A Performative Paradigm for the Creative Arts?

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Introduction

In his essay 'A Manifesto for Performative Research' (2006) Brad Haseman proposes a performative paradigm for the creative arts, distinguishing it from qualitative and quantitative models that constitute the dominant research paradigms in research. Drawing from his own field of theatre, Haseman agues that:

when research findings are presented as performative utterances, there is a double articulation with practice that brings into being what, for want of a better word, it names. The research process inaugurates movement and transformation. It is performative. It is not qualitative research: it is itself - a new paradigm of research with its own distinctive protocols, principles and validation procedures (Haseman 2007a).

Haseman argues that whilst qualitative research methodologies such as reflective practice, action research, grounded theory and participant-observation have informed practice-led research, it can not merely be subsumed under the qualitative research framework. He suggests that the distinctive research strategies, interpretative methods and outcomes arising out of creative arts, which are drawn from the working methods and practices of artists and practitioners, point us towards a new research paradigm. He has termed this paradigm 'performative research'.

A performative paradigm potentially offers the creative arts a radical new vision and a way of distinguishing its research from the dominant models of knowledge. Haseman's work has been significant in boldly asserting a performative paradigm and claiming it for the creative arts. However, before we make claims for a performative model for the creative arts, there are a number of urgent tasks that need to be addressed. Firstly there is a need to define the terms of a performative model in relation to the existing theories of performativity. Secondly, like the qualitative researchers before them, the creative arts need to carefully mark out the territory of a performative paradigm and differentiate it from the established research orthodoxies by refining its protocols and procedures. We need to define its concepts, methodologies and interpretive methods and assess whether a performative paradigm really can hold its own within the broader field of research.

The task of this paper is to set out the stakes of a performative paradigm of research in the creative arts. What is performativity and what would be the characteristics of a performative research paradigm? Is it enough to say that the performance/production is an event/act/production that becomes the thing done? Are all performances/productions performative? Against what criteria do we assess the success or failure of a performance/production? Finally, can a performative model make valid 'truth' claims that will be recognized by the broader research community?

The Performative Turn

In 1977, in a performance in front of an audience that included friends who had known him for many years, the Australian artist Mike Parr took a meat cleaver and chopped off his left arm. As the lifeless arm lay on the table a profound shock registered in the gathered crowd. The fact that many in the audience knew that Parr didn't have a left arm, didn't appear to reduce the shocking effect of his performance Cathartic Action. Every one, including close friends, was overwhelmed by the event. In a subsequent performance, Malevich (2002), as a protest against the Australian Government's imprisonment of refugees in detention centres in the middle of Australia's inhospitable desert country, Parr was blindfolded and nailed to a wall for three days. There he stayed, noted reviewer Adam Geczy, 'with tape over his eyes, not drinking, not eating, urinating onto the floor through his pants and deprived of all sensory stimulation short of the goings-on around him' (Geczy 2002-3: 28). For the three days of his detention, the performance was broadcast over the web so that people could log on and witness the state of play.

Parr's profoundly disturbing performances create shock, plunging his audiences in crisis. Here, according to Erica Fischer-Lichte, the audience is 'suspended between the norms and rules of art and everyday life, between aesthetic and ethical imperatives' (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 12). Fischer-Lichte suggests that this 'shock' provides the foundations of the transformative power of art. In such extreme performance work, the artist is not enacting the 'as if' of theatre, s/he is not expressing some inner self nor is s/he producing a re-presentation of anything in the world. In these performances the artist is working at the threshold of human experience and the performances are actions in themselves that produce effects in the world. They are performative. The performative act, Shannon Jackson has observed has, 'the power to make a world' (Jackson 2004: 2).

Fischer-Lichte claims that a 'performative turn' has characterized the creative arts from the nineteen sixties to the present day. (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 28). In this performative turn, the nature of the relationship between subject and object, observer and observed and artist and audience has been refigured to create a dynamic and transformative event. There is no separation between the production and work, and the audience becomes part of the work. The performative turn has transformed the work of art into an event (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 23). In the visual arts this turn was ushered in by happenings, body art and action painting, and has continued with performance art, light sculpture, installation, immersive environments and art events. In music, John Cage's involvement with FLUXUS and his events and pieces have been instrumental in this transformation in musical practice, whilst in literature the hybrid text and the interactive novels have literalized Roland Barthes' 'writerly text'. Through these new forms the reader becomes an active shaper of the text. All of these forms have been profoundly influenced by the digital revolution, which through its distributed networks and interactive quality has transformed our understanding of production, the work and the reception of the work or art.

