

June 2008

Greetings Performing Arts Presenter!

Welcome to Seen Performance's *on the other side of the glass plate, she wore nothing (other side)*. In this document you will find a project description, artist biographies, and technical specifications for *other side*, which premiered at Dixon Place in March 2008.

I am excited to be bringing *other side* to different venues to investigate the impact of specific spaces on the show. *other side* is founded on the interaction of viewers with one another and their collective watching of the performance. The play between them and us happens as much in the performance as it does in the place of its happening. We are looking for stages both small and large, crowded and empty, inside and outside, imagined and not.

I hope you will enjoy reading about *other side*. When you are ready to see a video excerpt, please let me know and I will send you a DVD copy right away. You can also watch a short excerpt online at your convenience: http://seenperformance.org/otherside/os_video.html

Best wishes,

Esther m Palmer
Founding Director, Seen Performance
Project Director, *on the other side of the glass plate, she wore nothing*

Seen Performance is a multi-disciplinary collective of artists collaboratively exploring the performance form. We are dedicated to sharing this process with audiences in our local and artistic communities through performances, classes, discussions, and writings. We move forward through experimentation, and strive to recognize and embrace distinctions among artistic and academic disciplines while borrowing methods, forms, and inspirations from them.

Seen Performance was founded in January 2008 by Esther m Palmer with members David Morneau and Shana McKay Burns. We are based in the Astoria neighborhood in Queens, New York.

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When the doors open, the show begins.

Three FOH Ladies in pretty dresses talk of clothing and whimsically burst into tiny ensemble dances. They generate a friendly mood, guiding viewers to become a single entity. Before the starting ritual is done, the audience – now a group – has built the set: two human scale boxes out of modular sections (ingeniously designed by Shana McKay Burns to play with the viewer’s visual perception of physical boundary). The Group fulfills a moment of choreography as they play together to decipher the correct construction method, and bring a new level of attention to the “stage” where the “performers” belong.

When those performers, Amiti Perry and Esther m Palmer, do finally “take” the stage, Esther inhabiting one box and Amiti steadily circling the other, David Morneau’s live-mixed sound score immediately establishes the environment for the tale, with music created from clothing elements – fabric, buckles, scissors – and lecture excerpts from evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins. The text directs the audience to see the image onstage and in their actions in the language of different worlds, and the sonic landscape eases the journey.

The Women on stage travel through a ritual: take the boxes apart, put them back together, take them apart to discard them, and return again to rebuild. Similarly they put on and take off, pick up and discard T-shirts with questions and claims sewn on to them. The costumes, designed and created by Elle Chyun, create a rhythmic action for the Women. Amiti treads through repetition and gradual change, building an image of who she might be. Every action is a careful choice and Esther watches patiently, waiting for a shift and a discovery.

other side has traveled from an intimately personal dilemma to one that is shared across societies. Research has revealed it to be a short journey, as they are the same problem – “...‘how I look or feel’ turns out to be anything but merely a personal and free exploration of the self”.¹

In the world of fashion and clothing, sociological and anthropological determinations shape our choices and our options, guiding us to remain ever communicative through sartorial maps. Inside these channels, however, “bodies are potentially disruptive. Conventions of dress attempt to transform flesh into something recognizable and meaningful to a culture”.² We are pinned into our languages – of body, clothing, and culture – and the ways in which they collide.

¹ Woodward, Sophie. “Looking Good: Feeling Right – The Aesthetics of the Self”. Clothing as Material Culture. Susanne Kuchler and Daniel Miller, Eds. New York: Berg, 2005. 35

² Entwistle, Joanne. The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress, and Modern Social Theory. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2000.

other side explores this process of communication and narrative through methods borrowed from comics and graphic novels. With help from Scott McCloud's instructive *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, I found a connection point with comics's "simple" images and complex spaces where time is constructed uniquely through each reader's experience.

Not only did comics illuminate a new take on perception in this piece, but it proved a good match for the clothing. Comics make stories of symbols and icons; fashion functions as symbols and icons. And then the language of both moves beyond easily formulated structures into the messy embodied realm. When I put on a T-shirt – sure the shirt may be saying something, but my body talks back; it has something to say too. But to whom is it talking? Me? Or the Group? Ultimately, that's a question for the audience.

