

The Washroom Talk ONE

Location: Gents at Hackney Empire Theatre's Mary Lloyd Bar
Date: 24th of March 2004
Time: 13:30 - 14:30
Participants: Tamara von Werthern
Mio Isshiki
Jonathan Lahaie
Timothy B. Layden

http://www.zeitraum.co.uk/washroom_talk_one.htm

Timothy: A student of mine in class once asked me 'What is art?' And she said 'Everything is art.' I had some issues with that. I asked her define what she meant by everything is art. How can everything be art? And we still want to define what art is. If everything was art we wouldn't have to define it. She got a bit angry with me and she said she was leaving the class and never come back because I wasn't open minded enough about art or something.

Tamara: Yes, hum.... But that is very difficult because how can you say everything is something and you have no... It just becomes value as you say everything has the same value.

Mio: Hmm... It quiet depends on of what you feel. And it is quiet different from other people.

Timothy: Subjective.

Mio: Yeah, I mean if I think that is art and you don't think it is not art. I mean it is quiet different.

Timothy: Or could y...

Tamara: It is conte... It is context really. I mean you can kind of argue that something is art there because... it reflects on something else and then you can say, maybe it is art and some people would agree with you it is art and others wouldn't. But it could still be art for the people but...

Timothy: The urinal, the famous urinal...

Tamara: Yes.

Timothy: Why was that art? Because...because Duchamps made it art. So is this art (pointing to graffiti on hand dryer) if someone doesn't make it art?

Can I just look at it and say 'Oh, that's art.' Or does it have consciously made into art by someone who considers themselves a person who can make art, maybe an artist.

Tamara: I think...

Mio: Even though a person made it says it is not art. But even though I feel it is art, it is still art for me.

Timothy: Aha, so you think that art depends on the perception of the viewer rather than the creator of the piece.

Mio: Yes, I think so.

(two seconds of silence)

Timothy: I think...

Mio: (looking at the hand dryer with the graffiti) Do you think this is art?

Timothy: I don't think this is art. (Mio laughing) I think if someone were to create this from its...its basic parts with the....

Mio: But, it's...

Timothy: ...intention of making an artistic statement then it would be art.

Tamara: Like copying it...

Timothy: Copying or...

Tamara: Completely like that so it looks the same but it's a fake. It is art.

Timothy: A representation of...

Tamara: A representation of it. But at the same time you could also like break it down into little bits and say 'Well, maybe the person who did the tag on it' and consider that to be art. That is a piece of art on that maybe... I mean this like, an ad from Mc Donald's and somebody wrote over it 'Don't feed this shite to your kids'

Timothy: That was an intervention...more a political than an artistic...

Tamara: A political...

(laughter)

Mio: That is art!

Timothy: Yeah, I suppose.

Tamara: We also have a nice little rabbit as well even for people who...

Timothy: Yeah, that rabbit is very cool actually. It is well designed, well proportioned.

Tamara: I quiet like the tail that is sort of broken up.

Timothy: Yeah. That is... What was it Miles Davis said about the art of improvisation in Jazz? There is no such thing as an accident; there are just new notes. And in the sense of that smear on the tail makes it more... might make it more interesting.

Tamara: I don't think it is a smear. It is actually designed like that. It's broken.

Timothy: Oh, yeah.

Tamara: It's because it is fluffy... Yeah, but it's really difficult because if you say that this is art... for you because you decided to... I mean... just.... And you could say everything could be art.

Mio: Yes, that is clear. That is my...

Timothy: But it's only art...

Tamara: But that is different from everything is art.

Timothy: But it's only art when the person who is experiencing it as art chooses or decides that this is art.... Ehmm...

Mio: We don't need to identify in one subject. Everybody can feel everything. That is OK. I think everything could be art. But some of them are not art for me.

Timothy: OK.

Mio: But some of them might be art for you.

Timothy: Hmm.

Mio: So everything would be art.

Timothy: Everything is potentially art.

Mio: Yeah.

Timothy: Everything has artistic potential. But I think that art has something to do with the creative impulse with the human who intervenes with the material to make it into art. That actually the material in itself is just material until someone has the creative impulse to alter because they have a drive which is internal that they almost can't control... that they need to change this and make it something that says something different that makes people look at it different or look their... their subjective experience differently because of the way they have experienced that. I think that is intervened by the artist.

Tamara: I think... I think that is right. And so it... Oh, god, I am thinking about how... how subjective it is. I mean I was just going on (pointing at the graffiti) when you said it's a reaction. It starts something off ... ehm...in your mind and you do something with the material and change it and it becomes art because you could say that about.... about this piece because somebody has interfered in this with intention of changing it and taking something of a slogan in and reacting against it.

Timothy: And actually altering the way that someone might think of that. Yeah, I mean now that you look at this here... how about... a sense of what the meaning of it is... entirely different. It changes the way you see it or the way you experience, and even afterwards makes your mind going.

Tamara: Yes, and when you see the original ad now you will probably think of it. But at the same time if we wouldn't at random be standing in the toilet having our talk about art, I think nobody would think it was art probably.

Timothy: It's...

Tamara: *It's meant even moment* as well, where something is...

Mio: Yeah, I mean if you see that on a gallery you say it's art because it is exhibited

Jonathan: It's in a gallery...

Tamara: Yeah, exactly. And that is really interesting; sort the material value of art and like the whole art market. I don't... I wouldn't think that any artist makes art to make money. I hope not. But it's such a big factor and such a big, big thing to define what is art so we can sell it.

