

Cast and crew

Paul Thomas Hickey – Harlequin
Sean Fitzgerald – man in garden
Mickey Mallett – man in basement
Thomas Patullo – man by tree
Neil Pickup – man in bedsit
Louise Ritchie – woman in garden
Ashley Ryce – young woman in garden
Rachel Smith – woman in bedsit
Oran Wishart – young man in garden
Petya Manahilova – props and costume
Holger Mohaupt – camera, editing
Dave Shea – lighting technician

Gallery crew

Anton Beaver, Clare Booth, Andrew Dodds,
Derek Lodge, Lindsay Mathers, Jason Shearer

For Suspect Culture

Faith Liddell, David Morgan, Devina Kumar

With thanks to Bert Ross

Exhibition Event

Thursday 21 September

Gallery 1, 7pm

Join Graham Eatough, artistic director of
Suspect Culture and artist Graham Fagen
as they discuss the ideas and inspiration behind
their experimental collaboration.

Dundee Contemporary Arts

152 Nethergate · Dundee DD1 4DY

Telephone 01382 909900

www.dca.org.uk

Supported by Scottish Arts Council and Dundee City Council

KILLING TIME

By Graham Eatough and Graham Fagen

A unique and experimental collaboration between artist Graham Fagen and theatre director Graham Eatough 'Killing Time' is an exciting fusion of performance, sculpture, installation and event. Devised specifically for DCA's galleries the project brings together elements of both theatre and visual art to dramatic effect.

The collaboration originates from meetings between DCA Curator Katrina Brown and Suspect Culture theatre director Graham Eatough while on residencies at Cove Park - a creative residency centre on the West coast of Scotland (www.covepark.org). Suspect Culture, one of Scotland's leading theatre companies engenders a truly collaborative approach to theatre, giving equal weight to the text, design, music and performance in all their productions.

Brown and Eatough invited artist Graham Fagen who has examined theatre and performance in his practice, to join their discussions. Over a two-year period, they identified common concerns including the relationship between the individual and society; control mechanisms; the

**9 September –
5 November 2006**

experience of time; and the telling and understanding of stories through performance.

Particular reference points in early research were novels, plays or films that were concerned with a world under constant threat. In particular they looked at public information films from the 60's most notably 'Protect and Survive' an instruction film about how to prepare for and what to expect after a nuclear attack, which perfectly evokes the mood of paranoia and imminent threat that pervaded domestic environments during the Cold War. Eatough, Fagen and Brown were keen that 'Killing Time' would make the connection between society's historical and current fears:

We have thought about our own coming of age under the threat of the Cold War, of being informed how to cross the road safely and how to dial 999. We are thinking about the fear of terrorism, the fear of the unknown, the manufactured fear that keeps power. The Empire of the United States. The Roman Empire. The British Empire. The French Revolution. A devolved Scotland.

Graham Fagen (2006)

Eatough and Fagen were also drawn to the atmosphere and set design of a number of significant plays from the 20th century including: *The Cherry Orchard*, Anton Chekhov, *The Dumb Waiter*, Harold

Pinter, *Look Back in Anger*, John Osborne and *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett. Each of these plays contains a sense of a larger more foreboding world outside that of the immediate setting; *one which ultimately poses a threat to the characters involved.*

Scene: A basement room. Two beds, flat against the back wall. A serving hatch, closed, between the beds. A door to the kitchen and lavatory, left. A door to the passage, right.

The Dumb Waiter, Harold Pinter (1960)

In Gallery One Eatough and Fagen have created a unique environment transforming the traditional gallery experience into another world, one which the viewer is able to interact with and explore. They have designed 5 different sets - a red theatre curtain and stage, the garden of a country house, a dank basement, an old fashioned bed-sit and a tree beside a road. Each set has been installed using a number of theatrical devices - scenic cloth, flats, a cyclorama, and are all lit by professional theatre lighting adding to the sense of the dramatic. Throughout the duration of the project a cast of performers inhabit and animate these sets - ironing, reading the paper, strumming a guitar, sitting by a tree - each suspended in their different worlds, constantly repeating the same actions, forever waiting, killing time.

Estragon: Let's go
Vladimir: We can't
Estragon: Why not?
Vladimir: We're waiting for Godot.

Waiting For Godot, Samuel Beckett (1952)

Eatough and Fagen used these sets to film the 5-screen video installation in Gallery Two. Echoing the position of the scenes in Gallery One, this room acts like an oracle predicting what may happen or has already happened in the scenes next door. The first screen depicts the closed, red theatrical curtain in front of which a microphone stands ready for a performer to arrive. In time a Harlequin character bursts through the curtain and the narrative begins.

On choosing the Harlequin as the main protagonist for their film Fagen explains *we needed a character who could go between each place but never be out of place.* The character of Harlequin originated in the Commedia dell'arte plays of the Renaissance and has become synonymous with an 'everyman' a person who can go anywhere and be anyone. The Harlequin resembles a chameleon constantly transforming to fit in with and adapt to his new surroundings. He has been described in other sources as a possible messenger of the Supreme Gods, a devil, a wily and unscrupulous servant, the typical scrounger, intrusive, greedy, always ready to lie, to pilfer and to kiss pretty girls.

Although the Harlequin is known for his agility he has always been a slow thinker and this characteristic becomes clear in the film as he takes his time to realise that he has the freedom to move between the different scenes, going on to encounter the different performers. To fit into his new surroundings he transforms his identity becoming in turn, a waiter, a contract killer, a doctor and a hangman.

In this uniquely charged and animated environment, the visitor will experience a fluid shift in time between past, present and future. Ultimately, the audience becomes part of the installation, and like the performers in 'Killing Time' are caught up in waiting for something to happen.

For more information about Suspect Culture and Graham Fagen please visit the Information Room just outside the gallery entrance where you will find books, articles and reviews of their work.

Killing Time is a co-production between DCA and Suspect Culture.



www.suspectculture.com