Artist Bios.....*on the other side of the glass plate, she wore nothing*

Shana McKay Burns (set design) has a website where you can see examples of her diverse work: shanamburns.com

Elle Chyun (costume design + construction) is a freelance costume designer and dancer based out of NYC. Elle started designing costumes while a student at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, working with emerging choreographers and creating costumes for her own choreography. She holds a BFA in Dance, with an emphasis in Choreography. She is currently performing with Jeso Dances in NYC. When she's not sewing or dancing, she is shoe shopping and lending her photography to news and tourism blogs.

David Morneau (music composition + performance) is a composer of an entirely undecided genre, a provider of exclusive unprecedented experiments. In his work he endeavors to explore ideas about our culture, issues concerning creativity, and even the very nature of music itself. For his ongoing podcast, 60x365, David is composing a new sixty-second composition every day for a year. Find more @ <http://5of4.com>.

Esther m Palmer (creative direction + performance) is exploring how performance heightens philosophical connections between people. In early 2008, she founded Seen Performance (seenperformance.org) to define this process through cross-disciplinary collaboration. Esther received her MFA in Dance + Technology from The Ohio State University where she developed an approach to creating performance through methodologies borrowed from disciplines outside dance. She fell in love with the idea of dance as a broader art form through improvisation, which was introduced to her as a method of performed composition by Penny Campbell (at Middlebury College). Esther carries this spirit of improvisation through all of her performances, relying on each specific situation to feed choices. Esther has performed and presented work in Chicago, Columbus, and New York.

Amiti Perry (performance), a native Texan received her BA in Dance from the University of North Texas. She has produced, choreographed and performed original works consistently since 1998. She co-founded DIP|dance in person with collaborator Coco Loupe; performed as a guest artist with Rachel Lampert and Dancers; and for four years she performed, taught, assisted and designed nationally and internationally with Skip Costa/CORE movement Project-NYC. Amiti took a three-year hiatus from NYC during which she received her MFA in Choreography from the Department of Dance at The Ohio State University. At OSU she studied under and was mentored by Bebe Miller and Dave Covey. She performed works by Miller and worked extensively with CoCo Loupe, Michael Estanich, Blake Beckham, Esther m Palmer, and composer David Mourneau. Since her return to New York, she has been creating and presenting new works with her company, æmp:dance, as well as performing with ellen stokes shadle/DANCEWORKS.

Technical Rider and Specifications

Seen Performance's on the other side of the glass plate, she wore nothing

Please note: Specific application of this rider is dependent on the negotiated terms of the performance contract.

A. Space Requirements

The Presenter will provide

- a. a performance venue with stage space measuring at least 20'x15' (or its equivalent).
- b. chairs or other seating in the performance venue for audience members.
- c. performers with on-stage warm-up time for the 2 hours prior to each performance.

The Presenter will be responsible for

- d. maintaining the entire performance venue, and ensuring that the venue is clean prior to Seen Performance's arrival.
- e. ensuring that the performance stage and access-ways from dressing rooms and bathrooms are safe for bare feet. The floors should be swept and cleared of miscellaneous objects, and all sharp protrusions must be blunted with adequate covering and highlighted for visibility.
- f. maintaining a controlled climate in the stage space, with temperatures between 70-78 degrees F.

B. Staffing

All staff provided by the Presenter should be proficient in operating house equipment in their respective areas of expertise, and experienced in running performances.

The Presenter will provide all technical staff for technical rehearsals and performances.

