

What: Live Art Falmouth

When: 8th and 9th of June 2007

Where: University College Falmouth

Foundation Building, Wellington Terrace, Falmouth

Who: Hosted by University College Falmouth

Organised by: ArtSurgery, Paul Carter and Alexandra Zierle and assisted by a team of Falmouth students

Artists exhibited included ArtDept..., Brendan Byrne, Dominic Thomas, Ruth Harvey Regan, Oliver Irvine, Kangaroo Kourt, Anna Clawson and Nicole Ward, Amanda Lorens, Magenta Interior, Mr Wasabisan, VJ Theory, Kayleigh O' Keefe, Samia Saidi and Isabel Baillie, Teresa Stevens, Hazel Hammond, Paul Carter and Alexandra Zierle, Delpha Hudson, Jacqui Orly, Matt Davies, Ann Haycock, Karen Koltrane, Salma Lilarasa Nathoo, Sarah Mathews, Charlie Napier, Steven Paige, Nelda Ramos, Tracey Richardson, Roberto de la Torre, Rupert White, Andy Whall, Veronique Maria.

The Live Art extravaganza that was LAF included interactive installations, cutting edge digital technology, performance, a video room, V.J's and an artist led discussion. The event was spread over Friday evening and Saturday.

There was so much to see that I failed to take it all in, there was such a range of work and of artists that the show took on a kind of survey status for me. Like any member of an audience I engaged with what resonated for me. To really discuss the different works that interested me I would have to review each of them independently. I was impressed by the Falmouth students performances and with their engagement with Live Art, which has not had a strong presence at Falmouth or featured in the practices of students or lecturers in the past. There has also been little engagement by the college with Live Art art professionals in the past so it was good to see ArtSurgery's and Alexandra and Pauls involvement as mentors and organisers for this project.

My only criticism really of the show as a very generous open and inclusive project would be that I needed longer to look at everything and more space to look at it in, and it would have made it easier for the audience to identify works if there had been handouts with the artists names and titles of work and times of performances available.

As the attendee of many a live Art event I was surprised to find a lack of nudity in this show, which seems a strange comment, but I think that this was indicative of a lack of familiarity with performance culture. Likewise the performances edging towards longer durations needed to run for longer in order for the students to begin to understand the purpose of durational work. I say this because I saw in some of the work the inability to separate from theatricality, one should not act like one is trying very hard to do something in durational performance it should be hard to do the thing. I should balance these comments by saying that there was a lot of strong performance and video work made by students in the show and that the show was so full there was no way any one performance could have had the space for a long time.

It was great to see artists that I am familiar with and to meet so many emergent practitioners arriving in a burgeoning contemporary art scene here in Cornwall. It was apparent to me from how busy this show was in terms of programming and attendance that we need more opportunities for Live Art to be exhibited, so that there is not the same kind of pressure on any one show to showcase everything happening, and so that shows are able to be curated around specific issues or by specific groups of artists who wish to exhibit together, this would allow artists at different stages of career development to reflect this in their curation. However there were advantages to the mixed nature of the programming. From talking to some of the more established artists in the show I know that they felt freed to be experimental and to test out new ways of working and to use the show to explore, whilst emergent artists were glad of the opportunity to show work. The nature of this show also allowed people who did not previously know each other to meet.

The show was well attended and it was great to see those visitors unfamiliar with Live Art interacting with the show in an open and relaxed way alongside the artists and students. Everyone remarked upon the quiet attentiveness of the audience and respectful attitude that was maintained throughout the longest performances. I think the artists really wanted to see each others work and that the public were genuinely drawn in and intrigued by what they found at the show.

The show left me feeling positive as one of the artists and as a member of the audience. I feel there is a growing community of contemporary artists who want to cooperate and collaborate to enable each other and to create more opportunities to make and exhibit work. Events like LAF are critical to bringing together groups of artists to share ideas and information, to critique each others work, to make friends and to create networks. I left more determined than ever to make more work and to organise shows.