However it is in sphere of theatre and performance studies that the concept of performativity has most decisively been embraced. Karen Barad has observed that in literary studies, theatre studies and performance studies 'performativity has become a ubiquitous term' (Barad 2008: 126). However she notes that in the embrace of performativity there has tendency to conflate 'performance' and 'performativity'. This collapse of a distinction between the two terms has prompted Barad to ask the question: Are all performances are performative? And what of the other creative arts? Can we argue that the creation of an artifact (for example a painting or a sculpture) is performative?

In the uncritical application of the term across the creative arts, there is now a tendency to call any art production performative, whether it is a theatre production, a performance, a sculpture, a film or a painting. But can we make the assumption that just because a practice brings into being what it names (say a performance or photograph) that it is performative? Has the term performativity been reduced to hollow rhetoric that is evacuated of its original meaning and power?

It is clear that in Mike Parr's work 'performativity' carries a particular valence. The performance did not represent something that existed in the world, it did not express an inner essence nor did it produce an artifact that could be brought and sold on the art market. It produced real effects in the world. What does this mean for a performative research paradigm? And how does this 'fit' with the theoretical discourse of performativity that owes its origins to the speech act theorist John Langshaw (J.L.) Austin?

Defining the terms: What is performativity? What does it look like?

Whilst the creative arts, and in particular theatre and performance studies, have come to claim the term performativity as their own, its usage is not necessarily true to Austin's elaboration of performativity. In performance studies for example, as James Loxley points out, the term performativity is used as an adjective that 'denotes the performance aspect of any object or practice under consideration' (Loxley 2007: 140). He continues, pointing out the implications of this take on performativity:

To address culture as 'performative' would be simply to examine it as some kind or performance, without the specific implications that would follow on from an invocation of the line of thought first developed distinctively by Austin. (Loxley 2007: 140)

It is precisely this 'take' that has led to the wholesale and, I would argue, uncritical adoption of the performativity by the creative arts. If we are to successfully argue for a performative paradigm in the creative arts, we will need to be far more rigorous than this usage would suggest. We need to go back to the origin of the concept.

The term 'performativity' was introduced to the world by J. L. Austin in a lecture series entitled 'How to do things with words', delivered as part of the William James Lectures at Harvard in 1955. Whilst his turgid lectures were not well received at the time, their publication as How to do Things with Words (1962) incited interest amongst intellectuals across the humanities and social sciences.

The central, most profound and enduring aspect of these lectures was Austin's claim that certain speech utterances or productions don't just describe or report the world, but actually have a force whereby they perform the action to which they refer. Austin's example of the words 'I do' uttered during the marriage ceremony or a judges proclamation

'I sentence you to ten years in prison', exemplify that the power of the speech act to have real effects in the world. Thus Austin observes:

In these examples it seems clear that to utter the sentence (in, of course, the appropriate circumstances) is not to describe my doing of what I should be said in so uttering to be doing or to state that I am doing it: it is to do it... the issuing of an utterance is the performance of an action (Austin 1975: 6)

He called these language acts performatives.

In his early work on language, Austin distinguished these performative utterances from constative utterances. The constative utterance is concerned to establish a correspondence between statements or utterances and the 'facts' being described or modeled. The performative utterance, on the other hand, does not describe anything. It does things in the world. Performatives are never just reportage, but the utterance or production invokes a causal link between the utterance and things that happen in the world. In their capacity to be both actions and generate consequences, performative utterances enact real effects in the world.

Through the work of such theorists as John Searle, Jacques Derrida, Judith Butler, Gilles Deleuze and others, Austin's work on the performative speech act, has become part of the established vocabulary of academia and its influence has spread far beyond its linguistic foundations. In the shift from a textual reading of cultural productions to a performative understanding of culture, performativity has become the 'new black'. In Searle's hands Austin's ideas have become incorporated into a 'general theory of the speech act'; through Derrida's notion of différance we come to understand the dynamics of the iterability; in Butler's theorizing, Austin's frame of reference is expanded to demonstrate how performativity can included bodily acts; whilst Deleuze espouses the forceful, transformative and creative potential of the performative.