This staff should include but need not be limited to:

- a. Technical Director
- b. Sound Technician/Board Operator
- c. Lighting Technician/Board Operator

The Presenter will provide all front of house staff for performances. This staff includes but is not limited to:

- d. House Manager
- e. Usher(s)
- f. Box Office Manager/Staff

C. Sound Requirements for Rehearsals and Performances

The venue must be equipped with

- a. 1 mixing board with 2 available 1/4" input channels
- b. 2 1/4" cables connecting Seen Performance's audio interface to the mixing board.
- c. 1 2-channel PA system with 2 speakers positioned to face the audience
- d. 1 15A power supply 120V (conventional outlet)
- e. 1 chair, 1 small table (approx 2' x 3'), and 1 small work-light (such as a Little Lite)

Seen Performance will supply

- f. 1 Mac laptop running Radial
- g. 1 M-Audio Oxygen 8 controller
- h. 1 Edirol FA-66 audio interface

D. Lighting Requirements for Technical Rehearsals and Performances

- a. The venue should be equipped with a properly functioning inventory of a fully dimmable and programmable theatrical lighting system, including a minimum of 24 separately circuited lights and corresponding cables, and a computerized light board with 1 monitor.
- b. The Presenter will supply Seen Performance with a draft of the light grid and performance space and an inventory of lights and cables at least 2 months prior to Seen Performance load in.
- c. Seen Performance will provide a light plot that uses the Presenter's inventory of lights at least 1 month prior to Seen Performance load in.
- d. The Presenter is responsible for having the specified plot ready to focus at the start of Seen Performance's tech time.
 - i. "ready to focus" is defined as: all lights hung and circuited according to the plot; all lights ready with specified gels and accessories; all lights patched to the assigned channels in the light board.
- e. Light focus and cueing will time will be determined during contract negotiations
- f. Seen Performance will direct the light focus and cueing, which should be staffed by the Presenter (2 people minimum for focus), and be allotted a minimum of 4 hours for completion.
- g. *Repertory plot: if the venue has a permanent repertory lighting plot, Seen Performance will design cues from the rep plot. A draft of the repertory plot should be made available to Seen Performance at least 2 months prior to Seen Performance load in.*

E. Tech Time

The Presenter will provide

- a. a technical rehearsal, staffed by the Presenter (see section C for details), that will last for a minimum of 4 hours and that will conclude a minimum of 2 hours before the first performance. The time of the technical rehearsal will be determined during contract negotiations.
- b. Light focus and cueing time staffed by the Presenter for a minimum of 4 hours.
- c. Sound set up and sound check time staffed by the Presenter for a minimum of 1 hour.

F. Dressing + Storage Areas

The Presenter will provide

- a. secure storage for Seen Performance's set and costume pieces throughout the run of the show. This storage space should be a minimum of 20 square feet in size and available for use at the time of Seen Performance load in.
- b. access for Seen Performance to the storage and dressing areas during load in, load out, and all technical rehearsals and performances; as well as 1 hour prior to each rehearsal and 2 hours prior to each performance.
- c. a private and secure performer dressing area for 6 performers, which must include:
 - i. 6 chairs/dressing spaces
 - ii. a costume rack for hanging costumes
 - iii. an iron and ironing board or a steamer
 - iv. coffee & tea service available in the venue
 - v. chilled drinking water, fresh fruit, and nuts in the dressing room(s)
 - vi. a sink with hot and cold running water
 - vii. a working toilet in a separate enclosure

Seen Performance will repair and launder all costumes.

G. Load-in and Load-out

Load-in and Load out times will be determined during contract negotiations to accommodate light focus and cueing, sound set up, sound check, technical + dress rehearsals, and performer warm-up time.

H. Other

- a. *other side* includes audience participation in which the audience is on stage during the performance
- b. The duration of the performance is determined in part by audience participation; it ranges between 1.5 and 2.5 hours from the time the house opens.
- c. For New York City performances, Seen Performance requests 2 complimentary tickets for each member of the production, totaling 18 complimentary tickets over the course of the performance run.
- d. Touring staff includes the following Seen Performance personnel:
 - i. David Morneau, composer (responsible sound tech)
 - ii. Esther m Palmer, director (responsible for light tech)
 - iii. 5-8 performers, the final number TBD separately for each venue

Contact Information:

Esther m Palmer
Project Director, *on the other side of the glass plate, she wore nothing*

e: esther@seenperformance.org
p: 718 483 0541

Seen Performance
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