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Mapping Realities: Representing War through Affective Place Making

One of the most unusual statistics in the study of performance and war is that aesthetic activity often increases in times of conflict. In this article Michael Balfour extends the consideration of performance and war to aesthetic projects that were located far removed from the centres of conflict, but that deeply connected with the affective impact of war. As an illustration of performative practice, the examples demonstrate the ways in which place making can play with documenting and representing war experiences in different ways. The two examples – *This is Camp X-Ray* in Manchester (a temporary installation) and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC – were designed in separate contexts for very different purposes; but contribute to understanding the kinds of choices that artists make in representing the affective 'truths' of war experience. In both cases, the artists were interested in creating spaces that would make the wars more visible for an audience, and provide a tangible place in which experiences of war could be re-conceived and an affective connection made. Michael Balfour is Professor of Applied Theatre, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia. His research expertise is in the social applications of theatre, in particular theatre and war, prison theatre, and arts and health. Major Australian Research Council-funded projects include *The Difficult Return*, on approaches to arts-based work with returning military personnel, and *Captive Audiences*, on the impact of performing arts programmes in prisons. His books include *Theatre and War 1933–1945* and, most recently, *Performance in Place of War*, co-authored with James Thompson and Jenny Hughes (Seagull Press, 2010).

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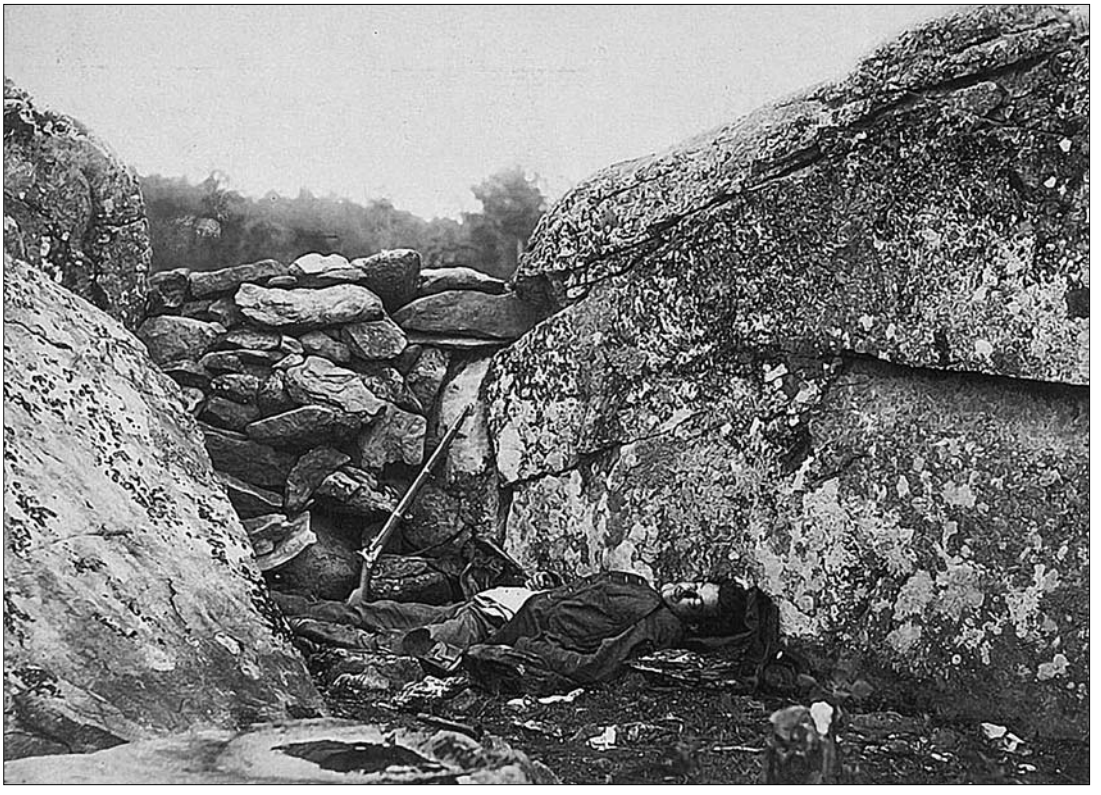
Place and non-place are rather like opposite polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed: they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten.[1]

