

101010

UpStage Festival

presents

make-shift

by Paula Crutchlow & Helen Varley Jamieson

It's about shifting places and cultural shifts, mind shifts and paradigm shifts and being shifty and sifting through the shifting sands to situate a make-shift performance that we can pick up, pack up and take with us when it's time to move on again.

make-shift is an intimate and participatory performance event that explores the fragile connectivity of human and ecological relationships. Part recital, part discursive salon, the performance uses online audio-visual conferencing, chat and performance tools to connect two ordinary living-rooms and their audiences across geographical and cultural distance.



At the 101010 UpStage Festival, Paula Crutchlow and Helen Varley Jamieson will present a work-in-progress presentation of *make-shift* that focuses on the online audience and interaction. This is the second stage in the development of *make-shift*, which began with a residency and presentation in London in July (pictured). Following another residency period in Devon (UK) in October, *make-shift* will premier on December 5 with Paula in Devon, Helen in Torino (Italy) and audiences in both those locations and online.



“Our research has been broad and we're now narrowing things down,” says Helen. “For example, I became completely obsessed about plastic, then that research has led to the idea of disposability, and what that means in our consumerist lifestyle at the smallest domestic level as well as globally. At the same time we are exploring disposability from a more philosophical perspective.”

Helen and Paula met in Wellington's theatre scene in the mid-90s. After Paula returned to the UK in 1999 they remained in contact, and last year began to conceive of a collaborative work that they could develop within the realities of their lives.

Says Helen, “We wanted to create something that is highly portable, flexible and sustainable – but at the same time well crafted, and deeply engaging and provocative for audiences.” Feedback received after the first work-in-progress presentation suggests that they are heading in the right direction.

Helen brings her extensive experience in cyberformance and writing to the project and Paula is drawing on two decades of work in theatre, dance, storytelling and participatory arts projects. Also contributing to the work is sound artist John Levack Drever, whose work includes participatory soundscapes and composing with disembodied sound – very appropriate for cyberformance!

make-shift is one of 18 cyberformances that will be presented at the 101010 UpStage Festival, taking place on 10-11 October 2010. Visit www.upstage.org.nz for a full list of performances and times, and further information about the festival and UpStage.

make-shift is a Blind Ditch project, commissioned by Beaford Arts (UK) and supported by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. The work was originally developed through a residency at Furtherfield.org (London), and its premiere on 5 December 2010 will be hosted by Beaford Arts and MagFest Torino.



Biographies

Helen Varley Jamieson (www.creative-catalyst.com/) is a writer, theatre practitioner and digital artist from New Zealand. In 2008 she completed a Master of Arts (research) at Queensland University of Technology (Australia) investigating her practice of cyberformance – live performance on the internet – which she has been developing for over a decade. She is a founding member of the globally-dispersed cyberformance troupe *Avatar Body Collision*, and the project manager of UpStage, an open source web-based platform for cyberformance. Using UpStage, she has co-curated online festivals involving artists and audiences around the world. Helen is also the “web queen” of the Magdalena Project, an international network of women in contemporary theatre.

Paula Crutchlow (www.blindditch.org/) lives with her family in Exeter, Devon. She graduated in Dance from De Montfort University, and in 2000 completed an MA in Devised Theatre at Dartington College of Arts, UK where she is now an Associate Lecturer in Theatre. Paula has worked in Britain and internationally as a performer, director and tutor of movement and devised theatre. As a co-founder and Artistic Director of Blind Ditch she has collaborated on context-specific collaborative art, performance and cultural events which engage audiences and participants in distinct ways through the use of digital media and live performance.

For more information, please visit:

www.make-shift.net
www.creative-catalyst.com
www.blindditch.org