Timothy: That's it. I think it's a bit the urinal thing. Duchamps put that toilet in the gallery to try and say not everything you look at in a gallery is art. But actually the people said 'Uh, Duchamps put this in the gallery. Now it is art.' And so Duchamps...

Tamara: It's ironic.

Timothy: Yeah, I think he was somehow appalled at the reaction that the people it actually received it as art in the long run. In the beginning it wasn't accepted, I think but...

Tamara: Do you know...? This is a bad... something else but, *The producers*, a musical.

Timothy: I haven't seen it.

Tamara: it's the same idea of these theatre producers who try to produce a flop. They try to find a play that is so bad.... musical that is so bad that nobody wants to see it. And they do something about Hitler, a musical about Hitler. (Mio laughing) And then like all people who've seen it "Oh, it's amazing. It's so ironical. It's so... uhhh, it's something new' and they all love it and then it succeeds and then they have failed and it was a flop. (0:08:40:04) And so in a way it reminds me of that because it's kind of...

Timothy: But I guess that is the thing about this...

Tamara: It's kind against it.

Timothy: The whole questioning therefore becomes an artistic expression. A questioning of what is artistic expression is in a sense an artistic expression. So for example with the urinal. The fact that the urinal is so interesting and still talked about is because it was an initial question of what is art. That was the whole purpose of it and therefore it stands alone as a unique piece of art. But it's just a urinal. I mean this one (looking at the urinal inside the washroom) is much nicer actually.

(laughter)

Tamara: I... I quiet like the white ones.

Timothy: Yeah, but this is bigger. The size matters these days.

Tamara: Yeah, but don't you feel sort of a bit intimidated not having your own space when like you pee?

Timothy: Ah yeah, sometimes, sometimes. It depends...

(laughter)

Jonathan: In Leicester square actually

Mio: Oh, it's true!

Jonathan: When you go in Leicester square.

Tamara: It's intriguing... I mean...like...

Mio: Well, yeah... We always got private room... all the time.

Tamara: Although, there is some club somewhere.... We.... Because apparently girls always go to the loo together so I can keep talking. So they made double loos with two loos in a room.

Timothy: Oh, really so you can sit and speak with each other.

Tamara: Yeah, but I haven't been in one of them. But must be cool.

Mio: We should try.

Jonathan: Ah, a good one, a good loo I saw in my life is in Montreal in a restaurant. You go to the loo and you sit and there is a TV on the floor...

Timothy: Oh, really?

Jonathan: ...and there is a movie and the sound of the movie playing...

Tamara: Really?

Jonathan: Yeah, I was there and it was like Pulp Fiction playing.

Mio and Tamara: Pulp Fiction?!

Timothy: (pretending to be on the phone) Can you bring my beer down here.

Jonathan: Yeah, you don't want to leave the room. It is so interesting.

Tamara: Where was that?

Jonathan: In Montreal, in Canada.

Tamara: Was that in a gallery or was it...?

Jonathan: No, it was a restaurant.

Tamara: Wow, that's really good.

Jonathan: A proper restaurant.

Tamara: It reminds me... Ah, I'm from Frankfurt... and there is the museum of modern art in Frankfurt. They had an exhibition in the toilet... nine years ago. It was really strange. You could go in and use the toilet. It was really dark and then you had this video projection of someone running over the crowds... music wafting. It was really strange because you were enclosed in the space and it was really an experience because it was everyday. It wasn't removed from the gallery space where you... 'Ah, art and wonderful' and you were doing something very mundane, going to the loo, and at the same time you had like all your senses but different because it was dark and there were lights, you heard music, you saw things. All these things you don't associate with going to the loo... and that's why it was quite powerful. So...

Mio: I think it's very good to do something in the toilet because you have own time, you can think about your own stuff. So it's very nice to show in the toilet.

Tamara: I...

Timothy: It's space away from...

Mio: No good for the shop... (laughter)... No one leaves, long queue.

Tamara: That is interesting. I was talking about the whole art-in-toilet-thing with my boyfriend. Yeah, that's true. You have the toilet. That is where you think. That is where probably most art is sort of conceived.

(laughter)

Jonathan: That is the thing about the toilet. You can go and think and relax and cut yourself from the real... the world. It's the loo. You cut completely. You shut the door and you are on your own by yourself. You are never alone anymore. You're just running all the time.

Tamara: One hopes that's the only place where...

Timothy: Free place...

Tamara: Probably, apart from today where there is no CCTV (everyone looking at installed CCTV-camera, laughing). It's like living in this Big Brother-society...

Jonathan: Are you sure? (pointing at CCTV-camera)

Tamara: Now! (everyone is laughing) Apart from today. But it's very difficult to... you don't really think about it. Sometimes I have this moment when I am standing at the bus stop and I am thinking 'Hang on, I am sure I am being filmed.' (everyone is laughing) I'm paranoid because of course...

Timothy: I think you're filmed...

Tamara: 500 times a day?

Timothy: About 80 times. Just from Heathrow Airport to the centre you're filmed 80 times.

Tamara: It's about 500 to 700 times a day that you are on CCTV. And if you think about that... I mean that's today is already probably on 250 CCTV cameras just going to the shops...

Mio: Just much more popular than Madonna.

(laughter)

Timothy: She is probably **on much** (0:13;25;10)

Mio: I am not getting paid. Why?!

(laughter)

Timothy: That's an interesting thing also about the issue of art: It's media. How much is it all the time in your face, visuals and things and stuff and some of the media we see, which is just advertising, it's bigger and brighter and...

Tamara: Ah, yes of course, it's got much more money. It doesn't have to go through the Arts Council.