IN 1863 Alexander Gardner, one of the first war photojournalists, took the picture 'Home of a Rebel Sharpshooter' during the battle at Gettysburg in the American Civil War. The photo shows a dead soldier, presumably shot, crumpled at his post with his face looking towards the camera. Gardner's naturalistic portrayal of the rebel soldier caused a sensation at the time, as one of the first war images to get close to the realities of the trenches and the front lines. However, the picture was a fiction. Gardner arrived at the decisive scene at Gettysburg two days after the battle ended. He dragged the body of a Confederate soldier some thirty metres to where he lies in the picture, turning the head towards the camera. The weapon in the picture was a prop. Gardner's practice raises a number of issues about the ethics of art in representing war, including the importance of practitioner intentionality and the tension between fictionalizing truth and authenticity through fiction.

In this article I address the tension existing between documentary work and arts practice wherein notions of authenticity are braided with more affective and ambiguous semi-fictions, or, as O'Brien suggests, practices that *make the stomach believe*.[2] The two examples are a site-specific installation, *This is Camp X-Ray*, constructed on a roundabout in Manchester in 2003, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington DC, constructed in 1982.

These came about for different reasons and were aesthetic responses to two very different wars. *Camp X-Ray* was a faithful replica of its namesake in Cuba, built as an

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Alexander Gardner's 'staged' photograph, 'Home of a Rebel Sharpshooter', during the battle at Gettysburg (1863) in the American Civil War.

aesthetic provocation to what was happening at the time. The Vietnam Memorial was commissioned to commemorate the veterans who had fought and died during the war in Vietnam, but in many ways can be seen to transcend its normative purpose.

My interest here is in examining the various ways these examples operate and, in particular, the ways the artists themselves invented aesthetic locations that play with the documentation and affective 'reality' of experience. The physical place inhabited by the examples is significant since both are removed from sites of war but deeply connected with the experience. The places are imbued with aesthetic qualities that assist in re-framing or re-calibrating perspectives, creating displaced palimpsests between place and non-place. In both examples the aesthetics are unfinished without the role of spectators, observers, or participants. This is not a weakness. They are places of possibility but void without the force of engagement. They change as a result of participation, and often in ways that are unpredictable to the artists and creators.

Out of Place

In 2003, Jai Redman's *This is Camp X-Ray* received wide international press coverage. The controversial installation was a meticulous working replica of the Guantánamo Bay detainment camp in Cuba. The Cuban facility had been set up in 2002 by the Bush administration to hold detainees from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as part of the so-called 'war on terror'. Camp X-Ray was one of three camps, the others being Camp Delta (which included Camp Echo) and Camp Iguana. Redman's camp design was based on publicly available plans and information provided through official sources.

The replica camp was set up for nine days on a roundabout in Hulme, an inner-city suburb of Manchester, UK. It featured repre-

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sentations of prisoners and guards, ran twenty-four hours a day, and stuck rigorously to the regime of the actual camp. The prisoner-performers were woken at 5 a.m. by the call to prayer and later observed the American flag-raising ceremony. The routine included a sick call at 11 a.m. and mail call in the afternoon. At 5 p.m. the prisoner-performers were locked up in the interrogation centre and lights were out at 9 p.m.

> Two handcuffed prisoners in orange overalls kneel in the compound of Camp X-Ray. They can see and hear nothing. . . . To their left is an interrogation centre, behind them a watchtower with machine gun in place. The fences are high and a stiff autumn breeze blows through the barbed wire, fluttering the US flag. Beyond the compound is a pub, a battered betting shop, and a burger van whose owner might be a little surprised to find a little corner of Cuba has been recreated on wasteland in Hulme.[3]

Redman's work was a direct response to the public debate about the human rights scandal of the Cuban facility, and specifically a 'mirror image' of the site that could be placed in the same community that was the home of one of the British prisoners in the camp (Ron Fiddler, known as Jamal Udeen).[4]

The establishment of the Guantánamo Bay Detention Camp (1 January 2002) was deeply controversial. The US Justice Department advised that it could be considered outside US legal jurisdiction and therefore the detainees were not entitled to any of the protections of the Geneva Convention. There was widespread condemnation of this in the press, but many felt it justified as a response to the 9/11 attacks.

