Painting's Liveness

Sarah Kate Wilson
Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London

Sarah Kate Wilsons's article 'Painting's Liveness', is written from her vantage point, as an artist/ curator/ researcher/ collaborator/ educator. Here she reveals how painting's relationship with performance, particularly during the second part of the twentieth century, has led to painting's *liveness*. This, she asserts, is apparent in paintings by Daniel Buren, Robert Rauschenberg, Yoko Ono, works by the Gutai Art Association, and performances by Ei Arakawa. The inauguration of a performance programme at Bauhaus in Germany, Black Mountain College in America, and the formation of the Gutai Art Association in Japan, are important milestones in painting and performances relationship. Writing by RoseLee Goldberg and Peggy Phelan on performance, J.L. Austin's speech act theory as well as, *Satori* an expression from Zen Buddism meaning enlightenment are woven into this text. David Joselit's declaration that the medium of painting is live and ON AIR is drawn into her argument for painting's liveness. Whilst, Catherine Wood's curatorial project, *A Bigger Splash: Painting after Performance* (2012) Tate Modern, London and her own curatorial project *Painting in Time* (2015-16) set the stage for this text.

Keywords: Painting, Performance, Liveness, Durational Painting, Shapeshifting, Live, Gutai

Figure 1: Ei Arakawa, *See Weeds,* 2011. Performance view at *Le Printemps de Septembre*, Musée Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France. Photo Marc Boyer. Courtesy of the artist and Taka Ishii Gallery.

Introduction: Painting's Liveness

In what follows, I propose that painting's relationship with performance, particularly during the second part of the twentieth century, has led to painting's liveness. The term performance has a double meaning; firstly, as live art and secondly, referring to how well an activity is done (such as economic productivity). I will leave the notion of how well a painting performs, economically, for discussion in a future text. Rather, this paper argues that when painting (both the medium and individual paintings) embraces the live aspect of performance, painting's liveness is revealed.

Performance's live gestures take place in time and space. So, it follows that paintings produced through a relationship with performance, result in time-based and spatialised paintings. Similarly, the medium itself can be seen as time-based and having a relationship with space, through its embrace of the medium, performance.

I coined the term 'durational painting',[1] through my PhD thesis, completed in 2017 as a means to identify, and grasp hold of the multifarious approaches involved in producing paintings that destabilise the traditional idea of painting as a static object, hung on a wall. Durational paintings defy stasis, unfold over time and in space through a multitude of approaches. My doctoral project identified and organised the strategies employed by artists to produce durational paintings into three distinct groups; '[…] the medium of painting embraces other mediums, such as performance, […] engage(s) people in their production, and employ(s) materials imbued with particular properties as a means of ensuring material unfixity' (Wilson 2017: 94). This work paved the way for me to develop an understanding of painting's liveness.

Before I continue, it is important to explain my use of the term liveness. Liveness can be used to describe; the state of being alive, experiences in real-time and space, being present with something or someone, transformation, instability, mutability, and existing in a state of becoming or potentiality, etc. I purposely avoid pinning down the term liveness, doing so would extinguish the spark triggered in our minds when we think of things that are live, alive, full of life, in the here and now. I do not do this to frustrate the reader, rather I allow the term to remain unfixed. In doing so, the meaning of liveness shapeshifts. I insist that liveness is in fact, in and of itself, live!

Figure 1: Carlo Crivelli, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1480. Tempera and gold on wood, 36.5 x 23.5 cm.

Flickering scenes and wafting flies

The main body of this text focuses on the relationship between the mediums of painting and performance since the 1950s. However, I insist that this relationship can be traced back thousands of years. Painting's liveness was present in the sanctuaries of caves at the end of the last ice age, made visible through Magdalenian cave paintings of animals. Our ancestors superimposed multiple heads and legs onto the same body and mapped haunches and shoulders onto protruding sections of the cave walls, to add volume to their pictures. Optical trickery courtesy of flickering fire light bouncing off the jagged cave walls, would have animated these images, and brought them to life. These paintings were not intended to be viewed as static images, furthermore, they would not have been visible without firelight. These paintings were created within a very specific environment, with animation in mind, they were performative. Jumping now, to the 15th Century, Carlo Crivelli's use of *trompe-l'oeil* to create highly realistic optical illusions in his paintings, in some instances I insist, imbue his works with a performative quality in the way in which we encounter them. For example, we try to waft the life-sized, seemingly real fly off the surface of his *Madonna and Child* (ca. 1480) [Figure 2] only to realise that we have been duped. The fly is projected into our world through the sheer brilliance of the artist's hand.

