

BRAND

Stories, Plays, Poems, Creative NonFiction

8th July 2010
at
South Bank Centre

Text in Context:
A Cross-Genre Symposium
and
BRAND Shorts:
Howard Barker
with Mikhail Karikis and Dzifa Benson

06

Spring/Summer 2010

Text in Context: A Cross-Genre Symposium

July 8th, Function Room, Level 5, Royal Festival Hall, 11am-5pm

Programme

Events are compered by Cherry Smyth

Session 1 11am-12noon

Sounding Stories: Anjan Saha, Jay Bernard & William Fontaine

Chaired by: Anthony Joseph

01 *In the Frame* and tablapoetry by **Anjan Saha**

Anjan Saha's work *In the Frame* looks at diaspora identities and his tablapoetry brings ancient Indian rhythmic philosophy into present day focus.

02 Poetry & comics by **Jay Bernard**

Jay Bernard will be reading three short poems, about pregnancy, childhood and pre-sexual desire, from two different books: - *Your Sign is Cuckoo, Girl* ("Kites" & "Eight") - *City State* ("A Milken Bud"); accompanied by projections of comic strips.

03 *Diary of the Out*: spoken word, sound work and music by **William Fontaine**

William Fontaine has crafted *Diary of the Out*, specially for this symposium, using his knowledge and synthesis of word, music, architecture and the esoteric. It is a short text (which will be expanded as a larger body of work) and soundwork, combining magical realism, non & science fiction.

Session 2 12-1pm

Texted Image: Margareta Kern, Uriel Orlow, Oreet Ashery

Chaired by: Cherry Smyth

01 On being a guest by **Margareta Kern**

Kern will be discussing her current project 'Guests', based on the mass labour migration from the socialist Yugoslavia to West Germany in the late 1960's. Starting from an autobiographical point, Kern will talk about the relationship of photography, memory and text, and the place of documentary and fiction in the context of this work.

02 Deep Opacity: visuals and text by **Uriel Orlow**

Uriel Orlow will present different examples of work that bring archival research and different image-regimes into correspondence and explore varying narrative modes and genres from documentary to sci-fi.

03 Semitic Score – powerpoint presentation and talk by **Oreet Ashery**

In this brief presentation Ashery will discuss the piece *Semitic Score*. The piece is an exchange between her alter ego, the orthodox Jewish man Marcus Fisher and the Vancouver based, Moroccan dancer, artist and choreographer 2Fix, performing with a Muslim outfit. *Semitic Score* is based on the Fluxus notion of instructions for acts, only with a Middle Eastern Orientalist flavour.

Break 1-2pm

Session 3 2-3pm

Staging the Shadow:
Chaired by:

Jennifer Farmer, Nicholas McNerny, Nina Rapi
Lisa Goldman

01 *The Fading City*: an immersive theatre/art installation piece by **Jennifer Farmer**

02 Immersive Theatre – Looking for the New Pleasure by **Nicholas McNerny**

Immersive Theatre has become a hugely popular form recently. Companies like Punchdrunk and Forced Entertainment have created sell out shows, and its spirit has spread from the cabaret and burlesque in La Clique, to the non-verbal physical theatre of SHUNT, to the explosion of site specific pieces produced by the Old Vic, Dreamthinkspeak and Queer Up North. Key to this is the new relationship between audience and performers, built around ideas of interactivity, participation and, crucially - pleasure. Drawing on my experiences of one of the most intense examples of this – the Burning Man Festival in Nevada – I want to explore what this means for writers and writing.

03 Kiss the Shadow by **Nina Rapi**

Director:	Anastasia Revi
Music:	Kostis Kritsotakis
Visuals:	Maria Georgakaki
Choreography:	Mariana Whitehouse
Movement Director:	Alexandros Mikhail
Performers:	Laura Morgan, Matthew Wade, Suzie Fairbrother, Noah Young, Alexandros Mikhail

Kiss the Shadow completes a trilogy of plays (*Angelstate; Reasons to Hide*), exploring surveillance, intimacy & resistance - underpinned by the quest for the ever elusive 'truth'. *Kiss the Shadow* further explores Rapi's other core theme of borders (physical; mental/psychological; emotional/sexual). While character-based, stylistically all three plays are non-naturalistic; choreography, music, visuals being integral to the story and the characters staying on stage throughout the play, creating a panopticon. An early extract of *Kiss the Shadow* was shown at Lyric Theatre in February, while the full play had a workshop production at Soho Theatre Studio in June. *This is the opening extract.*