The camp in Cuba was deliberately displaced – geographically, legally, and metaphorically – off American soil. The transplantation of the replica camp to an inner-city suburb made it harder to ignore its quasi-mythical representation as an ideological 'someplace-else'. In adapting the installation to a transient location with many passers-by, Redman invoked Augés definition of the 'non-place' – ever growing spaces created by the movement of people rushing through them: supermarkets, hotel chains, transport hubs, roads – all designed with transience in mind. In non-places, Augé argues, we are absent-minded wanderers, 'individuals taking on the role of the spectator without paying much attention to the spectacle'.[5]

The non-place represents the archetype of super-modernity, an embodiment of the excess of connectivity which makes little connection. Redman's belief was that the lack of photographs, television images, and visibility was a way of deliberately keeping the camp 'out of our gaze' and obscuring the injustice of the action.[6] It was an abstraction, abhorrent to some, incidental to others.

Responding to the 'War on Terror'

Without the visual evidence of the camp (media and cameras were banned from the facility), it was difficult to accept as a reality. Redman himself argued: 'People can less easily dismiss the camp and what goes on there if it turns up down the road from their local supermarket.'[7] Any radicalism (e.g., dramatizations) would be seen as left-wing propaganda and diminish the impact.

Redman, then, deliberately evacuated the installation of political dogma, even if his intention was to present an alternative, provocative act. The mundane routines, the lack of performative artifice, and the everydayness of the injustice were key to communicating and documenting the realities of the real camp. As Redman says:

> I am asking people to question whether we are the civilized nation we claim to be or barbarians. This camp is a weapon of state terrorism and the British people need to know what it is like.[8]

Redman's work was one of many responses to the war on terror that were more concerned with documentation of facts than with fictionalization of the historic moment. These works included David Hare's *Via Dolorosa*, 1997 (with Israeli–Palestinian interviews and monologue) and *Stuff Happens*, 2004 ('history play' about the Iraq War), the *Tribunal Plays* (Tricycle Theatre), *The Arab-Israeli Cook Book*, and *Talking to Terrorists* (Robin Soans), and Jonathan Holmes's *Fallujah*.

The turn to testimony during the height of the war-on-terror campaign (2001–8) may

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Night falls on Guantánamo Bay – transposed to a roundabout in the suburbs of Manchester. Jai Redman's *This is Camp X-Ray* (2003)

have been driven by a response to the ferocious melodrama of war stories in the media from embedded journalists. The news offered a diet full of image-driven stories (often packaged and sanctioned by the US military) that carried a heightened symbolic energy too often bereft of an ideological critique.

Such a mix of stage-managed, accidental, suppressed, discovered, spectacular, horrific propaganda and counter-propaganda meant that there was a high velocity of war fictions and counter-fictions. In contrast, documentary performance was designed to be simple, straightforward, without elaboration, and purposefully drained of image, metaphor, and symbol. The new wave of documentary or verbatim theatre during the war on terror provided a response to the excess of fiction that seemed to prevail during this period. The documentary performances presented testimony, a court case, a trial, a series of interviews about an event, dryly and without pretence, with the aim of re-presenting actuality for reconsideration.

The war-on-terror documentary performances and plays are linked by a strong urge for authenticity, for information that was undressed and without spin. The notion of authenticity played an important role in the early development of the performances. As with Redman's strict adherence to using official documentation only, the war-on-terror documentary plays placed a strong significance on the transcriptions of events or interviews with witnesses. In both form and content, the performances were marked by an aesthetic that was concerned with a 'direct communication . . . of lived experience through the actor as instrument'.[9]

Camp X-Ray may also be seen as an ironic recalling of the place-making activities first developed in the First World War, in which sanitized reconstructions of the trenches were created in Kensington Gardens or a ruined village constructed from wooden flats displayed in Trafalgar Square.[10] Similarly in 1917, the United States Navy built a 200-foot-long by 40-foot wide version of the USS *Maine* battleship in Union Square, New York City. Utilized not only for Navy recruiting, its broad decks became the stage for many wartime fund-raising efforts. The top celebrities of the day sang, danced, joked, or spoke to thousands of cheering fans at rallies.[11]

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Such recreations were designed to heighten civilian morale, promote recruitment, and perhaps comfort those at home about the conditions being experienced by front-line soldiers. Needless to say, they were idealized spaces that merely added to the mythical propaganda of military technologies, presenting the horrors of the trenches as 'clean, dry, and well furnished with straight sides and sandbags neatly aligned', and were actually 'the laughing stock of the army'.[12]

The Nature of 'Performance Displacement'

Redman's more radical installation echoed Max Stafford-Clark's belief that 'authenticity is inherently dramatic'.[13] What *Camp X-Ray* demonstrated was that this was true not just for acts of theatre but in the conceptual design of a performed place that replicated and represented a real other space.