Whilst Deleuze's transformative understanding of performativity has become increasingly fashionable in film theory and amongst visual artists, Butler's theorization of the performative act was taken up by Performance Studies and Theatre Studies and has framed its theorisation of performativity. It is this understanding of performativity that has the greatest currency in the creative arts. Whilst Butler draws on performance theory in her theorization of gender performativity, she is careful to distinguish between 'performance' and 'performativity'. She argues that performance presumes a subject whilst performativity contests the very notion of the subject. Thus while performance can be understood as a deliberate 'act' such as in a theatre production, performance art or painting by a subject or subjects, performativity must be understood as the iterative and citational practice that brings into being that which it names.

In her claim that performativity is an iterative and citational practice, Butler is very clear that performativity involves repetition rather than singularity. Performativity is:

not a singular 'act', for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition. (Butler 1993: 12)

Whilst there might be 'too perfect performances', 'bad performances', 'distorted performances', 'excessive performances', 'playful performances' and 'inverted performances', Butler, like Austin, argues that performativity is conventional and iterative.

The notion of conventionality and iterability may not sit comfortably with our preconceptions of the originality of art or the singularity of the performance. Nor does it conform to the commonly held assumptions that the 'shock of the new' ushers in the transformative power of the art. In my analysis of Parr's Cathartic Action, for example, I suggested that the performative power of the work resulted from a 'shock' that put the viewer in crisis. Would a repeat of Cathartic Action elicit the same transformative effect for a (knowing) audience?

Fischer-Lichte argues that in performance we are not concerned with the repetition of performative acts that underpins Butler's performativity, since a performance is singular (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 28). In describing the audience reaction to Marina Abramovic's harrowing performance Lips of Thomas (1975), she argues that the performance plunged the audience into a crisis precisely because in this singular event they did not have a point of reference and could not resort to conventional behaviour patterns (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 12). She believes that Judith Butler's definition of performativity is not adequate to deal with the 'the aesthetics of the performative' since it deals primarily with the everyday and not with the singularity of a performative art event.

I would agree that Butler does deal with the everyday and that the notion of performativity as an iterative and citational practice does not adequately account for such events as Cathartic Action or Lips of Thomas. However I would suggest that if the term 'performative' is reconfigured as a singular unconventional act, as suggested in Fischer-Lichte's account, it negates the foundational assumptions that underpin the term performativity - iterability and convention. Further, whilst her account is very compelling, it does not help establish a performative paradigm that purportedly can be used to account for research in the creative arts. The performative turn and a performative paradigm are two different, if related, beasts.

It is clear that if a performative paradigm is viable it has to be able to do the work expected of a research paradigm, it has to be able to define its terms, refine its protocols and procedures and be able to withstand scrutiny. I would suggest that Austin's performativity, filtered through the writings of Butler and Derrida (and also Deleuze but the scope of this paper doesn't not allow me to elaborate on this) does enable us to define our terms and begin setting out first principles. Here Butler's account of performativity helps in this task.

Butler's theory of performativity relates to the formation of the subject. In Butler's thesis, there is no subject who precedes the repetition. Rather, through performance, 'I' come into being. She argues that 'there is no performer prior to the performed, the performance is performative [and] the performance constitutes the appearance of a 'subject' as its effect' (Butler 1991: 24). Whilst Butler's work specifically addresses the way in which sex and gender are materialised in the everyday, I would suggest that there are some curious similarities between this materialisation and the way in which 'art' becomes materialised.

It could be argued that there is no artist who precedes the repetitive practice of art (and it is repetitive). Through practice, the artist comes into being. Art practice is performative in that it enacts or produces 'art' as an effect. 'Artists' engage with, re-iterate and question the 'norms' of 'art' existing in the socio-cultural context at a particular historical juncture. Similarly, art practice conceals the conventions of which it is a repetition. The re-iteration that operates in an artist's practice produces a 'naturalized' effect, which we come to label as an artist's style. Butler's argument that the 'process of materialisation stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity and surface' (Butler 1993: 9), can be

exemplified in an 'artist's style'. Thus we can identify a work or performance as a 'Mike Parr' through the sedimented or habitual style that characterizes his oeuvre. Mike Parr makes prints and drawings and engages in extreme performances. This is what he does. Further, the disciplinary operations of 'art business' encourage such repetition and re-iteration. It is to this sedimented or habitual style, that 'art business' attributes value. The sedimentation or stabilisation that produces the effect of boundary, fixity and surface is a consequence of the habit-provoking mode of discourse. However, is that all that happens? What about originality and original knowledge? Isn't this precisely what art and art-as-research purports to do, regardless of the so-called death of the avant-garde?