I suggest we understand these flickering scenes in the caves, as paintings existing in a perpetual state of becoming. Not only were they *performed* under firelight, whereby specific circumstances brought them to life, but they were accumulative, multiple hands added more images over time. Painting's liveness is also demonstrated when we meet Crivelli's fly in the here and now, in real-time, when we believe it to be alive. Furthermore, Crivelli's painting quite remarkably, opens up a space, a performance space, immediately in front on the canvas in which we act (fly swatting). This can be understood as a painting choreographing the space around itself.

As it is live, performance has been repressed

The performance turn took place in the 1960s, but it was not until the 1970s when performance was recognized and respected as its own medium. Art historian, critic, RoseLee Goldberg wrote:

> […] performance defies precise or easy definition beyond the simple declaration that it is live art by artists. Any stricter definition would immediately negate the possibility of performance itself. (Goldberg 1979: 6).

Catherine Wood worked through in her curatorial project, *A Bigger Splash: Painting after Performance,* Tate Modern (2012), paintings embrace of performance. Wood notes that historically museums have repressed liveness, both through the staging of and collection of performance. Even as

recently as 2010, Tate referred to performance as 'additional programming' (2018a: 55) that happened outside of museum hours, in peripheral spaces. Certainly over the past decade performance has been exhibited centrally within Museums whilst being traded, and collected. Large scale survey exhibitions, books, conferences and Biennale's of performance art have all surfaced in increasing numbers over the last ten years. *Performa* was founded in 2004 by Goldberg.[2] *Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art,* organised by Valerie Cassel; Oliver for the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (2013) and The Studio Museum, Harlem, (2014) and the 2014 Para Site International Conference, held in Hong Kong, *Is the Living Body the Last Thing Left Alive? The New Performance Turn, Its Histories and its Institutions.* This shows that the medium is gaining ground. Audiences are clearly hungry for work that exists in real time and space, perhaps as a counter to the inordinate amount of time spent staring into glowing portals to access virtual space.

On Stage

In the early twentieth century, in Germany, we see painting's relationship with performance firmly cemented, this time at The Bauhaus in Weimer, Germany. Bauhaus is considered the first art school to offer performance as a taught course (1919), commonly referred to as the *Stage Workshop* or *Theatre Workshop.* Oskar Schlemmer led the *Stage Workshop* from 1923 and he considered painting and performance as 'complementary activities' (Goldberg 1979: 67). Taking his painting, *Tischgeselleschaft,* (1923) as a starting point, he translated 'the atmosphere of the painting' (Goldberg 1979: 72) into a mostly improvised performance, titled, *Chorus of Masks*, (1928). Again at Bauhaus, Wassily Kandinsky in 1928 in the work *Pictures at an Exhibition*[3], designed visual equivalents to Modest Mussorgsky's musical poem he referred to this work as a '"Gesamtkunstwerk," i.e., a work combing sound, colour, and motion' (Buja 2020: n.pag). Xanti Schawinsky joined the stage workshop as a student and added puppets to his performance *Circus* 1924. He brought painting, motion, form and space together in the theatre space. Following the closure of Bauhaus by the Nazis in 1932 Bauhaus' performance legacy followed faculty and staff to Black Mountain College, (1933–1957) in the United States. Schawinsky arrived at Black Mountain College and devised a 'stage studies' programme (1936). Here, and beyond BMC, Merce Cunningham and Robert Rauschenberg produced stage works that brought painting and performance into dialogue with each other. These examples evidence paintings embrace of performance in Europe and North America extends back thousands of years. Furthermore, this relationship between the two medium's has been renewed and strengthened over time. Leaving Cunningham and Rauschenberg collaborations to one side, I now focus on a group of artists from Japan – known as the Gutai Art Association who in 1957 and 1958 created paintings on stage.

Figure 3: Kazuo Shiraga, Chogendai sanbanso (Ultra modern dance). Photo: Kiyoji Otsuji. From the portfolio 'Gutai Photograph 1956–57' ([1957] 2012). Gelatin silver print. © Tetsuo Otsuji, Musashino Art University Museum & Library. Courtesy of YOKOTA
TOKYO & Taka Ishii Gallery Photography/Film.

> …exploding cannons, bursting through the picture plane, choking audiences out of a theater with smoke, burning paintings. (Tiampo 2011a: 169)

Living Art

In 1954 in Ashiya, Japan a small experimental working group were gathered together by artist Yoshihara Jirō under the name the Gutai Art Association. The group's name, Gutai, means concrete as opposed to abstract or figurative. As I will show, members of Gutai produced paintings that epitomise painting's liveness. Ming Tiampo's extensive research, collected together in her book *Gutai: Decenturing Moderism* (2011) traces Gutai's drive for originality, and to gain recognition internationally.[4] Yoshihara urged Gutai members to 'Create what has not been done before!' (Tiampo 2011a: 11).[5] Gutai had ambitions to decentre Modernism from a Euro-North-America Art World.[6] Gutai often pre-figured developments that occurred at the 'centre' of the art world then, New York and Paris. Yet Gutai is not always credited with originality, rather as a lesser counterpart to Abstract Expressionism and Art Informel.