The war-on-terror performances suffered from the same critique as other documentary and verbatim work, that at the heart of the practice lay a troubling conceit – namely that the assumed authenticity was as much a fabrication as any kind of fiction. The illusion of truth is undermined by the conjuror's need to edit, structure, and shape the material into a narrative form (even a postmodernist episodic form derives from interpretations of source material). The form cannot escape the obvious contradiction that it uses fictional structures in its effort to act as a denial of the fictional.

While Redman was a conscientious documentarian, the framework of his piece may be viewed as polemic and perhaps even condescending to an audience. For Redman this was an aesthetic alternative to a political demonstration: 'You can only march round the block with a million people escorted by the Metropolitan Police so many times. . . . You get bored with that. This is something different.'[14] From one perspective Redman's justification is a licence for didacticism: that if an audience are shown the facts of the injustice, this will lead to some kind of radical thought, response, or action. This is one reading of the *Camp X-Ray* installation. Another perhaps more positive reading is that, in intention at least, Redman is attempting to make an intervention in the community and enter into a dialectic of history's failure. His work is an attempt to:

> create an awareness of the complex interaction between the destructiveness and the failures of history, on the one hand, and the efforts to create a viable and meaningful work of art, trying to confront these painful failures, on the other.[15]

The Bush administration's projection of the 'enemy combatants' (a legal term used deliberately instead of 'prisoners of war', which would invoke the Geneva Convention) held in Guantánamo Bay had to be a gross archetype of evil if the architecture of the justification for the camp was to hold strong. What Redman's installation did was attempt to diminish the myth and underplay the rhetoric so that the lines of force could be exposed and made delicate. In physically recreating the space in a non-place he was making visible the lines of force. *Camp X-Ray* was designed as 'a stumbling block' that may prevent an acceptance of the message peddled by the dominant orthodoxy.[16]

Žižek's commentary on this kind of 'performance displacement' is that it is not enough to break the grip of the symbolic order. Indeed, he believes that such acts of aesthetic resistance are already taken into account by the symbolic order which he describes as a 'gargantuan symbolic matrix embodied in a vast set of ideological institutions, rituals, and practices'.[17] This level of defeatism is important but not absolute.

The genealogy of the 'war on terror' has consistently been a competition between counter-narratives. The rush to dominate the historical triumphalism of the war on terror has been repeatedly undercut by the lack of evidence for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq (the motivation for the invasion), the increasing desperation and frustration with the military campaign in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the delusions of victory expressed by Bush.[18] In short, the facts have got in the way of the fiction machine.

Camp X-Ray was never going to topple a government, but it did offer a response to the foreclosure of dominant thought. Even at a

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local level it sought to agitate or compel inquiry rather than simply placate. The installation was subtle in the way it approached the subject crab-wise. *Camp X-Ray* reconstructed a place lost in an ideological blitz and placed it literally and metaphorically at the end of the street. The lack of drama and performance forced an encounter that was superior to an explicit statement of revolt, for it sought to engage at the level of affective remembrance. Key to this is the presence of the prisoner-performers, the embodiment of a previously distanced other. The prisoners' encounter with us, the spectator, unacknowledged like an animal in a zoo, nevertheless brings us into proximity with *them*, the other.

While such a request may be denied or accepted, it troubled us by intruding on the normalcy of our everyday life, even if we were only going to pick something up from the supermarket, or on our way home from work. It sets up a connection that is difficult to ignore. As Thompson points out: 'This is the starting point for a politics that has an inbuilt ethics of humility, where we are implicated in lives that are not our own.'[19]

However, this encounter with alterity can be diminished if the aesthetic work has limited affective capacity. And while *This is Camp X-Ray* produced a mirror image of the real facility and thereby created an aesthetic. conscious awareness in the community, it might be read as an absolute interpretation rather than an affective questioning.