Timothy: And what is its messages? Its messages: You know, buy this, you need this thing, which don't really need. So where is art coming in?

Tamara: In a way you would want for art to make a quite space rather to compete with that loudness and that brashness of the world. And that's got away. Do you know, art makes a quiet space

Timothy: Yeah, I think so...

Mio: The creator wants the people to look at him, not like ... you know, concentrate on their work. So I think in a way they wanna present it in a quiet space so they can concentrate and think about...

Tamara: So maybe that's what galleries are as well because they're like 'shhh-shhh'.

Timothy: But there is also... I mean we talked about this before (pointing at the hand dryer) but art happens in the streets happens because just people are instinctively creative creatures, human beings are instinctively, also communicative... and the conversation we use with just verbalising gestures is often not enough. We want to make bigger statements. Sometimes it doesn't even matter who sees it, when they see it or how they see it. It's just getting, getting the idea out there. And graffiti and things like that and some of the... you know, people who write poetry on the size of walls and even in toilets. I used to love this. In England they wipe them out too quickly. But I used to just love reading... in a loo reading the walls. A lot of it was *call so and so for a blowjob* and this and that. But a lot of it was quiet interesting as well.

Tamara: That is communication.

Timothy: Yes, I suppose so.

Tamara: But it is, it is really interesting. It is like a movement against that... that commercial society as well because you have sort of the underground and there is all these groups that know each other and they can greet each other and ... It's bit like leaving your marks like dogs. (laughter)...

Timothy: ...

Tamara: Yeah, that is really interesting and also when you said about communication. I remember in Germany I was driving down the road at night and there was something white, sort of on the road. Oh God, was what that?! And I drove back and drove off again slowly and it said 'I love you Silvia'. (laughter) Ahh... It's really nice, and I kind of find it... It's new, kind of completely unexpected places.

Timothy: Obviously that message had a specific person to communicate to but...

Tamara: But everybody has. That's why I felt so touched... who saw it, I think.

(a few seconds of silence)

Tamara: But I think, it's really interesting to think about toilets and art... actually.

Timothy: There is a ...

Tamara: it's a good combination...

Timothy: Because we were talking about the toilets earlier, I was thinking about... I don't know if any of you know of you are fans of Frank Zappa or ...

Tamara: Oh, the poster of him on the to...

Timothy: Yeah, I think it was an **uncover** as well...

Tamara: I only know it because...

Timothy: On the toilet. And what is he challenging? He challenges so many ideas and concepts and things but the toilet being a space where you do stinky, messy things you don't want anyone else to know about and then when you go out you have your nice shirt and you look, you know, clean...

Tamara: Flushed away.

Timothy: But the toilet being a space where actually ... an idea of a toilet of being a creative space rather than a space of defecation... ehm... is quite interesting, I think... turning around and make us look at this... Frank Zappa... and making a statement. What is he making a statement of? My music is shit? Or...I don't know.

Tamara: I don't know if it's about his music so much. I think it's more about society and you know...

Timothy: Taking a poster of myself taking a crap.

Tamara: Exactly. But... I don't know, I think it is challenging like conventions of how we expect like a singer present himself. And it's also because it's very private and something really intimate in a way... seeing someone on the loo. I mean, I wouldn't really... do that.

Timothy: The mass associates...

Tamara: So... So in a way it's maybe a very honest thing. I mean, it's maybe something, you know like 'I am going further than the rest. I don't have to pose in a funky outfit. No, I just post on the toilet.'

Mio: Only for men.

Timothy: Hmm?

Mio: For men... I think to do something on the toilet is a bit promotion because everybody would be interested what somebody did on the toilet...

Timothy: Yeah, I...

Mio: Because nobody is gonna expect somebody to do something on the toilet.

Timothy: It's a bit of the... the scandal... A very popular way of getting publicity...

Mio: Because everybody wants to see...

Jonathan: Ja.

Mio: Like something disgusting in a way. That's why everybody go and see the Hitler musical everybody because they wanna know how bad it is.

Timothy: Hmm... more because of curiosity.

Tamara: Yeah, but I find it's kind of... political. We did a show in a toilet and we did it... We wrote a piece of theatre that was set in a toilet because we thought it was a really interesting and really theatrical and dramatic place because it's... it's sort of like the premise it was... there was a big party in Hackney and it was in the toilets of that venue and the party was so... too loud and too much happening in the party and when there was a crisis or something you would come to the toilet to talk about it or to, you know, to cry or to do whatever you have to do.

Timothy: It's the escape space. A lot of films particularly... when, you know, the guy or the girl wants to get away *'OK, bye-bye, I'll be right back. I am going to the toilet.'* Through the window and... get locked in there or something ... it's a unique space.

Tamara: Yes, it is. It is kind of a cake space... it's been like... but I don't know.... Like... when toilets...

Timothy: Advertise things that you are going there and... I don't know... there is a lot of places where I still love to go.

Tamara: Yes, that is interesting

Timothy: And very private personal...

Tamara: Luxurious in a way to make your little house for yourself where you...

Jonathan: I am thinking, it is going to the toilets is very... you can't show it. There is a dancer in Montreal. She was naked on stage, had a glass of water and pee in a bucket.

Tamara: Wow.

Jonathan: That was... and the sound in the bucket and there is... but she destroyed the whole... nobody could go to contemporary dance anymore because it was in the beginning of the 80s and it was like... she... all the theatre were empty after that because she destroyed everything what they tried to promote that was nice... It is your first show you're going to see a contemporary dance show and somebody pee on stage. That's like that is too much for me... (laughter) But it's very interesting thing...