Within repetitive and reiterative behaviour, Butler figures that there exist possibilities for disrupting the 'habit' or the 'norm'. Within the re-iteration, repetition or citation of the discursive law, 'too perfect performances', 'bad performances', 'distorted performances', 'excessive performances', 'playful performances' and 'inverted performances' create what she calls (de)constituting possibilities (Butler 1993: 10).

Excessive and ironic performances and parodic re-iterations shift the ground of what is considered the norm. In political and artistic practices, these subversive performances have been employed strategically. The avant-garde, and more recently feminist, queer and post-colonial practices, have actively engaged in prying open the gaps and fissures produced through re-iteration, in an effort to disrupt and to get outside or beyond the norm. Avant-garde artistic practices, in particular, have made strategic use of the 'too perfect', 'distorted', 'playful' and the 'inverted' performances in an attempt to create the 'new'.

Elsewhere I have argued that self-conscious attempts at transgression do not in themselves create originary knowledge (Bolt 2004b). I argued that the 'shock of the new' is not the action of plunging audiences in crisis, but rather it is particular form understanding that is realized through practice - our dealings with ideas, tools and materials of production (including our bodies) in practice. I suggested that originary knowledge or the new is revealed through handling, rather than through conscious acts of transgression. Here my understanding of 'handling' or handlability can be understood as the iterative and citational practice that artists engage in their everyday artistic practice.

Derrida (1992, 1998) tells us that iteratibility - whether it is in performing language, performing gender or performing art -is the mechanism through which there is movement and transformation. He uses the term différance, to demonstrate that each iteration is a 'constitutive, productive and originary causality'. He continues. Différance is the 'process of scission and division which would produce or constitute different things or differences' (Derrida 1992: 112-113).

When Butler talks about gender 'trouble' she alludes precisely to the productive nature of iteration. Performative utterances are subject to trouble precisely because the repetition of a conventional behaviour does lead to bad performances, infelicitous performances and excessive performances. Repetition is never repetition of the same. It is always repetition of difference. In everyday life we don't always welcome the misfires and bad performances. In the creative arts, on the other hand, it is these 'misfires' that become the source of innovation and movement. This is the 'stuff' of research.

If, as I have argued the research process inaugurates movement and transformation through iterability, what are the forms of this transformation and how are they to be interpreted and evaluated in a realm of research? Thus far, my account of performativity provides an alternative account of how 'the new' emerges through iterative practice. Here,

singularity is not the conscious transgressive singular act of the artist, but rather 'singularity' arises in and through re-iteration and citation. We see this 'pattern' in our own practices and those of our students. It allows us to begin to recognize the conventions (context of theory, context of practice) and map the ruptures that shift practice. Further, it allows us to understand art as an effect and appreciate what art does in the world. This is all very well, but how does this model of research fit with the standards of proof in the qualitative and quantitative domains?

The Burden of Truth: Truth Claims

It is around the questions of 'truth' and 'standards of proof' that we need to set out the stakes involved in research and differentiate science-as-research from the domain of knowledge that has assumed the name 'art as research'. Here we have much work to do to stake out our claim. Like the social sciences and humanities before it, the development of art-as-research has proceeded in the shadow of the research 'model' par excellence, that is, science-as-research.

Through its systematic procedures, methodological consistency and ongoing peer review, science lays claim to 'objective truth'. The equation of objectiveness or objectivity with truth (through measurement and calculation) has become the hallmark of the tradition of science-as-research. Through its propositional form and its ability to establishing a correspondence between statements or modelling of the world and the world, science establishes true or false statement. Similarly the social sciences and humanities produce descriptions that correspond to facts in the world.

The creative arts, in contrast, are often criticised for the subjective and emergent quality of their research. Creative arts research often seems nebulous, unquantifiable and untestable: its procedures and methods emerge in and through the work rather than being prescribed in advance by the discipline. In the academic world at least, the creative arts are seen to lack credibility because the methods cannot be replicated exactly and correspondence in findings between studies is not a goal that is valued. I have suggested that this lack of correspondence is precisely what is the originating force of the performative principle. However, it does not meet the 'standards of objective truth' that enables science to make its truth claims. How then do we establish our truth claims against the 'veracity' of science?

Austin's early distinction between the constative and the performative is useful for thinking about how we might begin to distinguish a performative paradigm from the qualitative and quantitative paradigms and make an alternative 'truth claim'. Whilst constative utterances and statements establish a correspondence between the description or modelling of the world and something in the world, performative utterances productions do something in the world. Constative statements and descriptions are the propositional or discursive statements of qualitative and quantitative research. Quantitative and qualitative research methodologies rely on constative statements or utterance to establish truth claims. Here truth is seen as correspondence. In other words they are representationalist.