Although Gutai sought to decentre Modernism, it is important to note that Gutai's project, was inextricably intertwined with Jackson Pollock's. Tiampo writes they (Pollock and Gutai members, as they were working at the same time) faced 'the most prominent issue in painting … redefining the relationship between painting and representation, and consequently rethinking the boundaries of painting' (Tiampo 2011a: 49). Importantly, Pollock stressed that his drip paintings did not reference objects, rather as Robert Goodnough put it:

> [P]hysical space is dispensed with as an element in painting- even the dimensions of the canvas do not represent the measurements inside which relationships are set up, but rather only determine the ends of the image' (1951: 60).

For Yoshihara this suggested to him, that 'the space of painting can be enlarged to encompass anything: the outdoors, the theatre, time' (Tiampo 2011a: 49). Importantly, Yoshihara, had previously worked as a theatre set designer, furthermore, all Gutai members, originated from Japan, where Matsuri, (religious festivals) that involve elaborate dances, processions, hundreds of costumed performers, on floats, and boats, are organised all year round. It is important to mention these two facts; the use of a theatre stage (Yoshihara's expertise) and the abundance of Matsuri as they would have offered inspiration to Gutai. On Gutai and Matsuri festivals, see Ming Tiampo

(2002).

Yoshihara's aim was to create paintings in time and space, he gravitated towards outdoor space and the space of theatre as an arena in which to create a new kind of painting. Gutai member Saboro Murakami stated that '[G]utai Group's urge for discovery demands the elements of time as well as the element of space in order to give a full aesthetic impact' (Tiampo 2011b: 31)[7] Through the incorporation of time a space, Gutai did not break from painting, they broke away from the Euro-American definition, for them Pollock had 'reached the limitations of painting's Euro-North-American definition' (Tiampo 2011a: 54).

Gutai's quest for a new kind of painting, would come to also include the site where they created, and exhibited their works. Between 1955-1958 four exhibitions by Gutai were staged, two outdoors and two on the stage. *Gutai Art on the Stage*, (1957) and *2nd Gutai Art on the Stage* (1958) were both presented in theatre spaces in Japan. As Tiampo notes, they literally 'transformed the exhibition space into the support' (2011a: 49-50) meaning painting was given a temporal and spatial element. This transformation of the theatre space into support, reveals that Gutai made works in front of a live audience. Importantly, Gutai's expansive concept of painting did not necessarily involve paint on canvas.

Figure 4: Atsuko Tanaka, Butai fuku (fantastic garments for the stage). Photo: Kiyoji Otsuji. From the portfolio 'Gutai Photograph 1956–57' ([1957] 2012). Gelatin silver print. © Tetsuo Otsuji, Musashino Art University Museum & Library. Courtesy of YOKOTA TOKYO & Taka Ishii Gallery Photography/Film.

> Yoshihara Michio projected hand-painted slides, Atsuko Tanaka performed her renowned *Stage Clothes* in which she created a moving "painting" of color and form on her body using layer upon layer of highly engineered clothing, with trick hems that produced ballgowns and gloves that unfurled into dresses and Koicki Nakahashi threw dozens of paint-covered balls at a white canvas… (Wood 2012: 15)

Whilst Gutai artists created work on the stage, they also created two-dimensional paintings [Figure 4]. Wood, who included Gutai paintings in *A Bigger Splash* (2012) writes 'the act of creating work as tantamount to the presentation of finished work' (2012: 14). Tiampo, references Osaki Shin'ichirō who argued that Gutai's 'investigations with material in the context of their installations and performance ultimately contributed to their painting practice and were, in fact, *part* of the same practice' (Tiampo 2011a: 34). Akira Tatehata wrote that '[e]arly Gutai evidently consisted of a group of painters. At the centre of its activities there were always paintings' (Tatahata 1985: 14).[8]

As Murakami, saw it, Gutai's endeavor was to '[…] convert immovable time in art to a "living time", and so create a new style of painting' (Westgeest 1997: 192).[9] It is this development in their work, seeing the potential for painting's liveness, through a relationship with performance that saw them create live paintings on stage. According to Shinichiro Osaki, curator of the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art in Kobe, the 'aspects of time and space combined with the extreme physical element, are what make the Gutai works unique' (Westgeest 1997: 192).[10] The notion of 'living time' in painting is highlighted by Art Historian Helen Westgeest who writes on Gutai's ouvre in her seminal book *Zen in the fifties: Interaction in Art between East and West* (1996);