Timothy: Yeah...

Jonathan: You should be honest and...

Timothy: The fascinating thing is that... that sort of looking behind the curtain to see the veil of human experience not just the pretty... one with the make-up on...the nice well behaved but looking at every aspect of human experience, even some of it is stuff that people don't want to see or people like to keep hidden.

Jonathan: Yeah, that's the thing. You can see hide-camera on the internet, you can go and see hide-camera on the loo and everything...

Tamara: Really? But it's a private camera somebody put in their loo?

Jonathan: Yeah, somebody put... yeah... it's disgusting but you can do it and if you show it but if you show it like.... 'Ok, it's normal, it's open, you can do it, you are allowed to watch it' No, I don't want... It's a funny thing that...

Mio: Some people are quite addicted to see it though cause in Japan they have quite a big issue about illegal camera on the toilet, in ladies toilets.

Tamara: Oh, really?

Timothy: Illegal cameras?

Mio: Yes, illegal cameras. Some people gonna sell it. But if I go to toilet I do know but...

Timothy: You check the toilet.

Mio: Yeah!

Timothy: But to bring up the idea of what is art again in the sense of the morbid curiosity. When is that art and is it actually perversion or just exploitation that is not artistic actually but just sort of crude... crude... not sure what term to use but not art. Somebody putting a... an illegal camera in the woman's toilet so they can watch it in their private space.

Tamara: But that is exploitation because the victim doesn't know about it but if the artist chooses to confront their audience with it then you own it and it's kind of...

Timothy: But is it art if for example... is it art to put a camera inside a toilet and ask people to go and use the toilet, and project that an audience is expecting or not expecting that. Is that art? I mean is...where is the one thing is very different between maybe contemporary art and art from an other era is skill. Where is the skill in that? Do you need to have skill now to be art or do you just have to have to be provocative or clever? Is that all you need to be? Clever or just be provocative for that matter? Is being just provocative art or is just being provocative and audacious and...?

Tamara: I think that depends... depends on the situation and on the piece as well but I think, the way that art is perceived now, it's possible but it's not only because... because you used to be...you had to be skilled to be an artist but it was also because there were... there were other factors... maybe in what art was supposed to do like religious art and then sort of moving into representative art and we just have such a variety of things that help us now as well as like the media, photography, film... anything...

Timothy: Exactly, these are tools. So...

Tamara: They are tools but when they weren't there you had to have a skill to do a portrait....

Timothy: But...

Tamara: Very different skill than you have now.... Taking a picture. I mean like it's sort of... a different skill but...

Timothy: But with that in mind and... and the grand amount of... of imagery and things that are out there that are run by... for propaganda with political purpose or advertising and then you have artistic... What is the aim of art therefore? If it's not... It can't be just for advertising, it can't be for just political reasons and shouldn't just be provocative...

Mio: But art is only for self expression. Say, it can be for anything. If I wanted to say something political... for me political reason gonna be my aim but probably you wanna say something else, so something that depends on you. So, it quite depend on what I want to do... in my art or in my life.

Tamara: But isn't it also the effect on the one hand communication. So you have something that you want to communicate... in some way... to the audience and you communicate that but in order to communicate you kind of provoke a change in the person looking at it. So really it's changed. But that's... maybe it can be happening in so many different aspects. So it can change your thought, it can change your feeling, it can change your perception, it can change the way you look at the world, it can ... you know it can change different...

Timothy: It's interesting to bring up the advertising thing in. It seems that a lot of advertising tries to plan as well. You have an advertisement... a lot of advertisement about holidays, about getting away in the London underground. And then you have this huge sign that says 'Come to Barbados! Your world will be different. You'll be a new person'. Lots of little clever things that are written to try and have the same effect as what you were talking about to make people look at it differently thanks to Fuji Film.

Tamara: Yeah, that's really interesting. It reminds me of... there is a play on at the moment about that... that topic. It's at the Soho Theatre. It's called 'Other shoes' or 'Other people's shoes'... I can't remember. It's basically about an artist who... does this project called 'I'm in your video' where she puts T-shirts on saying 'I'm in your video' and she tries to be in as many people's holiday videos as possible... it's kind of a cool idea... and then somebody gets interested in that what she's doing and buys it and says 'I buy this'. But he is the twin brother of somebody who runs a big *Who business* and they use it as a marketing tool. So it's all about marketing and art and where one starts and the other begins and how...like when you use the ownership of your artwork. That's really interesting.

Timothy: This is the whole question before about the gallery. When something is put into an art gallery, particularly there are some art galleries that make art more art than other art galleries. If you end up at a

certain time with a piece of art there and that's definitely art. But I've seen some things in a certain time: a dirty old bed that's been burnt and somebody's spilt some paint on it and all of a sudden that's high art...

(urinal flushes automatically)

Tamara: Oh, that's high art, too!

Timothy: Yeah,...

Tamara: Oh, like a waterfall. It's a bit like an installation.

Timothy: No, it's great actually.

Tamara: ... (mumbling)

Timothy: I've never looked into the urinal like this before. I've always been facing the other direction.

Tamara: How do you do that?

(Timothy showing her how to look into the other direction while standing in front of the urinal)

Tamara: Oh, I see...

Timothy: Eh... so...has completely altered by that. That's probably good. It has completely changed. It reminds me of a piece by Brian Eno that is in Chicago Airport, which I quite like. I think it's in Chicago Airport. It might be somewhere else. Ehm... it's all these lights that are lined up along the passageways or whatever they call them at the airport... long hallways. As you walk a light comes on and some music plays... do-do-do...in different ways. It's a fabulous experience. I had like three hours to kill at the airport... I've been walking back and forth.