Session 4 3-4pm

Voicing the Body:	Klairie Lionaki and Tom Mays, Cherry Smyth, Andra Simons (with Stephane Roul).
Chaired by:	Alev Adil

01 Shall we dance? - Performance-installation (work in progress) by **Klairie Lionaki** and **Tom Mays**

The one-act play *Shall we dance?* by Klairie Lionaki meets the installation *Acousmeaucorps* by Tom Mays. The text of *Shall we dance?* delves into a random series of moments in the life of a couple and calls on the audience to fill in the empty spaces and put the story into the right chronological order. Using the technique of montage, the different moments become more and more confused as the rhythm accelerates as if the couple is dancing through their own relationship. The interactive sound installation, *Acousmeaucorps*, creates a sound/body space using a video camera, a computer and 4 speakers in which the human body becomes a performance instrument.

02 User Error: performance poetry with visuals by **Cherry Smyth**

Cherry Smyth will look at how medical and psychoanalytic discourses around hypochondria can be re-envisaged as a poetic-performative text. As the hypochondriac can only voice difficult emotions through the anticipatory fear of illness or an imagined condition, Smyth explores 'health anxiety' as an adaptation to voice the subjectivity of the body. Her poetic-performative text will become a further adaptation and embodiment, through language and performance, of what medical discourse fails to articulate.

03 Amphibia perform debris.debris – music, spoken word and image: **Andra Simons** with **Stéphane Roul**

Amphibia is a dynamic music and spoken word project between French virtuoso percussionist Stéphane Roul and Bermudian poet and performer Andra Simons. They merge the immediacy of poetry with the power and magic of theatre; capturing energies of jazz, blues and rock. *debris.debris*, a collection of tales of modern mayhem and muses, has been enhanced with the spellbinding images and art of Joao Trindade. "...The images come so fast you sometimes feel like a Slinky falling down the stairs, yet the emotion and intention are clear, moving, and often funny" – *The Skinny, Edinburgh*

Session 5 4-4.30pm

Cross Fictions:
Chaired by:

Clare Morgan, Olumide Popoola
Shaun Levin

01 Views and Voices: cross-genre experimentation and writerly development by **Clare Morgan, M.A., M.Phil., D.Phil., F.R.S.A.**

Oxford University's Master of Studies in Creative Writing focuses around cross-genre work. Students find that working outside their usual comfort-zone can be a revelatory experience which strengthens and develops their abilities. As well as enhancing skills in their preferred genre, such experimentation often opens up previously hidden possibilities. A writer in the twenty-first century needs flexibility as well as talent, and working across genres can help develop this vital attribute.

02 This is Not About Sadness by **Olumide Popoola**

Olumide Popoola will be reading from her novella *this is not about sadness* in which an unlikely friendship between two complex and traumatised London-based women, one an older Jamaican, the other a young South African, is explored through each character's use of specific language to relate to space, memory and silence. The lyrical dual-narration allows vernacular language to shape the structure and flow, echoing call-and-response modes familiar to international storytelling traditions. A hybrid between monologue, dialogue and third person POV *this is not about sadness* addresses in its form, the gap of being spoken for and speaking yourself.

Round up 4.30-5pm

Chaired by:

Cherry Smyth

BRAND Shorts: Howard Barker

with Mikhail Karikis and Dzifa Benson

Evening Show 7.45, Purcell Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall

A cross-art performance event, premiering a new short play by Howard Barker and new work by Mikhail Karikis and Dzifa Benson

01 Poetry performance by **Dzifa Benson** with visual artists **Robert Pyecroft Rainbow** and **Gary Stewart**

Benson's work focuses on the body and that which links the living, the dead and the unborn. Poems performed this evening include *Self-portrait As a Creature of Numbers* (the unborn into the living), *Skin* (the living) and *London Bone* (the living into the dead).