> '[I]n Zen, the World is considered to be dynamic and art should be part of this movement. Conversely the traditional Western artist has, for the most part, been concerned with freezing movement. So it is hardly surprising that Japan was the very place in which 'living art' was being produced by a group of artists as early as 1955.' (Westgeest 1997: 218)

She continues, 'In Zen, *Satori* is acquired by the intense experience of the here and now' (Westgeest 1997: 221). Curator Magnus af Peterson included Gutai works in *Explosion! Painting as Action*, (2012), Moderna Museet, Stockholm. Both *Explosion!* and *A Bigger Splash* (Tate) surfaced in 2012, and included works by Gutai. Peterson too connects Gutai with satori, 'enlightenment – that comes to the individual like a revelation, an immediate experience of the now' (Peterson, 2012: 95). Following Westgeest and Peterson, bringing satori into this discussion is apt, Gutai artists created paintings in the here and now, with an audience present. These works brought maker and painting, painting and observer, observer and maker together in a moment of total presence, live. Satori, like liveness – requires being in the here and now whilst being totally present, connects to the heart of Gutai's endeavor.

Living time is similarly captured instantaneously on the matt *blank* surfaces of Rauschenberg's 'White Paintings' (1951). Made in 1951, Rauschenberg designated the materials and tools for the white paintings, canvases, paint and rollers, meaning others could make them. The composer John Cage famously asserted that Rauschenberg's 'White Paintings' were 'airports for the lights, shadows and particles' (Joseph 2003: 33) as people stood in front of them, they cast shadows across them. Rauschenberg, stated instead of him (as artist and author), today is their creator. The living time of today visits the surfaces of his paintings, they receive the everyday, or put differently, they receive life. Feminist Scholar Peggy Phelan, is invoked here, she writes '[p]erformance's only life is in the present' (1993: 146). As we stand in front of Rauschenberg's 'White Paintings' we have a revelation, we recognise our presence both as shadows on these surfaces and as participants creating these surfaces. These paintings reflect living time back at us.

In this momentary revelation when we realise our presence is present on these painted surfaces in the here and now, is Satori achieved?

Artist and writer Daniel Buren questioned the durational viewing conditions of works of art, asking: 'Are we sure that the works hung in a gallery are seen?' (Fuchs 1976: 9). Like Gutai he employed theatre spaces for paintings. In January 1973, for one night only, Buren staged his painting *Act III* (1973)[11] not in a gallery, but in a theatre, here he hung a 420 x 429 cm unstretched painting across the stage and illuminated it with theatrical lighting in front of a seated audience. Buren explained that his audience, '[o]nce in their seats [...] settled down to await the "event"'. In hindsight this seemed rather uneventful, as the event was 'simply the sight of what was in front of them' (Fuchs 1976: 8-9). Elsewhere, Buren writes that Act III 'has been presented as the third part of a continuing performance' (Buren 1973: n.pag). For me, the 'continuing' nature of this performance is extremely important. *Act III* is not the third time this painting has been performed, rather this is just the third 'act' in the painting's life. Buren created *Act III* (1973)[12] with an eye on the future, staging works in this way, sees painting's liveness unfold over multiple acts, which alludes to the possibility of past and future events, and underscores the importance of being in the here and now to experience this liveness.

Art Historian David Joselit writes '[P]ainting, somewhat paradoxically, is LIVE: a live medium … 'On the Air' (Joselit, 2016: 12). As he sees it - paintings mark, store and accumulate time on their surfaces through their making. These time batteries (paintings), states Joselit, 'stockpile […] affect and visual stimuli' (2016: 14), which the viewer upon meeting the work cannot consume all at once. To remedy this, audiences now capture paintings as pictures on their smart phones and therefore defer this consumption for a future date. In doing this, visitors are drawn into a process of 'accumulating accumulation', meaning 'the marking and storage […] of time' in making and consuming painting 'are simultaneous and ongoing' (Joselit 2016: 14).

We certainly cannot consume a painting all at once, but this does not make the medium live. I depart from Joselit's line of thought here, Instead, I join my voice to his compelling theory that painting 'may function as a score' (Joselit 2016: 17). Here he is referring to scoring in the musical sense, and, or the type of scores employed by Fluxus artists.

Figure 5: Yoko Ono, *Add Colour Painting (Stone Bench version),* 1960/2016. Participation work. Acrylic paints, water, containers and brushes, stone bench and quote displayed on wall in vinyl. Dimensions variable. Installation view, Sullivan Galleries, School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), 2016. Courtesy SAIC. Photo: Tony Favarula.