Making the Stomach Believe

> In a true war story, if there's a moral at all, it's like the thread that makes the cloth. You can't tease it out. You can't extract the meaning without unravelling the deeper meaning. And in the end, really, there's nothing much to say about a true war story, except maybe 'Oh.' True war stories do not generalize. They do not indulge in abstraction or analysis. For example: war is hell. As a moral declaration the old truism seems perfectly true, and yet because it abstracts, because it generalizes, I can't believe it with my stomach. Nothing turns inside. It comes down to gut instinct. A true war story, if truly told, makes the stomach believe.[20]

In 1990, Tim O'Brien, a Vietnam veteran and one of America's most critical writers of the Vietnam War experience, published *The Things They Carried*, a work of semi-fiction. In the book he discusses his experiences of the war and the distinction between 'story truth' and 'happening truth'.[21] He argues for aesthetic works that seek to affect the senses – *making the stomach believe*, rather than sticking to the facts. In this way, he kicks against the documentary approach to representing war in art and literature. Instead he suggests using the facts as a point of departure only, to connect with more intense emotional senses.

American aesthetic responses to the Vietnam War are a reflection of the continuing wider national discourse on the war, and remain polarized between seeing it as a disfiguring national tragedy and a necessary and ideological cause. The representation of a 'truthful' national memory of the war, remains a constant pitched battle between revisionists on both sides of the debate.

There is perhaps no more powerful symbol of the aesthetic–ideological debate than the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC. This consists of three structures: a minimalist V-shaped 500-foot-long panel with roughly 58,000 names inscribed on 140 plates, a flagpole, and a statue of three American soldiers. The panels of the wall diminish in height from the apex of the V as they taper outward, giving 'the impression that the wall descends into (or rises from) the earth'.[22] Designed by Maya Lin and constructed in the 1980s, the wall was the unanimous choice of the design committee, supplemented later by the flagpole and the statue as an additional compromise.

The compromise between the orthodox memorial, the representation of the 'universal' courageous soldier, and the more oblique and ambiguous V, means that the site needs to be read as a whole rather than separately. However, it is clear that perhaps because of the proximity of the conventional soldier's statue, the V memorial seems all the more rich and complex as a text, as if it borrows its capacity from the simplistic deficits of the patriotic statue and flag.

While the wall is one of the most visited monuments in Washington DC, there have been diverse and sometimes contradictory

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readings of it. Lang calls the memorial 'the most emotional ground in the nation's capital'.[23] Fish describes some of the reactions: 'People have cried at the wall, prayed there, screamed in anger and in pain, found friends and comforted strangers. And they always touch it.'[24]

Responses to the Vietnam Memorial

Foss has suggested several major features of the wall that have impacted on its affective efficacy. First, the memorial violates the conventional form of war memorials of universalizing or celebrating military leadership.[25] Secondly, the open V shape is a welcoming stance characterized as an 'embrace' or 'two open hands' that seem to safely envelop the viewer and offer a more female sensibility in contrast to normative phallic memorials.[26] It also has an integral relationship with the earth; there is a connection rather than disconnection with the land.

A third feature that Foss identifies is the lack of information or specific message inherent in the design. It is seemingly ambiguous and apolitical. The memorial has also been replicated and reproduced on postcards, T-shirts, buttons, brochures, posters, and books. Despite its status as a tourist destination, it continues to produce significant responses from veterans and their families. People scrutinize the panels looking for names familiar to them, unable to refrain from touching what they read, and they leave behind them (at the base of the walls or wedged into a seam) flowers, letters, women's underwear, teddy bears, model cars, photographs (even a Harley Davidson motorcycle). What Lin did not take into account was that mourners would try to give to these names the keepsakes of identity, as if to restore to the dead the intimate worlds they had lost.[27]

These keepsakes number more than 40,000 and initially were labelled 'Lost and Found', until the park authorities realized that they were being left intentionally. These objects, most of them left anonymously, are now taken to a warehouse, catalogued, and stored. In so doing the Park Service has transformed them 'from individual artefacts to aesthetic objects of memory'.[28]

