London: MIT Press and Live Art Development Agency, 2009, 379 pp, ISBN 978 0 262 01255 3 (hardback)

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Out of Now: The Lifeworks of Tehching Hsieh is a handsome and imposing volume, demanding proper room on one's bookshelf just as much as the artworks it concerns demand their place in histories of performance and art. There is a profound dialogue under way in this project, between the visible appearance of this giant object and the very quality of the work it documents. The tension in this dialogue is located – as Adrian Heathfield notes – in the fact that Hsieh's work has 'existed at the edge of public visibility' (p. 11). Although Hsieh, indeed, has stood as a major reference point for several generations of performance art practitioners, and may condition the core narratives, procedures and questions of the genre, his presence has developed through his works' legendary quality, rather than through discussion in scholarly works addressing conceptual art, body art and performance art – all of which are domains within which Hsieh's projects might merit consideration.

This book is an important attempt at commenting upon – and potentially filling – a gap in

performance scholarship and, moreover, in the study of performance and art in the specific context of New York. This has been a pivotal context for scholars engaged with performance of the 1970s and 1980s, and specifically the testing of bodily limits and the relationship between the body and outside/inside urban space. As Heathfield argues, the scant attention given to Hsieh's work in scholarly discourse relates to the way Hsieh himself has carefully constructed his 'invisibility', making his 'lifeworks' particularly hard for others to access.

From 1978 to 1999, Hsieh developed six projects, five of them year-long performances, and the final piece lasting thirteen years. Each project entailed a rigorous structure of rules that Hsieh imposed upon his body, shared with audiences by showing fragments, beginning with a public statement of commitment (sealed by a legal utterance supervised by a lawyer, framing his speech act within the normative discourses of legal agreement). In the first of these pieces, Hsieh spent one year (1978–79) in voluntary confinement in a cage built in his studio, committed to 'not write, talk, listen to the radio or watch TV' (p. 24), regulating his daytime through the simplest actions of eating, defecating, washing and sleeping (tended to by a friend appointed as a lifework assistant). He spent a subsequent year (1979–80) punching a time clock every hour on the hour, and documenting each hourly action in a film still; the act deprived him of proper sleep and of 'free time'. He committed himself to stay outdoors the following year (1981–82), avoiding any roof other than the skies of New York City and any shelter other than those provided by the interstices of the metropolis. In 1983–84, he forged an intimate relationship with fellow artist Linda Montano, by being tied to her by an eight-foot rope for one year, with the prohibitive rule that they should never touch each other.

In the following and last two projects Hsieh pushed the coefficient of his activities to degree zero, apparently negating the action to which he had committed himself – the making of art. The artist committed himself first not to make, talk about, see, read or interact in any way with art for one year (1985–86); he then declared a thirteen-year plan, promising to make art during this period, but not show it publicly. After the thirteen-year period, he kept the promise of revealing what this art project had involved, with a final statement: 'I kept myself alive'. As suggested by Heathfield in a long conversation with Hsieh, 'in terms of the art world and in terms of public presence as a figure',

in this last, announced performative gesture, Hsieh strived to 'become invisible' (p. 338), submitting himself, perhaps, to a durational effort at what Deleuze and Guattari have termed 'becoming imperceptible'.

Heathfield consciously faces the awkward task of dealing with Hsieh's lifelong process of becoming imperceptible, allowing this work to unfold with the kind of affection usually reserved for the sharing of secrets. Some of the secrets of Hsieh's work could not be revealed; moreover, others are left out of the picture altogether. Possible questions arise, yet are left unanswered: for instance, how did the artist sustain himself throughout the years? Who supported the projects, and how? Where and how does sexuality stand in this translation of a life into a 'lifework'? What is at stake, though, seems to bring us back to a dialogue between the manifest objectivity of this volume and the poverty of Hsieh's work materials. Whereas the artist's work is deeply engaged with producing documentation (the only traces of its taking place), these documents are in no way self-explanatory and often exist in order to deny a certain kind of access (such as the unintelligible tapes of the conversations between Hsieh and Montano, recorded during what is known as the *Rope Piece*).

This book is an attempt at dealing with this documentation, adopting the attitude Rebecca Schneider suggests, elsewhere, might be taken in one's relation to 'performance remains'. The various documents include photographs, copies of legal statements and thirteen blank pages 'documenting' each undisclosed year of artistic production in the *Disappearance Piece*. These are published alongside a collection of letters addressed to Hsieh by friends, colleagues and scholars, including Peggy Phelan, Marina Abramović, Tim Etchells, Santiago Sierra and Carol Becker, all affective inhabitants overlooking what Phelan calls Hsieh's 'dwelling'. These texts do not engage in a historiographical account of Hsieh's work, but constitute private, personal interventions. Heathfield's own critical introduction, opening the volume, also evades the impersonal gaze of an outsider, and is interested rather in drawing intimate lines of thought in and around theoretical discourse. His writing addresses the way that performance – and especially Hsieh's 'lifeworks' – may call into question the concept of artistic value. Beyond the majestic sumptuousness of this important volume, Hsieh's work might still remain powerfully imperceptible.

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***Programme Notes: Case Studies for Locating Experimental Theatre* edited by Daniel Brine and Lois Keidan**

London: Live Art Development Agency, 2007, 108 pp, ISBN 978 0 9546 0404 0 (paperback)

***The Live Art Almanac* edited by Daniel Brine**

London: Live Art Development Agency, 2008, 130 pp, ISBN 978 0 9546 0406 6 (paperback)

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For those working in the field of contemporary performance in the UK, the Live Art Development Agency (LADA) is likely a familiar name. Celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2009, LADA works from the premise that 'live art' is an interdisciplinary space for artists working at the interstices of theatre and visual art practice. As such, LADA's website argues that live art is 'not a description of an artform or discipline, but a cultural strategy' that foregrounds experiment and cultural inclusivity; LADA was founded as part of an ongoing effort to provide contexts of legitimacy and support for work 'that might otherwise be excluded from established curatorial, cultural and critical frameworks'. Over the years, its tireless co-founder and director Lois Keidan and the small team of staff have cultivated the work of seminal artists including Franko B, Kira O'Reilly, Tim Etchells, Manuel Vason, and many others. But just as important has been their service to 'the sector' more generally, through a plethora of professional development and advocacy projects, the launch of Unbound (an online bookshop), partnership with Performance Studies International and Queen Mary, University of London in the coordination of PSi#12: Performing Rights conference in 2006, and the curatorship of an archive and reading room that contains a wealth of rare videos and documents tracing the largely unwritten history of live art in the UK.

As part of that ongoing mission, LADA has recently published two slim volumes that provide snapshots of the field of live art as it is currently configured. *Programme Notes: Case Studies for Locating Experimental Theatre* is co-edited by Keidan with Daniel Brine, LADA's Associate Director from 2001 to 2008. The book's goal, according to the brief introduction, is to further 'dialogues and collaborations between the theatrical mainstream and artists from the independent