> I call this *Add Colour Painting*. It is very important to have art which is living and changing. Every phase of life is beautiful; so is every phase of a painting. (Ono 1966: n.pag)

Scoring, and Fluxus, leads me onto the work of Yoko Ono. The image above is of Ono's *Add Colour Painting (Stone Bench version)* (1960/2016) [Figure 5] from my curatorial project *Painting in Time* a large-scale exhibition of 'durational paintings' by a cross-generational group of international artists.[13] *Painting in Time*, (2015) toured from The Tetley, Leeds under the title *Painting in Time: Part Two* to the Sullivan Galleries at the School of the Arts Institute Chicago, (2016).[14] As you will see the date of this work reads 1960/2016. During the 1960s Ono made scored works, that allowed participants to interact and realise her works in gallery spaces. When showing these participatory works from the 60s, now, she selects new objects to realise the work with. Working with Ono's studio on the realisation of *Add Colour Painting,* originally created in 1960, a stone bench was chosen as the object to paint and add colour to. Ono writes (in 1965) 'I think painting can be instructionalized […] the painting will be more or less a do-it-yourself kit according to the instructions' ([1965] 2000: n.pag). Alongside the stone bench Ono asked that the quote above (rather than a score) be displayed on the wall with pots of paint and brushes for participants to use. The quote offers us insight into Ono's desire to create living paintings, that mirror the life of those who make them.

Anna Dezeuze states that a 'participatory practice' is a type of practice that produces artworks that 'require an active physical and/or conceptual participation on the part of the spectator' (2012: 1). She explains how 'do-it-yourself practices' such as Ono's rose to attention in the 1960s, and continues by observing '[t]he second wave of do-it-yourself practices' surfacing in the 1990s, 'made visible through the curatorial and critical activities of […] Nicolas Bourriaud and Hans-Ulrich Obrist' (Dezueze 2012: 4).

Artworks, in the 1950s and 60s shifted the emphasis from the work of art as an object to the works of art that could bring about a social action, an artwork that does something in the world. Ono's instructionalised paintings, are not reenacted or reanimated from the present rather they are reimagined. She created her instructionalised paintings with the future in mind, by way of scores, prompts, quotes. She allows her works to be re-imagined ad infinitum with different objects, painted by different people, which marks their liveness.

In mapping out painting's liveness, I turn to J.L. Austin's term 'performative utterances'.[15] Both working at the same time, I believe there are connections between Ono and Austin. Austin published *How to do things with words* (1965) which set out his speech act theory. Austin explains the differences between language that is constative, (describes the world) and performative language

that has the capacity to do something - effect the world. Austin stated that 'performative utterances' and 'speech acts' (under specific circumstances) have the power to effect change and bring about social action. For example, *I do* uttered during a marriage ceremony does something – it transforms a person from unmarried into married. If I borrow from Austin here and map his notion of performative language onto Ono's *Add Colour Painting,* where the title is not just a title, it is also an instruction. The painting asks the viewer to add colour, if/when they do, can we say that the painting is a performative utterance, as it transforms viewer into participant?

I now return to Catherine Wood's exhibition *A Bigger Splash* (2016). An exhibition that sought to demonstrate 'paintings entanglement with performativity' (Wood 2012: 10) which was predominantly explored though the 'double frame […] a combination of the rectangular space of the canvas and the space of its lens-based documentation, within which an image of the canvas would be embedded' (Wood 2012: 12-13). Pollock is conjured here we 'see' his work through Namuth's lens, who exposed the working process of Pollock through photography. When we encounter a Pollock drip painting, both the physical painting and the image of the act of painter painting arrives in a simultaneous present. Painting in its relationship to performance, therefore, had to embrace the use of the camera, capturing within its frame, painting. She continues:

> [T]he final part of the exhibition sets out a series of post-1970s positions and strategies, which are anchored in painting but which also employ collaboration, theatricality, action or participation. (Wood 2012: 20).

I am indebted to Wood, as her extensive curatorial project, writing and research put on record paintings entanglement with performance. She did not set out to address painting's liveness, yet *A Bigger Splash* has been invaluable to developing my theory of painting's liveness.

Figure 6: Ei Arakawa, *See Weeds,* 2011. Performance view at *Le Printemps de Septembre*, Musée Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France. Photo Marc Boyer. Courtesy of the artist and Taka Ishii Gallery.