While memorials are officially sanctioned spaces of mourning and remembrance, the informal response to the Vietnam wall is paradoxically intimate and communal. Like the containing form of the ceremony, the wall seems to offer a structured (physical and spiritual) space for mourners. This unexpected set of responses from veterans and their families transcends the usual normative response to memorials as an official site of commemoration, and opens the site to multivalent readings which are not just possible but are essential. As Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci argue, the memorial is a provocative political piece of architecture that posits a postmodern textual 'difficulty' that amplifies its 'capacity to evoke response'.[29]

The left-behind artefacts change the nature of the memorial's text on a daily basis, refocusing its interpretation on different individuals, upon a different experience of the war, or different meanings the visitors attach to the wall. The wall therefore:

> serves as a repository of more than its own story; it admits within its text the multiple decorations, stories, interpretations, elaborations, and arguments that visitors leave at the site.[30]

These artifacts question the completeness of the memorial as a site of official commemoration and break up the normative acts of instructing visitors about what to value and how.

The wall's ability to generate diverse and surprising affective responses breaks up the sanctioning of a particular type of political and historical memory-making. As Griswold notes, the word 'monument' derives from the Latin *monere*, which means not just 'to remind' but also 'to admonish, warn, advise, instruct'.[31] Although the structural V shape of the wall is symmetrical, the sequence of the names of the dead is not. The names are listed chronologically according to date of death, but the list begins at the vertex of the angle formed by the two walls and proceeds to the right and begins again on the left wall. To read the wall sequentially, it is necessary

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to stop and re-start at the other end of the wall. 'To accept the symmetry of the wall's structure is to break the sequence; to follow the sequence it is necessary to counter the symmetry.'[32] Rather than telling one story, unifying and ceding the individual into a collective universal soldier, it tells multiple stories. The design of the 'difficult' text, the refusal of the simple categorization of names or the linear presentation of deaths followed in a logical sequence, mean that the site is not only one of commemoration but also one of questioning.

The Wall as 'Open Text'

The communicational structure of the wall can be seen as what Eco calls an 'open text' which demands much from the reader in that it does not satisfy our 'hunger for redundancy' in the same way that a closed text (a traditional war memorial) might. In the same way as O'Brien's writing about the Vietnam War seeks to disrupt the general through contradictory individual perspectives that *make the stomach believe*, the wall resists presenting the past as anything but clean, tidy, and linear; it maintains the 'difficultness of affect, rather than resorting to comfortable proclamations of certain effect'.[33]

The wall resists finality and closure of the past, which perhaps provides a clue to its affective appeal:

> Each time forgiveness is at the service of finality, be it noble and spiritual (atonement or redemption, reconciliation, salvation), each time that it aims to re-establish a normality (social, national, political, psychological) by a work of mourning, by some therapy or ecology of memory, then the 'forgiveness' is not pure – nor is its concept. Forgiveness is not, it should not be, normal, normative, normalizing. It should remain exceptional and extraordinary, in the face of the impossible: as if it interrupted the ordinary course of historical temporality.[34]



The open-V shape of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC.

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As an aesthetic tactic, the wall avoids the pitfalls of validating universal truths about the war and memory. It also neatly sidesteps the factual chronological account that freezes memorials in the past. The dialogue between the wall and its visitors is both an indication of its affect as well as an integral element of its aesthetics. Its ambiguity as an open text avoids the impulse for neat and linear units of time, classification, and the freezing of time and the past as an 'object of spectatorship'.[35]

In Feldman's discussion of museum formats and hegemonic tendencies to seal history off from the present, he says the past is used as 'a convenient signifier that has been too neatly stitched into the dominant ideologies of the present, and which does not disrupt, but enforces the linearity of historical time'.[36] In contrast to this 'archicized' past, Feldman, via Williams, talks about the values of 'residual' histories that are micro-narratives, collaged, incomplete, and resistant to the push for meta-narratives of victory, collective remembrance, justice, or honour. These forms of memory are contradictory and present time as fractured in ways that disrupt a coherent chronological flow. As Thompson notes:

> A residual practice is therefore one that brings forth the dead or past events into presence in such a way that their integration into problematic, contemporary political projects is made difficult. It is making public a content that bears upon the present, without being fully consumed by it – so that it remains, in the words of Derrida, 'exceptional and extraordinary'.[37]

Contrasting the Dislocated Responses

In contrasting the two examples of dislocated responses to war, it is first important to reiterate that *Camp X-Ray* and the wall are very different aesthetic projects. The intentions, purposes, contexts, circumstances, and impact are not directly linked. My focus here is more on what the aesthetic approaches were and what the art works themselves did. So in the context of *This is Camp X-Ray*, the culture of war, and in particular the 'war on terror', provided a clear desire for cleansing aesthetics of fiction.