02 Sounds from Beneath by **Mikhail Karikis**

Sounds from Beneath continues Mikhail Karikis's exploration of notions of the stranger and his engagement with the voice as a sculptural material, investigating diverse vocal acts and the marginalisation of voices. Centred around a new work for voices, Karikis invited Snowdown Colliery Welfare Male Voice Choir to recall and sing the subterranean sounds of a working mine, bringing a desolate disused coalmine back to life through song. A colliery in East Kent, once populated with workers, machines and the sounds of their activities transforms into an amphitheatre haunted by a stranger, resonating sounds of explosions in the ground, machines cutting the coal-face, shovels scratching the earth and the distant melody of the Miner's Lament, all sung by the choir grouping in formations reminiscent of picket lines.

03 Smack me: a new, short play by **Howard Barker**

Cast (in order of appearance)

Thing, A Searcher:

Victoria Wicks

Print, A Searcher:

Megan Hall

London, The Mother of a Murdered Child:

Suzy Cooper

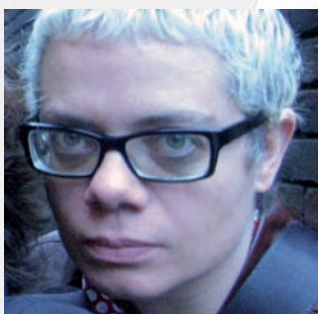
Barker sees his mission as developing a 'conscience-free, speculative, tragic theatre speaking its own language ...' He describes his greatest achievement as earning world-wide status without compromising his principles.

Interval - Break 15 mins. After the break, there is a rare Q&A with Howard Barker and a panel discussion with all three artists, chaired by Nina Rapi

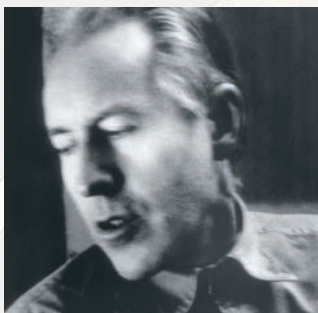
Biographies



Alev Adil was born in Cyprus and has lived in Cyprus, Turkey and Libya. She now lives in London where she is Head of the Department of Communication and Creative Arts at the University of Greenwich. Her first collection of poetry *Venus Infers* was published in 2004. Her poetry has appeared in literary magazines including *Agenda*, *Brand*, *Mantis* and *Body Politic* and in anthologies including *Hungry for You* ed. Joan Smith, *Stepmother Tongue* ed. Mehmet Yashin and *Cypriot Identities* ed. Karin B. Costello. Her film-poems *Hotel Amnesia* and *Dead Zone* were screened in group shows at the PM Gallery and the Stephen Lawrence Gallery in London in 2008. She has performed her poetry at a number of venues in London including the Hampstead Theatre, the Shaw Theatre, The Poetry Cafe and the Jazz Café. She has also performed at poetry festivals in the UK, Turkey, Lithuania, Cyprus and the Cuir Literary Festival in Galway, Ireland. Her poetry, digital art practice and academic research engage with digital environments, diasporal identities and the interstices of private and political memory. She has been widely published in international academic journals in the UK, US, Australia, Sweden and Cyprus. Alev has also reviewed fiction for *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times* and *The Independent*.



Oreet Ashery is a Jerusalem born, London-based, interdisciplinary visual artist. Ashery's performative practice engages with socio-political paradigms and tends to include participatory and delegated elements. Ashery frequently produces work as a male character. Ashery's work has been screened, performed and exhibited widely in an international context, and has been discussed in numerous publications and books in various languages. In 2009 Ashery published three books; a monograph, a graphic novel in collaboration with Larissa Sansour and an Artangel's commission publication. Ashery is an AHRC fellow at the drama department in QMUL and currently having two solo exhibitions in Shanghai and Beijing with the Other Gallery.



Howard Barker was born in a working class family in South London in 1946. His first stage play was performed in 1970 at the Royal Court. Subsequently, his works were played by the Royal Court, Royal Shakespeare Company, The Open Space Theatre, Sheffield Crucible and the Almeida. His early nausea with social realism, his embracing of tragedy 'the greatest art form known to man', his poetic discourse, and what he calls 'a suffocating unanimity of critical and theatre opinion' served to isolate him from mainstream theatre in this country, whose culture he describes as 'utilitarian, entertainment-obsessed and awash with moral platitudes'. He is currently Artistic Director of The Wrestling School, a company established to disseminate his works and develop his theory of production. His work is played extensively in Europe, in translation, in The United States, and in Australia. Howard Barker is the author of two works of theory, three librettos for opera and five volumes of poetry. He is also a painter. His work is held in national collections in England (V&A, London) and Europe.