New York based, Japanese artist Ei Arakawa's performances often employ paintings, whilst he takes up the role of host [Figures 1 and 6]. His performances are convivial affairs, uninterested in sole authorship, he offers a space of collaboration. Works by his friends (mostly paintings) are included and audience members become participants in his pop-up, events that might look make-shift, like the unglamourous space of the greenroom, backstage. With paintings made by other artists, he might

translate them into huge printed fabric backdrops (to set the scene of a performance), transform them into placards, or banners, and dance with them. Wood writes:

> [T]hat painted pictures are so often embedded, with special status, within the constellation of performers, structures, and relationships that Arakawa sets up lends the action the sense of some mysterious aesthetic order. (2013: n.pag)

The special status Arakawa gives to paintings is evident in the image above which shows Arakawa's performance at Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France, where he brought out six historic Gutai paintings by Akira Kanayama, Jiro Yoshihara, Atsuko Tanaka, Shozo Shimamoto, Kazuo Shiraga from the collection and as Wood's notes was '(miraculously) allowed to… move them around on travel frames adapted with wheels' (2013: n.pag). Miraculous, due to conservation challenges and financial value. At times the works were arranged in a circle with surfaces turned outwards to viewers, and pushed by Arakawa and collaborators who danced the paintings. Collaborators moved the paintings to sound, into different configurations whilst moving in and amongst the Gutai works.[16] As the Tanaka painting is wheeled about, Arakawa, says to the audience 'Some paintings we are not allowed to move very fast' (Wood 2013: n.pag).

Turning to Joselit again here:

> [T]he question has become not where to deposit […] paint on its support, but rather, where will the painting […] go. How will it behave?' (Joselit 2012: 17).

The painting is 'a kind of scoring in physical space'– which he calls the 'externalization of painting' (Joselit 2012: 17) whereby the insides of paintings are turned outwards. As a result, paintings can visualise the networks within which they circulate, revealing how they behave as they travel within these networks. Arakawa turns the insides of Gutai paintings, outwards, in his performance at Les Abattoirs. As I see it, he continues Gutai's project, to create painting in real time and physical space. Acting as host/ medium, Arakawa summons six Gutai paintings to perform. Importantly, his performance is not re-animation, re-enactment or re-performance, as these Gutai paintings have never been seen or performed like this. Rather, he collaborates with these Gutai painting's and channels Gutai's endeavor, to create a new kind of painting, living painting, in time and space.

In the hands of Arakawa, these Gutai paintings have shapeshifted, their framed bodies have been freed from the wall, and attached to wheels, allowing them to be pushed and twirled by performers in a choreographed dance, in front of a live audience. The insides of these Gutai painting's visualise their live state of potentiality, they exist in the here and now, in the present, but not as they have

been seen before. The danced performance has a processional and ceremonial quality to it, which for me conjures a connection to Matsuri Festivals again. This is another aspect of these painting's insides turning outwards, Arakawa visualises these links to Matsuri Festivals through performing the works in this way. Through Arakawa's performance, these Gutai works have been plugged into new networks, in the present through Arakawa's collaboration, which has brought the work into view in front of new audiences, live! Where these paintings will go, and how they will behave, what shape they will take in the future, remains to be seen.

Conclusion

The relationship between painting and performance is an ancient one. Established in the fire lit caves at the end of the last ice age, painting's burning desire for performance has endured the test of time. It is the live aspect of performance that painting is attracted to. Both the medium of painting and individual paintings embrace performance's liveness as a means to ensure painting's liveness. All of the works discussed here are durational paintings, they defy stasis and unfold over time in space. Each underscores the importance of being present, in the here and now to experience this liveness. The liveness of individual paintings is brought about through a multitude of approaches; through a form of mediumship/ collaboration (Arakawa), a staging (Buren), by choreographing the space around itself (Crivelli), the inclusion of time, space and site (Gutai members), a score (Ono), through the reflection of living time (Rauschenberg).

The works discussed above by Ono and Crivelli score the space around themselves, we add colour, we lunge at the fly. I have asked if Ono's instructionalised work can be considered a *performative utterance?* Buren with an eye on the future, created a painting that unfolds over multiple acts, which alludes to the possibility of past and future events, in perpetuity. Gutai created a new kind of painting, their paintings brought maker, painting, audience and site (stage) together in a moment of total presence, live. Satori, like liveness, requires us to be in the here and now, totally present. Satori connects to the heart of Gutai's endeavors. I have questioned if satori is achieved in the momentary revelation we have when we realise our presence is present on the surfaces of Rauschenberg's 'White Paintings'? Arakawa, through a collaborative performance with historic Gutai works presented the insides of these works outwards. In the hands of Arakawa these Gutai paintings shapeshift.

The medium of painting and individual paintings, shapeshift. Similarly, to the term liveness, painting and paintings are, in and of themselves, live.

References

Austin, John, L. (1962), *How to Do Things with Words,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bishop, Claire (2012), 'Delegated Performance: Outsourcing Authenticity', in *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, London: Verso, pp. 219-240.

Buja, Maureen (2020), 'Art Into Music Into Art: Kandinsky and Mussorgsky', *Interlude*, https://interlude.hk/art-into-music-into-art-kandinsky-and-mussorgsky/, accessed 3 September 2023.

