

Christopher Hewitt

Professional Background

Over the past 20 years I have been professionally involved with live art and contemporary performance practice. I originally studied Fine Art at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff where I specialised in the 'Time Based' department where I developed an interdisciplinary practice and an interest in live art. I have lived and worked in London, UK and Turku, Finland. I am now based in Berlin, Germany.

While living in London I for 9 years, I gained a range of experience in the area of live art. I worked on three separate magazine publications which covered the areas of interdisciplinary and live art. I also worked in the Combined Arts Department at the Arts Council of England. This department was the only national funding body which had a specific remit to support live art and interdisciplinary or 'combined' art forms.

In 1996 I established a live art venue called Hollywood Leather. The venue was based in the East End of London and presented a monthly programme of performance work from both established and emerging artists. As well as managing the running of the venue, I also had the opportunity to work closely with the artists as they developed work for the venue. While running the venue I successfully applied for two grants to fund the programme of the venue and to enable me to commission new productions. (See www.liveartwork.com/cv/curating/holly/)

In 1997 I was offered the position of Director of Live Arts at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. The ICA is a long established, institutional arts venue and as Director of Live Arts I was responsible for programming the ICA's theatre as well as organising live events elsewhere in the venue. While working in this position I had the opportunity to extend my connections with the fields of international live art, contemporary theatre and contemporary dance. I also had the opportunity to work with some highly respected artists and diverse international groups. (See www.liveartwork.com/cv/curating/ica/).

After nearly two years at the ICA I took the position as Head of Interdisciplinary Studies at the Turku Arts Academy in Finland. The Academy offered me the opportunity of establishing a unique course of studies, called Crossing Borders, which would be a practical education in performance art and interdisciplinary studies. I was responsible for designing the course curriculum as well as managing the practical implementation of the studies. (See www.liveartwork.com/cb/).

As well as teaching my own practical workshops and lectures I also presented a full programme of visiting international guest artists. Over the four years of the course over 30 international artists gave lectures, presentations and workshops on the course. The artists were drawn from my own network of contacts and included both well established and younger practitioners from countries as Norway, Canada, Britain, Serbia and Japan.

The Crossing Borders studies came to an end in 2003. In 2004/2005, in collaboration with the Finnish artist Tero Nauha, I ran a one year, adult education course called 'Live Art Specialisations Studies' also at the Turku Arts Academy.

I have also taught as a visiting teacher for three years running on the summer residencies of the Transart Institute MFA programme based in Linz, Austria (www.transartinstitute.org) and have also visited the Live Art and Performance Studies programme at the Helsinki Theatre Academy several times over the past six years as a guest teacher.

Since 2003, I have been based in Berlin. For the past three years I have published the liveartwork DVD series (see www.liveartwork.com/dvd) and the associated liveartwork editions (see www.liveartwork.com/editions). These are independent publications featuring video documentation of contemporary performance and live art. The intention behind the series is to provide a unique resource for the international live art community.

From 2006 to 2010 I also worked as producer for the Norwegian performance theatre group Baktruppen. For over 20 years they have been one of the leading experimental performance groups in Europe. My responsibilities as producer are as diverse as the group's work. As well as promoting and organising performances at international venues and festivals, I have helped to develop educational workshops, worked on the groups extensive archive of documentation and have overseen the publication of a book about the group's history.

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