Mio: I think, airport is going to be another good place to exhibit, isn't it?

Timothy: Yeah, they're becoming like big galleries of some...

Mio: You have to wait so long time and you haven't got anything to do. Most people just waiting and see thing and look at the board... two hours

Timothy: Airports commission huge pieces of art these days.

Tamara: But they don't exhibit.

Timothy: No, they won't. They are huge pieces of art. They're permanent parts of airports... quite a few airports. And there are quite a few airports I've seen as well that have exhibition space... that they show... often they show things that are relevant to that area for tourists to sort of begin their experience.

Tamara: I'd love to do a performance piece at airports. I think that would be nice.

Timothy: Yeah, that's cool. You must be careful. They have guards on there.

Tamara: Yes, that's true. Anything out of the ordinary at the airport is quite scary... *Permission, permission. We are artists. Don't shoot us, please.*

Timothy: That's a good theme to start with... There is something I am fascinated with right now is... art that isn't necessarily art that you find in a gallery. It's not... I mean at the same time I am fascinated with a lot of the art you see in galleries but it's really interesting to see how people use art to intervene in... ahh... in spaces that people normally are sitting around doing... you know something they should be expected like reading a paper and they're often bored.... It would be great if people performed at random at airports.

Tamara: We did a performance in the tube, on the tube in London which was... which was quite unsettling, I think.

Mio: You did it on a platform or...?

Tamara: No, on the tube, the carriage.

Mio: Oooo...

Tamara: It was... it was actually a piece that we... I was at... I was at college still and we were being marked on it. So we had teachers in the carriage with us. I was boarding at one point and I was supposed to be sick... like...

Timothy: You were supposed to have your role to be sick.

Tamara: Ja, well, in that part. Yes, we all had character and we kind of bring this whole piece through London. and then we went, we drove to France.... It was filmed. It was quite a long piece. But that moment... it was... I just had to go on and be sick... in a plastic bag...

Timothy: Did you actually have to be sick or just sort of make a lot of noises and *chiggle*?

Tamara: No, I had to be sick. So what I did I was standing at Kings Cross... ha, ha... drinking cold asparagus soup for like half an hour. Because I didn't quite know which tube train they would be in....(pretending to drink) Oa, oa... and then I was actually sick. But like... it was quite good. But the idea was to spit the asparagus soup into the bag.

Timothy: Aha... which you actually was...

Tamara: Yeah-ahh...

Timothy: What was... just... if I can dissect or maybe if you can dissect... what was... what were you trying to do? Why did you decide this is a work of art that is important for me to do and the audience I want is a random group of people who would be riding the underground and I want to affect them by vomiting into a bag.

Tamara: Well, what I wanted to do is I wanted to have quite a layered audience so that a part of audience knew what was happening or expect... like ... would recognise me as a character from this play which they have started to see before. And I would also have an audience who you didn't know that it was a performance and so would think that is would actually be happening because I didn't actually have a reason to think... there wasn't actually a frame to say this is a performance. So, so that would also meant the people who knew it was a performance could experience the people who were also in it but weren't part of it really but became part of it because their reaction was real to what was happening. So... that was, that was...

Timothy: That is actually really interesting...

Tamara: And it was very...

Timothy: A changing ground...

Tamara: And there were two people sitting... either side of me and as soon as I started to go green in the face and grabbed my bag and stuff they both got up and left and sat somewhere else. I mean it might be a really normal thing. I would probably do that as well. But I think that's really...

Timothy: Oh, yeah. I would, too.

(laughter)

Tamara: But it's...but it says quite a lot about... like... for me, for me it absolutely made that moment so real because it was part real. For them it

was real. For me it was fake. For the audience I hoped it would be more real, it would be both at the same time.

Timothy: That is a particular... (looking at Mio) Did you want to say something?

Mio: Mmm.

Timothy: I was just gonna say... an interesting strong point of street performance when you can bridge reality... the, the... you know, day-to-day experience into the art and there is not a divide that you can actually chhhh (hand movement)... I quite like this...

Tamara: Yes. And I think that is the main aim of site specific performance is to find that moment of reality and artistry of emerging becoming one thing or becoming two different things from two different viewpoints. What you said as well about as well, it might be art for one person and it might be not art but just something real for someone else and have that happening simultaneously, I think, is really interesting because...Especially with the theatre this very high pedestal at the moment, I find, where you go and you pay quite a lot of money and...

Timothy: ...

Tamara: Yes. It's like a very exclusive society when you go there...in front of the red curtain all that and you have to pay and intellectualise about it and you right reviews about it and all that. And with our work you don't really want that. You kind of want to...to be there and you're gone again and nobody...and some people 'Wha? What was that?' and other people know about and look at it as a performance but...

Timothy: This is the concept of guerrilla art there where you sort of attack people and then abandon them.

Tamara: Well, yeah, but we are not quite that brave.

Mio: You are brave enough to be sick on a tube.

Tamara: I was end up saying *it's fake*...

Timothy: Is that sort of... Are you typecasted now?

Tamara: Ah yeah, I know, probably. I make my own character and they're always sick. Maybe the German.

Timothy: Why is that? Are Germans notoriously sick or something?

Tamara: Yah, I don't... maybe a strangely perverse sense of humour, I think.

Timothy: I think human beings...

Tamara: Maybe yes. I am just being racist against myself.

Laughter

Timothy: Proud to be perverse.

Tamara: Exactly.