Buren, Daniel (1973), 'tract de Daniel Buren distribué lors de "Act III"', https://danielburen.com/images/exhibit/126?ref=personal&year=1973#lg=1&slide=2, accessed 9 February 2017.

Dezeuze, Anna (ed) (2012), 'Introduction', in *The 'do-it-yourself' artwork: Participation from Fluxus to New Media*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp: 1-21.

Fried, Michael ([1967] 1968), 'Art and Objecthood', in Gregory Battcock (ed), *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, New York: E. P. Dutton, pp. 116-147.

Fuchs, Rudolf Herman (1976), *Discordance/Cohérence: A Book by R. H. Fuchs with the collaboration of Daniel Buren*, trans. D. Britt, Eindhoven: Van Abbermuseum.

Gioni, Massimilano (2018), 'Notes on Abstraction', in Massimilano Gioni and Karen Marta (eds), *Kerstin Brätsch: 2000 Words*, Athens: DESTE Foundation for Contemporary Art, pp. 6-17.

Goodnough, Robert (1951), 'Pollock Paints a Picture', *Art News,* 50: 4 (May 1951), 38-41, 60-61.

Goldberg, RoseLee (1979), *Performance: Live Art 1909 to the present*, London: Cox and Wyman Ltd.

Graham-Dixon, Andrew (1999), 'The National Gallery during the Second World War', *Andrew's Archives*, https://www.andrewgrahamdixon.com/archive/the-national-gallery-during-the-second-world-war.html, accessed 2 December 2014.

Greenberg, Clement ([1969] 2007), 'Modernist Painting,' *in The Collected Essays and Criticism 4 Modernism With a Vengeance: 1957- 1969*, edited by J. O'Brien, Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.

Joselit, David (2016), 'Marking, Scoring, Storing, and Speculating (on Time)', in Isabella Graw and Ewa Lajer-Burcharth (eds), *Painting Beyond Itself: The Medium in the Post-Medium Condition*, Berlin: Sternberg, pp. 11–20.

Joseph, Brandon (2003), *Random Order: Robert Rauschenberg and the Neo-Avant-Garde*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Ono, Yoko ([1965] 2000). 'Letter to Ivan Karp. 4 January 1965', in *Grapefruit: A Book of Instructions and Drawings*, New York: Simon & Schuster, n.pag.

Ono, Yoko (2016), quote provided by curator Jon Hendricks in correspondence with the author, 17 May. Quote originally published in the *London Sunday Telegraph*, 27 November 1966, n.pag.

Peterson, Magnus af (2012), 'Explosion! Painting as Action', in *Explosion! Màleri som handling/*

Painting as Action, Moderna Museet, London: Koenig Books, pp. 93-108

Phelan, Peggy (1993), *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance,* London: Routledge.

Sarathy, Jennifer (2017), 'Rauschenberg and Cunningham', Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, https://www.rauschenbergfoundation.org/art/lightboxes/rauschenberg-and-cunningham, 25 April 2023.

Tatahata, Akira (1985), 'Creating tableaux: 1950s Gutai Art Association', in *Action and Emotion, Painting in the 50s, Informel, Gutai, Cobra*, Osaka: National Museum of Art, pp. 14–19.

Tiampo, Ming (2011a), *Gutai: Decenturing Modernism*, Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.

Tiampo, Ming (2011b), 'Gutai Experiments on the World Stage', in M. Franciolli, F. Namioka, T. Visser (eds), *Gutai: Painting with Time and Space*, exhibition catalogue, Museo Cantonale d'Arte, Lugano, Switzerland, 23 October 2010 - 20 February 2011, pp. 24-37.

Westgeest, Helen (1997), *Zen in the fifties: Interaction in Art between East and West*, Zwolle: Waanders Publishers.

Wilson, Sarah Kate (2017), *Durational Painting: gifting, grafting, hosting, collaborating*, Ph.D. thesis, Leeds: University of Leeds.

Wood, Catherine (2012), *A Bigger Splash: Painting After Performance*, London: Tate Publishing.

Wood, Catherine (2013) 'Out of Body: The Art of Ei Arakawa', *Artforum*, 51: 6, https://www.artforum.com/features/out-of-body-the-art-of-ei-arakawa-214942/, accessed 9 February 2017.

Wood, Catherine (2018a) 'Game Changing: Performance in the Permanent Collection' in C. Costinaș & A. Janevski (eds), *Is the Living Body the Last Thing Left Alive? The New Performance Turn, Its Histories and Its Institutions*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, pp. 54–62.

Wood, Catherine (2018b), *Performance in Contemporary Art*, London: Tate Publishing.

