

## Some Strategies of Live Art\*

**Simultaneity** - Two or more events existing or happening at the same time.

**Indeterminism** - The use of chance or randomness. (goes against the traditional artist intent.) 1. Origin of images is unknown because it lies in deeper-than-conscious levels of the mind. 2. Images derive from mechanical processes not under the artists control.

**Brevity** - A compression into a short event, a short duration.

**Collage** - To combine separate parts into a whole.

**Incongruity** - Composed of parts out of harmony, unsuitableness of one thing to another, inconsistency, absurdity.

**Juxtaposition** - A combination of unrelated parts. A disruption or contradiction. (Unrelated actions, images, materials etc...)

**Compartmentalized** - Contained into units or compartments making up a larger whole. (compartments can be presented simultaneously, or one proceeding another.)

**Matrixed** - The artist presenting him or herself in "character" and in an imaginary space other than the actual location.

**Non-Matrixed** - The artist presenting him or herself not in "character", but as themselves and in the actual location that the performance is taking place.

**Sensationalism** - Preoccupation with exhibitionism, sadism, perversion, sex, etc...

**Dissolving the Fourth Wall** - To break down the convention of a fourth wall separating the audience from performer. This leads the way to the audience becoming actual participants in the event.

**Art as Activity** - As the audience become participants in an event, there develops a point where they are no longer "watching" in the usual audience/performance relationship, but everyone becomes an active creator of an activity.

**Logical Process** - One unit of information is joined to another in a consistent context. An accumulation of connotative detail that arrives at an intellectually coherent statement.

**Illogical Process** - A process of disruption and contradiction. It works against probability and against their context of logicity.

**Alogical Process** - Is neither logical nor illogical. It does not "add up" in an intellectual sense. A unit of information can be formal, imagistic and isomorphic rather than literary. The expressive possibilities and the visual language involved are presented for their own sake rather than being used to create narrative development. Unity can be imagistic or conceptual rather than containing a causative sequence of information.

**Work-like Presentation** - The performer does not confront or acknowledge the audience, instead there is an attitude of "work" towards completing a "task" rather than to "perform". A work-like-presentation is adopted rather than an exhibition-like presentation.

**Ritual / Ceremony** - Taking on the external form of a rite or religion. Formal; exact; precise; In a ceremonious manner; formally; with due forms.

**Pushing the Limits of Physical Endurance** - Using the performers body in such a way that the physical endurance is "tested". The artist may perform a physical activity that is

difficult to sustain, (carrying a heavy object, holding one's breath etc...) the audience may then physically react in response to viewing the activity.

**Persons as Objects** - The use or treatment of persons as material objects rather than "characters". The physical person of the performer by himself (jumping, falling) or and by another (lifting, chasing, throwing, pushing, hitting, wrestling) or a slower, more sensuous use of the person (caressing, menacing, gazing) by others or by the person himself.

**Use of Materials for their Sensuous Properties** - Using materials for their sensuous properties rather than for their conventional uses. (Dropping pieces of bread into a bucket of water, setting a table for a meal, frying apples, melting butter, hanging up wet laundry etc...) An impassioned and repetitive use of these materials will heighten their sensual effect.

**Tension / Tension Reduction** - Disrupting the sense of equilibrium and order to create tension. (One way that tension may be produced is by creating complexity and chaos; a reduction of tension being a simplification of chaos towards orderliness.)

**Activity as a Gradual Process** - Activities that are literally processes. An activity that is a gradual process resembles:

- Pulling back a swing, releasing it and observing it gradually come to rest.
- Turning over an hour glass and watching the sand slowly run through the bottom.
- Placing your feet in sand by the ocean's edge and watching, feeling, and listening to the waves gradually bury them.

**### Once the process is set up it runs by itself ###**

## **STRUCTURE - ORGANIZATION OF PARTS**

**Stationary Mode** - Fixed, exhibiting no change. Passing out of the present moment into the past with no change. The image is frozen in time without change. (Example - a person or object with no movement)

**Static Mode** - Fixed, showing little change, steady, uninflected. Passing out of the present moment into the past with little change. The image is essentially unchanging through extended time. It persists but it gives no indication of "going anywhere." (Example - Robert Wilson's dancer whirling in a circle)

**Transitional Mode** - A series of different present moments flowing one into the other without creating operative memories or expectancies. The image changes but the action does not develop. Each moment is dynamically and structurally equal. A series of present moments flowing one into another. (Example - forming a series of images similar to a photograph)

**Common Mode of Memory / Expectancy** - The action changes shape or configuration as it extends through time. If an action exists entirely in the present moment, this shape is received whole and complete. If the action occupies a longer time span there is the possibility that the whole action will not be registered. Memory is necessary to perceive the entire configuration. Expectancy may also be created, predicting the future characteristics of the changing shape from the portion of the action that has already been perceived. (Example - a narrative)

**Discontinuous Structure** - Information or images jumping over time. It does not seem to flow, but more like parts of a jigsaw puzzle as bits of information are found and put into place or set aside and remembered until later. Memory and expectancy are the basis of discontinuous structure. Repetition of identical, like or similar elements is perhaps the basic kind of nonsemiotic discontinuous structure. (Creates expectancy)

**Continuous Structure (Preceptual)** - Anything that exists continuously through time creates structure. The actor/participant is generally the basic perceptual unit. If the participant is on stage for an extended period, that time duration is held together by the person's presence. As each present moment fades into the past, there is a common element - the participant - that joins the disparate time experiences. Props, costumes, colors, shapes, motifs, lights, movements etc... (In addition to participants) overlap gaps and fuse the time units at a different level.

**Continuous Structure (Mental)** - The continuous presence of a mental rather than a physical or perceptual element - this also structures segments of extended time. A participant/actor may be present to the mind in various ways even though not on the stage. Hidden from view, talked about, a character whose arrival is expected etc... Actions may also be continuously present, thus structuring time. (Example - a blinking of the eyes-short / a search for the murderer-long)

\* these strategies were originally developed from various sources, many of which were writings on "futurist performance", "dadaist writings", "happenings" and "formalist theatre" by Michael Kirby.