Tamara: I think, something that is quite interesting.... Ehm as we were saying before when we came in here ... as we can acknowledge now is the fact we are all from all over the world and that is a very interesting aspect of art is now. It is completely multicultural and ...

Tamara: And global.

Timothy: Global in a sense that your experience as a human being and your experience as a German living in London working with other artists. Perhaps actually being German... I don't know how important that may or may not be to you or to your viewers or to your colleagues or to any... but it is fascinating that there are cultural divides but there is cultural fusion happening and how much of that we are conscious of and how much is just happening naturally.

Tamara: Mmm... there is another company: Cob Squat.

Timothy: Cob Squat?

Tamara: Cob Squat. I think they are based in Berlin and in London maybe. But they do performances in England and in Germany. They hop countries. This is quite interesting. Yeah but also can sort of within a performance you can leave the country... you can do a performance in two countries at the same time.

Timothy: At the airport you can continuously cross the border.

Mio: You can fake countries. You could say *'I'm in Germany...*

Timothy: Yeah, yeah... well...

Tamara: Because you have this enclosed world you make up and you have this suspension of the belief you just say 'OK, we believe everything that's happening on this stage at this moment because that's why we came here for, that's what we do.'

Timothy: Yeah, I suppose art is to take you somewhere where you're not normally...even... even a... a painting that is really successful, I think, in the moment that the viewer is looking at it and allows themselves to be involved with it. They have to be... *they have to be* (sarcastically)... But they're often are taken away, taken out of their body almost into another world and then they come back. But when they come back from that world hopefully some of that world stays in them and they carry an effect on what they do...

Mio: I hope it's gonna stay in my mind...maybe...

Timothy: Probably...

Tamara: I wonder how... you know coming out of the other world of the toilet into our daily lives...

Timothy: Every time I want peace I remember this for the rest of my life...

Tamara: I wonder what happens if one of us has to go to the loo? (pointing to the toilet cubicle where the camera is placed) Should we use that one over there and make it a piece of performance art?

Timothy: So far I'm OK.

Tamara: I'm fine.

Mio: I thought we gonna demonstrate about art. Ha, ha!

Tamara: Are you cowards or what?... (asking Mio) How long have you been in London?

Mio: Two and a half years.

Tamara: Ah ja. And have you worked in Japan as well as an artist?

Mio: Mmm? I did actually but not really.

Timothy: But you do fashion design. Is it bas....

Mio: Costume at the moment.

Timothy: Costume designer? OK.

Tamara: Is that at the theatre or both?

Mio: First year for the theatre, second year for the film, third year graduation theatre performance...

Tamara: And do you find it a big different sort in the way that art is perceived... or do you find you look at things differently because you are from a different culture here or ... I don't know or do you just not...?

Mio: I think, education system is quite different. So I don't know it is the way I think is different from the other or just the education of mine is different from the college. I don't know but I think it's quite different.

Timothy: Hmm. I spent some time Hachiyochi. Where are you from in Japan?

Mio: Ehime.

Timothy: Where?

Mio: Ehime.

Timothy: Ehima?

Mio: A small city in south.

Tamara: I learnt from a Japanese: Yawai.

Mio: Yawai! Ha, ha!

Timothy: What's yawai?

Tamara: Wicked.

Mio: No, yawai is not wicked.

Tamara: Is it not?! I was taught wrong.

Timothy: What does it mean?

Mio: If you are in danger or you feel like some pressure you say yawai.

Timothy: Yawai like in Oh!...

Tamara: Oh no!

Timothy: But that's great. You have that intonation in your voice of that *wicked!* or when you say *Oh my god!*

Tamara: It's wicked.

Mio: Smile in your face and w-i-c-k-e-d.

Timothy: When you think about it. A lot of the terms we do use mean wonderful... actually have sort of literally ... But in America in the 90s 'killer' was a word people used... more high-class people. But a lot of people said *That was killer, man*. Yeah, killer is quite a vicious word actually.

Tamara: I only can think of awesome.

Timothy: Awesome?

Tamara: It's quite awful. Yeah, or... terrific. *Terrific!*

Timothy: Terrific?

Tamara: Terrific, really terrible...

Timothy: No, terrific... well it's rude as the same word as terrible but in a positive way. Something is terrific...

Tamara: Anyway, we are not here about...

Timothy: Talking about words.

Tamara: Word, words, toilets, toilet art... But language can be, can be art.

Timothy: Art is communication as we said earlier.

Tamara: But that... that was I really loved...exhibit also in the Museum of Modern Art in Frankfurt, which was all about words. And there were blocks coming out of the room and you had the word written on...like that (describing with hands a block). So they would mean different things depending on which side ... in German as well we have a stem of the word and then you put something else in front of it and it makes the different words. You know, it meant the opposite if you stand like that and then (changing places)... And that fluidity of meaning. ... Of it becoming an object in space but being a concept only... something like that.

Timothy: Yeah, that's interesting. Well, I wanna ask you a question. (looking at Jonathan) A friend of mine is a choreographer. I was talking with him about the language in art. He totally protested to the idea that dance is a language but dance is something completely beyond. There is nothing. There is no grammar. There is no... no...

Jonathan: Yap, but that's...ja... that's... classical ballet. There is a grammar. If in classical ballet this movement... it means something and it means something for everybody. But in contemporary dance this movement for me says something, for you it's another thing. That's... And everybody goes to see a show because of your own experience, life experience. You see the same show and you're not seeing the same thing like your neighbour. And so... that's the thing about it. There is no official language about it. So you just do something with your feeling. Just some...

Tamara: Is it improvised?