[1] 'The strategies can be divided into three distinct approaches, and often one or more strategy is mobilised within an individual work. Firstly (and in no particular order), the medium of painting embraces other mediums, such as performance, installation and theatre, to yield durational paintings. Secondly, these paintings engage people in their production. Thirdly, durational paintings employ materials imbued with particular properties as a means of ensuring material unfixity.' (Wilson 2017: 94).

[2] RoseLee Goldberg founded and is the Chief Curator of Performa Biennale, a globally renowned three week programme of live performance, projects and events in venues that takes place in New York City.

[3] Presented at the Friedrich Theater in Dessau, 1928.

[4] The history of this, requires the readers full attention, so I direct you to Tiampo's work, as I cannot do justice to Gutai's ouvre in decentering Modernism here.

[5] Yoshihara Jirō, "Gutai gurūpu no 10 nen: Sono Ichi" [10 years of the Gutai Group: part one], Bijitsu Jyānaru 38 (March 1960; 3-6; reprinted in Gutai shiryōshū; Dokyumento Gutai, 1954-1972/ Document Gutai (Ashiya: Ashiya City Museum of Art & History, 1993), p.324, quoted in (Tiamp 2011a: 11)

[6] Japan in the 1950's, geographically, must have felt far away from Europe and America. To draw themselves closer and enable their work to meet international audiences, Gutai published a journal. Over ten years, twelve issues were printed and disseminated worldwide.

[7] Saburo Murakami, 'Gutai bijutsu nit suite' (on Gutai Art), Gutai no. 7, 1957, quoted in (Tiampo 2011b: 31).

[8] Also quoted in 'Atsuko Tanaka: Works from the Gutai Era', Galerie im Taxispalais, published by Hatje Cantz, 2002.

[9] Murakami in *Gutai 7,* 1957, an English translation was published in the catalogue Gutai, Darmstadt 1991, pp. 401-402, quoted in (Westgeest 1997: 192).

[10] Shinichiro Osaki in the catalogue *Giappone all'avanguardia*, Rome 1990, pp. 31-33, quoted in (Westgeest 1997: 192).

[11] Daniel Buren, Act III, The New Theatre, New York, 1973

[12] Daniel Buren, Act III, The New Theatre, New York, 1973

[13] *Painting in Time: Part Two*, (2016) guest curated by Sarah Kate Wilson and organized by SAIC faculty member and artist Claire Ashley. *Painting in Time,* (2015) co-curated by Sarah Kate Wilson with Tetley, Leeds.

[14] *Painting in Time,* (2015) Artists included Polly Apfelbaum, Claire Ashley, Kristina Buch, Kate Hawkins, Robert Chase Heishman and Megan Schvaneveldt, Natasha Kidd, Rob Leech, Lisa Milroy, Yoko Ono, Hayley Tompkins, Jessica Warboys and Sarah Kate Wilson. *Painting in Time: Part Two*, (2016) Artists included: Polly Apfelbaum, Paola Cabal, Susie Choi, Kayla Cook, Debo Eilers, Dylan Fish, Kate Hawkins, Robert Chase Heishman and Megan Schvaneveldt, Natasha Kidd, Rob Leech, Billy McGuinness, Jaclyn Mednicov, Sanjana Mehra, Lisa Milroy, Yoko Ono, Sophia Padgett Perez, Jeremy Sublewski, Maryam Taghavi, Vincent Tiley, Cindy Zhang.

[15] J.L. Austin's work *How to do things with words*, presented in 1955 (Austin 1962)

[16] The processional performance of the Gutai paintings conjures Arakawa's Japanese heritage, as I mentioned with Gutai, I think there is a link here to Matsuri ceremonies.

Contributor details

Sarah Kate Wilson (b. 1982) completed her MFA in painting at the Slade School of Fine Art (London, 2010), and AHRC funded practice based Ph.D. at University of Leeds (2017). She is Senior Lecturer

of BA Painting at Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London. As an artist she works across painting, ceramics, print, costume, tapestry and performance, and has had solo exhibitions at BALTIC 39, Newcastle, Armory Center for the Arts, California and CAVE Leeds. Her Painting Performances have been staged at Palais de Tokyo, Royal Academy of Arts (London) and Museum of London, BALTIC 39 (Newcastle). In 2019 as part of the Bauhaus Centenary Celebrations she undertook a research residency at Bauhaus, Dessau focusing on the stage curriculum. Her research culminated in performances staged to launch the new Bauhaus Museum made in collaboration with her colleagues and students from Camberwell. She curated Painting in Time, 2015–16, Tetley, Leeds, United Kingdom and Sullivan Galleries, SAIC, Chicago, IL, United States.
Contact: Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London, 45-65 Peckham Road, London, SE5 8UF, UK.
E-mail: s.k.wilson@arts.ac.uk