Theatremakers, artists, and audiences alike demonstrated a hunger for work that presented the 'facts' unadorned by the spin of the war machines. However, in the replica installation, there was an inbuilt limitation that, while understandable, may have prevented a broader, deeper affective engagement.

Inherent in both examples was an exploration of pain. In Lin's wall there is an attempt to find a language of sensation as well as of facts. The wall deploys this through what Bennett refers to as a 'coming into language' of trauma,[38] whereas in *Camp X-Ray* there was little room to create anything other than a faithful translation of testimony. *Camp X-Ray*'s main deficit seems to be that in draining the fictive as an ethical political provocation, Redman simultaneously diminished the affective. The facts are presented cleanly as a response to the excess of fiction present in the socio-cultural context of the time, but fail to draw on O'Brien's insistence on an aesthetics that *makes the stomach believe*.

I do not necessarily have an answer to this; it certainly does not mean Redman should have resorted to polemics, but the inevitable reduction of the aesthetic in documentary performance relies on realism to capture and transmit 'real' experiences. The politics of testimony requires, as Bennett argues, that art should seek not to produce faithful translations but to 'exploit its own unique capacities to contribute actively to this politics'.[39] Ernst van Alphen suggests that the restrictive quality of realism tends to reinforce rather than challenge the distinction between the reality of war and pain, and therefore that representing the real is not best served by privileging meaning over form.[40]

Lin's wall is an example of an aesthetic project that is transactive rather than simply communicative. There is a liveness in the dialogue that occurs between the art and the spectator, and this is achieved through what Deleuze coins as the encountered sign, a sign that is 'felt rather than recognized or perceived through cognition'.[41] Bennett's view is:

> For Deleuze affect or emotion is a more effective trigger for profound thought because of the way in which it grasps us, forcing us to engage

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involuntarily: 'More important than thought there is "what leads us to thought" . . . impressions which force us to look, encounters which force us to interpret, expressions which force us to think.'[42]

Deleuze argues that the encountered sign is more affective than the explicit testimony because it engages a participant in different ways, emotionally, psychologically, sensorally. Similarly, La Capra's concept of empathic unsettlement suggests an aesthetic experience in which a viewer can simultaneously encounter the other and become aware of a distinction between one's own perceptions and the experiences of another.[43]

Maya Lin's wall transcends the familiar memorial trope through avoiding a direct transcription of experience. The Deleuzian framework suggests that sense memory can tap into a certain type of process, 'a process experienced not as a remembering of the past but as a continuous negotiation of a present with indeterminate links to the past'.[44]

The tension is between *Camp X-Ray*'s poetics that are a 'speaking of' and the wall's 'speaking out of' a particular memory or experience.[45] Bennett argues that art can establish an affective connection to pain not through sympathy and empathy with predefined characters or places, but by virtue of its ability to 'impact on us in spite of who we are, it goes beyond reinforcing the kind of moral emotions that shape responses to a particular narrative scenario'.[46] She underlines, though, that the issue is where the image takes us once an affective connection has been made. The encountered sign is one that needs to take us from the intellectual understanding of the other through a process of engaging with our senses, emotions, and bodies – as a way of making our stomachs believe. The distinction is between an aesthetic that is shocking and 'something that compels us through feeling into thinking'.[47]

Perhaps, in the final analysis, Gardner's moving of the soldier's body can be seen as an unethical *and* aesthetic action. While his ethics of practice can be critiqued and certainly admonished, his aesthetic decision made an affective impact on the audience of the time, bringing them into a closer felt proximity with the experience and forcing them into a new way of perceiving, thinking, and understanding. This does not justify Gardner's practice: it simply sets up the complexities of mapping playful truths and responsible fictions in war contexts.

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