Jonathan: No, but it can be. But... no, usually it's ready set, everything is ready set. But it's just go there and don't have any expectation. Some people go there try to have a story but there is no story. It's just receive some feeling. You see some colours, you see some movement. And that means you go back in your own background or anything and you feel something about it. It's the experience. That's it. You don't need to search or try to find the real idea about... But? Clear or not?

Tamara: Yeah, yeah. It's interesting. It's a bit like the same movement in, in art as well.

Timothy: In visual art.

Tamara: Yeah, yeah no, in visual art where you go from the story telling or like something that represents something and you break it down in colour, form and...

Timothy: Yeah, you also have the free from style, I guess, where you can say something like where you have complete freedom beyond any defined rules or laws but you just have the material or in dance the movement which you can use freely to express a sense which is much deeper than, than the language itself.

Jonathan: Yeah. That's why... I used to be actually studying theatre and I feel dance. I can tell more with dance than with word. That's...

Tamara: It's interesting because we are working on this dance piece at the moment and we are starting off with words and so we're working on a text, we are working on Utopia by Thomas Moore and we are getting words from

it that we think are important and then we get the dancers to find a movement that for them represents that word.

Jonathan: That word yeah...

Tamara: And then we actually use the term vocabulary. We have the movement vocabulary and then everyone teaches each other their movement and then we put it together and so... it is in a way a language... It is the same idea of a language.

Jonathan: Yes, it is.

Tamara: But it's not universal. So it's like our language in the group because we made it up.

Timothy: It's interesting, I think. There is a lot of human movement and expressions and things despite the fact that they may differ in, you know, different countries, in different gestures and in different things, there is a hue you can tell what someone's saying... so much of that, I think, the percent we can communicate without words is much higher than that with words. Just last night I watched *Sunset Boulevard*. Have you seen this? It's an early black and white Billy Wilder film.

Tamara: I don't think I have.

Timothy: It's about the era of Hollywood when silent film sort of became obsolete and language, dialogue comes in and... There is a few times in the film where people are saying like words have destroyed the expression of cinema; there are too many words now; the real acting, the real cinema is, is dead. Sort of... of course that was in the very early stages of cinema... It was interesting....because sort of...

Tamara: I think, it's carelessness maybe as well or like restrictions, how you have restrictions such as you can't use language and then that makes you very careful with the way you use your body, your facial... all that because you have to communicate without the words and that makes it very good, very carefully done and...

Mio: But the thing is, the funny thing is, after the silence film the voice comes on to the film, yeah? And now I obse.... Past director could not work on the voice and they don't get used to. So they have to bring some theatre people to see the film. Because they can use all the thing; they can stencil mark and you can use the voice...

Timothy: Aha, that's interesting. So early film actors didn't, didn't have the vocalize, they just had...

Mio: They can't speak, you know. They don't.... usually speak... on the cinema.

Tamara: That is probably, that is generally like that because you often have people who are working only in film and then they make a show in the theatre and for them it's often projection. That is the real problem. They can't talk like that because they are not trained...

(everyone is silent for a few seconds)

Tamara: Freezing.

Timothy: Do you wanna.... a coat? There are a couple of coats.

Tamara: Oh, actually I've got a scarf somewhere.

Timothy: There is an interesting thing as well about art now is... as you said earlier the media, the different media that we have at our fingertips or other parts. It's so easily acquired and, and used really. I mean with a digital camera I can use all sorts of photos. When I learn about the camera I can take better and better photos. But still the media and the ability to, to capture and manipulate ideas and images with media all the time by anybody. The amount of... the thing you were talking about, the CCTV-cameras are there and there is something I wanted to mention. You know, you can download a lot of CCTV-footage off the Internet. Often you have to pay for it. Often it costs like... if you pay 10, if you pay 10 Pounds you can get this half-an-hour from this CCTV-camera...

Tamara: Admin fees or...

Timothy: Police camera in particular, I think. I am not exactly sure how it works. But I think, particularly police cameras, they have numbers and if you know the number you and you know the time you can say you want to footage from this time. It's, it's not very expensive to get that footage. And I heard a story about some kids, I think, in North London, but I am not exactly sure where, but they made a rap song and they wanted to make a video with CCTV-cameras. So they were dancing and doing their sing and on the computers they could put the dance track over, under... to make this... This cost them like 20 quid because they just got the footage down the Internet.

Jonathan: That's great.

Timothy: Yeah, that is really cool. So I mean, being filmed so many times a day...

Tamara: Yeah, you can use. In fact, I was just thinking when you said 'Oh, yeah', just find one and do something. Just block it up for half an hour.

Jonathan: It's funny; in my country it's illegal... CCTV it is.

Timothy: Really?

Tamara: My god!

Jonathan: In Canada it's illegal.

Timothy: But do...do they have police CCTV or...?

Jonathan: Ah... they're not allowed.

Timothy: OK.

Jonathan: They put some in Montreal. They have a drugs problem here... there at one in one university. But they take footage. But they can't... they need somebody to watch it 24 hours and 24 hours and they can't keep the footage more than 48 hours if they don't have any proof of anything. So they can't keep it. So they erase it, yeah. That's it.

Timothy: That's really interesting to... to hear that. I mean, I have issues with all the filming but at the same time it's all a bit Big Brother, you know...

Jonathan: But there are satellite. They can see you anyway by satellite. So ... You can go and buy the satellite. You can go and check your home.

Tamara: Yes, of course

(Everyone talking gibberish at the same time)

Tamara: But it's kind of, it's not like... constantly updated. It's sort of, I think, every three months.

Jonathan: I think, you can have it on real-time.

Tamara: Really?