Performativity offers an alternative model, one that is no longer grounded in truth as correspondence. It sets up a different paradigm altogether. Here I wish to return to our foundational understanding of performativity. Firstly we have established that the performative model of language is not based on the correspondence between a statement and the facts of the situation but the utterance/production is actually already part of the

facts. The performative act doesn't describe something but rather it does something in the world. This 'something' has the power to transform the world.

Secondly we have identified that the underlying principle of performativity is iterability, and a priori, iterability is subject to the dynamics of différance. Thus good performances, bad performances, playful performances and the excessive performances are all generative of difference. Thought in terms of différance, performative research necessarily begins to bud and grow in a disorderly fashion. Whilst operating against the backdrop of convention, re-iteration and citation produce repetition with difference, rather than repetition of the same. According to this principle, as I have argued elsewhere, even representation is mutable (Bolt 2004a).

Whilst science methodology demands that experiments are replicable and only verifiable if replication produces the same, the performative principle demonstrates that iteration can never produce the same. This is the 'novelty' that the recent UK review of Practice-led Research in Art, Design and Architecture, found in its assessment that one of the distinctive qualities of practice-led research is its propensity to disrupt the status quo and produce research that is 'novel both in its contribution to research and in its very nature' (Rust, Mottram and Till 2007: 57).

The recognition that the fundamental character of iterability is difference strikes at the very heart of science-as-research's 'standards of proof'. In scientific experimentation, binding adherence to standardized procedures constitutes the rigor of research and establishes the validity of its 'truth' claims. Through the standardization of procedure other researchers are able to replicate a study in order to validate results from research. Whilst this standardization is considered to be one of the strengths of science-as-research, Heidegger (1950) identifies the prescriptiveness of the scientific methodology as part of the problem. He argues that science-as-research is a testing of the unknown in terms of the already known; a confirmation or refutation in terms of a law already established. However we have seen that originary knowledge emerges from the mutability that is inherent in iterability. Perhaps then, there is a 'flaw' in the very procedures through which science-as-research aims to establish its truth claims. We might go so far as to suggest that the paradigmatic shifts that have occurred in science (as in art) are a consequence of mutability rather than repetition of the same.

A Performative Model of Research: Interpreting successes and failure

So far, I have set out to demonstrate that a performative paradigm can account for the novel nature of creative arts production. However, I have also argued that for the creative arts to establish the credibility of a performative paradigm, it must establish criteria whereby it can interpret and validate its research within the broader research arena. In Haseman's account, practice is performative in that it brings into being what it names. 'The name performs itself and in the course of that performing becomes the thing done' (Haseman 2007b: 150). At its most basic level this could mean that a performance, an interactive digital work, an immersive environment or a novel would constitute the thing done. However, if we pay heed to Austin, we must acknowledge that some utterances and performances will be successful whilst others will fail. The problem in creative arts research (and all research for that matter) is that there will be production in some form. How then, do we assess the success or failure of the performance? This returns us to Barad's question: Are all performances performative?

We have established that the performative act doesn't describe something but rather it does something in the world. It may seem simplistic, but in the first instance we need to ascertain just what 'it' (the research) has done. This takes the focus away from describing, explaining or interpretating a work into a new realm of understanding. What are the theoretical and pragmatic tools that we can bring to bear to this task? Here Austin's tripartite categorization of the speech act provides us with the basic concepts to begin this task. In Austin's later work, he gives up the binary distinction between constative and performative utterances in favour of the more complex notion of the speech act. In elucidating the speech act he identifies a triadic relation - the locutionary illocutionary and the perlocutionary dimensions of the speech act. Whilst the locutionary dimension deals with semantic meaning, it is the illocutionary and perlocutionary dimensions that are of most interest to us. Performativity is not first and foremost about meaning. It is about force and effect.

In Austin's thinking, explains Loxley, 'the illocutionary force of any utterance is the function it performs or the effect it achieves' (Loxley 2007: 168). The words 'I find you guilty' exemplify this illocutionary speech act. It is a performative utterance that has a force. 'The name performs itself and in the course of that performing becomes the thing done' (Haseman 2007b: 150). The nailing of Mike Parr to the wall in Malevich and Marina Abramovic's act of cutting a five-pointed star into her abdomen and subsequent self-flagellation in Lips of Thomas can be seen to be illocutionary acts.