Dzifa Benson writes, performs, curates, teaches and is a creative entrepreneur. She has performed her prose and poetry nationally and internationally at the London Literature Festival, Tate Britain, the ICA, Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club, Edinburgh Festival, the Houses of Parliament, on tour with the British Council and Sustained Theatre in South Africa and at the Shakespeare & Company Bookshop, Paris. Her writing has been widely published in poetry anthologies, newspapers and magazines. In 2007, she was commissioned for Africa Beyond's cross-arts project, *Translations*. She was artist-in-residence at the Courtauld Institute of Art from 2007 to 2009. In 2009 she was invited by Southbank Centre to be an ambassador for its Global Poetry System project. In 2010, she curated the Vineyard Poets' contribution to Tate Britain's Going Public event. More recently, she has been expanding and experimenting with her cross-arts visual practice in association with London Literature Lounge's Dark Fairytales.



Jay Bernard is a writer and cartoonist who divides her time between Oxford and London. She is currently co-editor of *Dissocia Zine* and blogs at brnrrd.wordpress.com. She has been featured in two anthologies, *Voice Recognition* and *City State*. Her first poetry collection *Your Sign is Cuckoo, Girl* was PBS pamphlet choice for summer 2008. Jay is also the recipient of a Foyle's Young Poet of the year award and was champion at the London Respect Slam. Her comics have appeared in *Litro*, *Chroma* and *Culture Wars* and her first exhibition will take place in St Andrews in 2011.



Jennifer Farmer, a native of Chattanooga, Tennessee, Jennifer was named one of the U.K.'s newest theatre talents by *The Guardian* in 2004. Also in 2004, her play *Compact Failure*, premièred to critical acclaim. Drawn to marginalised voices, Jennifer has created work with and for women offenders, refugee communities, mental health care users and young people at risk of social exclusion. Her work includes *Looking At The Sun* (BAC, 2001), *clean* (BBC Radio 3, 2003), *Breathing*, (Theatre 503, 2003), *words, words, words* (Tricycle Theatre, 2006), *Bulletproof Soul* (Birmingham Rep, 2007), *Urban Dreams* (London Bubble, 2008) and *These Four Streets* (Birmingham Rep, 2009). Currently, she is collaborating with visual artist, Samuel Overington on immersive improvisational projects through their company, Coffee+Sponge.



William Fontaine, a Cornwall-based artist, produces synergistic works in music, sculpture and writing. Since relocating from NYC to London in 2000, Fontaine has concentrated on performances and installations that challenge the mind as well as the eye. The use of soundscaping, text and the construction of mazes are at the forefront of his most recent works and he is currently collaborating on projects with Gavin Turk's The House Of Fairy Tales organization.



Lisa Goldman is a freelance director and writer. She was until recently Artistic Director of Soho Theatre and previously founding Artistic Director of the Red Room. For these companies she developed, curated and directed a huge body of radical new work over 15 years. Recent premieres she directed: *Behud*; *Shraddha*; *Everything Must Go*; *This isn't Romance*; *Piranha Heights*; *Leaves of Glass*; *Baghdad Wedding*; *A Couple of Poor, Polish-Speaking Romanians* (which she co-translated with Paul Sirett); *Hoxton Story* (also wrote); *The Bogus Woman*. This autumn she will be directing Mike Packer's new play *Inheritance* for Live Theatre in Newcastle and *This isn't Romance* for Radio 3 Wire. This summer she is taking a break from theatre to write a novel.