Timothy: Mhhh.

Jonathan: I think so.

Timothy: Real-time...

Jonathan: So, there is more stuff upstairs than... than... (mumbling)

Tamara: It's strange but I never really think about...

Jonathan: I don't have anything to... you know...

Timothy: And if you have something to hide you couldn't hide it except maybe in the loo but the satellite can have a look into the loo as well... (sarcastic)

Jonathan: But when you get out of the loo then you...

Tamara: I think, it's...

Timothy: We should make tunnels between *imbues* (??). We could shuffle around without being seen.

Tamara: We could be... we could start a secret Loo Society.

Mio: But not here.

(everyone is looking at the CCTV-camera installed inside the loo)

Tamara: No! It's all outed now. Pulled out by the roots. Oh dear. Ja, but it's strange, I actually never think about CCTV or like the way we're being filmed at all. I feel Ja-la-ja, walking around on my own, nobody getting me.

Mio: But on the bus you can actually see yourself on the CCTV.

Jonathan and Tamara: Oh, I hate that. I hate that.

Tamara: What is that supposed... Is that to make you feel safe?

Timothy: Yeah, so you can see yourself being stabbed.

Tamara: Exactly! Great! I mean, there is so much aggression how... like on the buses anyway and it's not...

Jonathan: Safer now.

Tamara: You don't like "*Oh, there is CCTV. I'd better not. Mmm.*"

Timothy: It's funny with all this... ah...also with the Oyster Card. It's so much cheaper to have an Oyster Card but... you know...

Tamara: Wait until everybody has one... and then the price goes up.

Timothy: I know. It's sort of a travel record which is quite.... They can see *bla-bla. You didn't pay here...* It makes me feel even more sort of lost amongst a mass than I ever was...

Tamara: I started cycling now.

Timothy: Yeah, that's good.

Tamara: Shepard's Bush. Hi, hi.

Jonathan: Somebody steel my wheel. So...

Timothy: Somebody stole your wheel?

Jonathan: Yeah, I went to work with my bicycle ... and I attached it outside and someone steal my wheel.

Timothy: It's probably cheaper to get a new bike than pay one month fare... If you actually did have to travel.

Tamara: Where was your bike? Was it far from Hackney?

Jonathan: Ah... Blackfriars.

Timothy: Blackfriars?

Jonathan: Bridge.

Timothy: Aha.

Tamara: Ah, that's quite good, isn't it.

Jonathan: So I take a bus.

Tamara: Now.

Jonathan: I started to take the bicycle because an incident happened on the bus. I'm scared now to take the bus. So... ah... it's a stupid world...

Timothy: There is a couple of major... that sort of ties into art... There is a couple of major bike recycling projects in London. I think you can... There is one called *The Bike Project*... I am not sure if that's the right name. And there is another one that's... I can't remember the other one. I think it's

also *The Bike Project*. Ha, ha. But it's picking up all these bike... because people... you know, somebody's wheel are stolen they just leave them there. So they take that. Someone else leaves a wheel. They take that part and they're building bicycles and you get them really cheap. You can go and they teach you how to work on it. Ah... But this to bring it into art is the idea of recycling, which I think is something very important and used a lot these days because there is so much stuff that's produced and to recycle. And... not just...

Tamara: And ideas in a different context.

Timothy: Ideas as well and concepts and actually pieces of art... Ehm... because there is just so much of it.

Tamara: It just reminded me, cycling and art. Something that reminds me of a site-specific project throughout the city. You know, when you cycle and there is a pothole *And bchra*.

Timothy: Yeah... You gonna do that and get sick on the bike.

Tamara: Yeah, exactly! No, no. But there is a website where you can report this

Timothy: Aha.

Tamara: it's called [www fillthatwhole dot...](http://www.fillthatwhole.com) I did report it and then the council has to do something about it.

Timothy: Oh, really. There is one pothole on my way to work. It's just around this...

Tamara: Just tell them. Tell them.

Timothy: OK, [fillthatwhole dot UK?](http://fillthatwhole.uk)...

Tamara: Dot UK or dot COM... I don't know but that's quite good. And that's sort of changing the city landscape, you know, just by having that communicative network...ha...Ahhhh.

Timothy: That reminds me of that dinner talk when I was at home: Virtual space. There is so much art...like...you, you get lost in these virtual art spaces and there is amazing stuff out there. There is a lot of sort of amateurish type stuff and a lot of, you know, little bits of things but there is some fascinating stuff. You just go on the Internet and you can see much more you can ever see going into town to try and hit the galleries or anything like that.

Tamara: It's quite scary though as well like I.... I mean being...headspace ... It's kind of you can sit in your room and you can just type on the net and... and not have the experience of actually going out and all these little things on your way...

Timothy: Plugged in. Crsh...

Tamara: Yes. And it is happening in isolation and at the same time.

Jonathan: Yes, at the same time...

Timothy: But don't you think at the same time... that's where you can make connections there. I mean, it was through the use of the Internet and a friend of mine - he is an artist in Spain - who found something on the Internet, who sent to me so that I contacted Jay so he contacted me so I am standing here with you.

Tamara: Yes.

Timothy: Physical people. So, that's fascinating as well as it is being isolated it also links.

Tamara: Yes, it's true.

Timothy: ...

Tamara: I mean the arts mailing list that where, where Jay advertised from is as well... is just amazing the kind of have an idea...

(mobile phone rings)

Timothy: There is a strange animal in your pocket.

Mio: (on the phone) Hello?

Timothy: It's right on time actually. We started exactly an hour ago.

Mio: OK, we are leaving. Just coming....

End