However, it doesn't end there. Actions have effects, and it is the effect of the performative act that is encompassed in the perlocutionary utterance. The perlocutionary aspect of an utterance, explains Loxley, is any effect that the performative speech act 'achieves on its hearers or readers that is a consequence of what is said' (Loxley 2007: 169). The effects of the performative can be discursive, material consequences and/or affective. The effect that is brought about by the words 'guilty' is that the person found guilty will actually be sent to prison. When Mike Parr chopped off his arm and when Marina Abramovic cut a five-pointed star into her abdomen and then took a whip and began flagellating herself, the effect on the audience was palpable. In referring to Abromovic's performance, Fischer-Lichte observed that:

This reality was not merely interpreted by the audience but first and foremost experienced. It provoked a wide array of sensations in the spectators, ranging from awe, shock, horror, disgust, nausea, or vertigo, to fascination, curiosity, sympathy, or agony, which stirred them to actions that equally constituted reality (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 17).

She cites this 'effect' to demonstrate the inadequacy of hermeneutic and semiotic analysis in the interpretation of such events. In doing so, she alerts us to the limitations of our existing tools of interpretation.

I have suggested that effects of the performative are multi-dimensional - they may be discursive, material consequences and/or affective. How then do we assess the effect? While quantitative research may seek a metric to measure the effect, it would find it difficult to deal with the fact that there is 'no object independent of its production or its creator' (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 17). Similarly qualitative research may seek to observe, describe and interpret these effects on an audience, but again this is difficult to achieve, because, as Fischer-Lichte points out, there is no distinction between the production, work and reception (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 18). I would argue that Austin's notions of the illocutionary and the perlocutionary provide a focus to our interpretive task and a way of addressing the success or failure of our performative productions. However it still begs the

question of how we assess the illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the performative production. If we are to employing such concepts in creative research, we need to establish some way of mapping the degree and caliber of these dynamics in creative productions.

Conclusion:

In this paper I have set out to address the question as to whether the creative arts can successfully argue a 'performative paradigm. I have gone back to foundational work of Austin to define its concepts and demonstrate how procedures within the creative arts, like science, are based around repetition. However, I have argued that whilst in the scientific paradigm, assessment of the validity of research lies in replication of the same, in a performative paradigm this requirement does not have validity. A performative paradigm would operate according to repetition with difference. Through reference to Austin's conceptualisation of the illocutionary and the perlocutionary, I have argued that the interpretive tools of a performative paradigm allows the creative arts to stake its 'truth claims' in terms of the force and effect of a creative production. This contrasts with science-as-research, which still holds dear the notion of an 'objective truth' and truth as correspondence.

Science-as-Research
Art-as-research
Constative: describes/models the world
Performative: does things in the world
Methodology: repetition of the same
Methodology: repetition with difference
Interpretation: truth as correspondence
Interpretation: 'truth' as force and effect

The aim of a performative paradigm is not to find correspondences but rather to recognize and 'map' the ruptures and movements that are created by creative productions. Here the work of art is not just the artwork/peformance or event, but is also the effect of the work in the material, affective and discursive domains. The problem for the creative arts researcher is recognizing and mapping the transformations that have occurred. Sometimes the transformations may seem to be so inchoate that it is impossible to recognize them, let alone map their effects. At other times the impact of the work of art may take time to 'show itself', or else the researcher may be too much in the process and hence finds it impossible to assess just what has been done.

Austin provides us with some concepts that help us focus our interpretative efforts. Through tracing the complex and multi-dimensional relation between the illocutionary and the perlocutionary we may begin to map the forces and effects of particular 'events' in relation to the events in themselves. Through this we may gain some apprehension of the effects produced by our performative productions. This may start to sound suspiciously like the term 'impact', a term that is regularly touted as one of the key markers for assessing research outcomes. In the context of the current debates around research assessment, perhaps this is not a bad thing. In a recent conversation with a scientist, I raised the question of the place of creative arts research and ventured to put forward the notion of a performative paradigm. She looked at me with incredulity. 'What's that?' she exclaimed. This is the task we have ahead of us.

Addendum

I have just spent the last nine months working on a project to 'map' knowledge transfer activities (or what is called in the UK third stream activities) within my university. This project has brought together a team that consists of academics from across all fields of research. The qualitative researchers quickly settled to complete a literature survey whilst the quantitative researchers labelled themselves 'the data group' and set about collecting and analysing data. A third group set about the task with a very different question in mind: What can we do with all of this?

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