Anthony Joseph is a poet, novelist, academic and musician. He was born in Trinidad, moving to the UK in 1989. His publications include *Desafinado* (1994), *Teragaton* (1997), *The African Origins of UFOs* (Salt, 2006) and *Bird Head Son* (Salt, 2009). His work has also been included in several anthologies, including *Identity Parade* (Bloodaxe, 2010), *Red* (Peepal Tree, 2010) and *Black, Brown & Beige* (University of Texas Press, 2009). He performs and lectures internationally and tours with his band The Spasm Band. Joseph lectures in creative writing at Birkbeck College, University of London. He is a AHRC scholar and doctoral candidate at Goldsmiths College. www.anthonijoseph.co.uk, www.myspace.com/adjoseph, www.birdheadson.blogspot.com



Mikhail Karikis is a Greek-born and London-based artist. Equally embraced by the art gallery and the concert hall, his inter-disciplinary practice encompasses performance and sound art, music, video and drawing. Coined by critics a 'sound alchemist' (Le Monde), a 'primitive futurist' (French National Radio) and noted for his 'sumptuous experimentalism' (WIRE), Karikis has a genre-challenging practice which includes the world-wide release of his music by pop experimentalist Björk (One Little Indian Records, 2005), the international releases of his solo album *Orphica* (Sub Rosa, 2007) to enthusiastic critical acclaim, and his interdisciplinary album *Morphica* (Sub Rosa, 2009), nominated for a Quartz Electornic Music Award (France). His sound art and performance art have featured in major institutions, galleries and festivals such as Tate Modern, Whitechapel Gallery, BAFTA, British Film Institute, Kings Place London, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Musée des Beaux Arts de Nîmes, and Tate Britain.



Margareta Kern (b. 1974, Bosnia-Herzegovina/Croatia) is a London based visual artist who uses photography, performance, video and text, to tease out connecting threads between intimate spaces, narratives and socio-political forces. Further info on www.margaretakern.com



Shaun Levin is the author, most recently, of *Snapshots of The Boy* (Treehouse Press). His novella, *Seven Sweet Things*, was published in 2005, and a collection of stories, *A Year of Two Summers*, in 2003. He teaches creative writing at Bishopsgate Institute and on the Complete Creative Writing Course. Visit him at shaunlevin.com.



Klairie Lionaki, born in Greece in 1968, is a writer and theatre director living in Paris. Her works have been published and presented in Greece and France. In 2008 *Shall we dance?* was used as a libretto for an opera by Yiorgos Vassilandonakis commissioned by the National Opera of Athens. The same year she directed her play *Reality* in Paris. *Reality* was also presented in the festival Anagnoseis in the National Theatre of Athens in March 2010.



Tom Mays is a composer, computer performer and teacher – specialising in computer music. He is especially interested in instrumental performance of real-time computer systems for both written and improvised music, as well as in interaction between music and video, and is currently Associate Professor of New technologies applied to composition at the Superior National Conservatory of Music in Paris.



Nicholas McInerney has over 75 credits in stage, radio, film and TV. He is chair of Script, the West Midlands Agency for Dramatic Writers and was Creative Arts Fellow at Wolfson College, Oxford. Recent work includes writing an online course for Oxford University, script editing on an Alternate Reality Game and a new play - LAZYeye.



Clare Morgan is Director of the graduate creative writing programme at the University of Oxford. Her new novel *A Book for All and None* is forthcoming with Weidenfeld & Nicolson in 2011, and her book *What Poetry Brings to Business*, focusing on her research with The Boston Consulting Group, is published by University of Michigan Press in May 2010. She has published a short story collection, *An Affair of the Heart*, and her stories have been commissioned by BBC Radio 4 and widely anthologized including in the British Council *New Writing* series and *The New Penguin Book of Welsh Short Stories*. She reviews regularly for the *Times Literary Supplement* and is a Fellow of Kellogg College, Oxford University, where she directs the Centre for Creative Writing, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.



Uriel Orlow was born in Zürich and lives and works in London. His practice explores blind spots of representation and investigates the spatial and pictorial conditions of history and memory. He works in video, photography, sound and drawing and creates modular, multi-media installations. His work has been shown at Tate Modern, *Third Guangzhou Triennial* at Guangdong Museum of Art China, Jewish Museum New York, Argos Brussels, Kunststalle Budapest, Les Complices* Zurich, Kunsthalle Fribourg, Jerwood Drawing Prize, Kunstmuseum Bonn, ICA, Whitechapel Gallery, Shedhalle Zürich, the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen. Orlow has published several artist's books and has written for a number of publications. More information can be found at www.urielorlow.net



Award-winning Nigerian-German writer and poet **Olumide Popoola** has presented internationally, often collaborating with musicians or other artists. The scope of her work concerns critical investigation into the 'in-between' of culture, language and public space, where a sometimes uncomfortable look at complexity is needed. She will continue these explorations in a PhD programme (creative writing), exploring especially vernacular and hybrid languages as opportunity for social/ cultural change. Her work has appeared and been critically reviewed in anthologies, academic writings and magazines. Her novella *this is not about sadness* is published in October 2010 by the German press Unrast Verlag.



Nina Rapi's plays and monologues include *Reasons to Hide*, Tristan Bates Theatre (workshop production); *Lovers*, Gielgud Theatre, West End Shorts Season; *Edgewise*, National Theatre of Greece, and Gate Theatre (staged readings); *Angelstate*, recipient of an Arts Council Writing Award; *Mrs Jones Matters*, EstacaZero Teatro, Porto, Portugal; *Tricky*, Tart Gallery (and published by Robinsons); *Gentle Persuasion*, SubVerse, Theatre503; *Josie's Restrooms*, ICA (and published by Heinemann); *Ithaka*, Riverside studios, Best Play Award, BITS Theatre Festival, Pirani, India (and published in *Seven Plays by Women*, winner of Raymond William Award). Essays on Nina Rapi's work have been published in the UK, Italy and USA. She is also the editor in chief of *BRAND*.



Anjan Saha is a London writer, lecturer and cultural commentator. He is the creative Director of London Literature Lounge - promoting writers to work across artforms in meaningful ways in venues across London. He is the Director of "Dark Fairytales", which brings spoken word performance together with visual animation and live music. He has performed across the globe from the Jazz Cafe in the Czech Republic to Mumbai, India. His poems, stories and articles have appeared in *London Magazine*, *Pulse*, *Brand*, *Kin (Renaissance One)*, *A Storm Between Fingers Anthology*, Channel 4, BBC London Radio and the BBC Poetry Season. He recently performed for National Poetry Day at the South Bank.



Andra Simons is a Bermudian writer and performer living in London. He published his debut collection *The Joshua Tales* (Treehouse Press) in 2009. Andra has performed and published various works in Canada, Caribbean, UK, and the United States. Andra is presently a Visiting Lecturer at The University of Greenwich.



Cherry Smyth is a poet, a visual arts critic and the poetry editor of *BRAND*. See www.cherrysmyth.com

Howard Barker's cast:

Suzu Cooper's theatre work includes: for the *Wrestling School*, *Slowly*, *Hurts Given and Received* and *Found in the Ground*. Estelle in *Huis Clos*, (Kings Head), Daisy Gates in *Laughter when we're Dead*, (Live Theatre Newcastle). *The Homecoming*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Man of the Moment*, and *A Little Shop of Horrors*, Theatre Royal York.

Megan Hall's theatre work includes: *Slowly*; *Found In The Ground*, for The Wrestling School (TWS), Riverside Studios. *Voices of Arran*, Reveal Theatre. *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, New Vic Theatre. *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, Criterion Theatre, Piccadilly. *Shakespeare n' Sinatra*, Brixton Prison Dream Factory. *Hysteria*, Salisbury Playhouse. *Jane Eyre*, Regional Tour. *A Busy Day*, The Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue. *The Merchant of Venice*, Cannizaro Park. *Oh, What A Lovely War!* Bloomsbury Theatre.

Victoria Wicks has appeared in many productions for The Wrestling School, performing in London, Berlin, Stockholm, Paris and Adelaide; and has also appeared in several of Howard Barker's plays for radio, and one of his plays for puppets. Her television work includes 6 series of *Drop The Dead Donkey*, playing Sally Smedley, Mrs Gideon in *Mighty Boosh* and The College Director in 3 series of *Skins*. Other work includes *Collision*, *Dr Who* and *Mistresses*.

Dzifa Benson's supporting artists:

Rob Pycroft-Rainbow is an artist who works with photographic, print and time-based processes. He first became inspired to create images through a need to visualise written ideas. His film-making and installation work captures the elusive elements of time passing; recording the traces of objects, places and people.

Gary Stewart makes sound and visual installations that explore social and political issues. Together with Trevor Mathson he forms part of the London based research, production and performance group Dubmorphology.

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Both events are part of the London Literature Festival 2010



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design by arteo graphik (arteo71@hotmail.com)