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'The Theatricality of Grief: Suspending movement, mourning and meaning with Roland Barthes'

Harry Wilson

Emotion as departure/Mother as guide

The year must be 1986. We are in the back garden of our family home on Beechwood Road in suburban Birmingham. It's a bright day. There are white sheets hanging on the washing line. My sister, who must be about 5 years old, is playing with her friend Ruth. They are dancing around and performing for the camera, competing for the attention of my dad, who is filming. My brother George, who is 2 years old at the time, is less aware of the camera and instead seems more interested in the people, going up to my dad and trying to join in the games that my sister and her friend are playing.

There is a distinctive blue tint to the daylight in the film. It strikes me today as a very 80s colour: the colour of over-exposed VHS tape perhaps; the colour of my childhood (or of documents of my childhood, at least).

There are a series of shots of me and my mum. I'm about 6 or 7 months old and I'm sitting on her knee on a low wall at the end of the garden. There is a laurel hedge behind us. My mum bounces me on her knee, tickles me and recites the nursery rhymes 'Round and Round the Garden' and 'This Little Piggy Went to Market' (accompanied by the appropriate finger and toe actions). My mum doesn't seem to be performing for the camera; she is immersed in the task of caring for, and playing with, me. When she occasionally does notice the camera, looking directly down the lens, it is as if she is caught seeing herself being seen, at one point saying to my dad 'Stop taking pictures of me!'

This footage forms part of a small handful of family movies that were filmed from 1984 to 1987. My dad had a huge VHS camcorder that he brought home from work, upon which he captured five or six seemingly uneventful moments of our early childhood. When I watch this footage now, I am struck by how banal it is. We are not really doing anything. This particular ‘scene’ consists of about seven minutes of children playing in a garden on a sunny afternoon. The footage seems to linger, attempting to capture more than just actions, but perhaps, as if trying to hold on to how it felt to be in the garden on that day.

In the summer of 2016, I re-watched these family movies with the idea that they might be useful for the final performance of my practice-as-research PhD project ‘Affective intentionalities: Practising performance with Roland Barthes’s Camera Lucida’. In Barthes’s book from 1980 he develops a theory of photography based on the wounding detail, the affective realm of an image. In analysing photographs Barthes wants to approach them with an ‘affective intentionality’—a view of the object that is ‘steeped in desire, repulsion, nostalgia, euphoria’, in which he would keep with him ‘like a treasure, my desire or my grief’ (1993: 21). This approach culminates in part two of the book where he examines a childhood photograph of his mother Henriette—who died three years before Camera Lucida’s publication—and in which he recognizes his mother totally: ‘the truth of the face I had loved’ (67).

While there have been interesting applications of Barthes’s theories of photography to performance practice—specifically through his concepts of studium and punctum—^{[note]1} this project did not attempt to directly apply Camera Lucida to performance but approached the text through an associative method of creative response. I conceptualized this process as one of practising with Barthes’s book, where ‘with’ suggests more than mere application but a thinking and practising in proximity to Barthes that seeks to extend his ideas—on bodies, on absence and presence, affect, time, loss and the performative and theatrical aspects of images—from within a performance practice. In other words, I worked with Camera Lucida as a potentially generative guide or implicit set of instructions for making performance.^{[note]2}

Barthes’s intensely personal approach nudged me into confronting my own experience of losing my mother when I was 14. I focused on the footage of my mum holding me from my family movie as I found it to be both viscerally painful and

strangely beguiling. The ongoing grief I feel over this loss had informed my previous practice for this project but for this performance it was both my departure point and my guide when making the work. Following Barthes's method in Camera Lucida—where he takes 'Emotion as Departure' (1993: viii)—throughout the process I leant into my feelings of loss as a way of responding to the affective registers of Barthes's book.

As Diana Knight has highlighted, Barthes also plays with the idea of 'Mother as guide' by placing the image of Henriette as the photograph from which he will derive the essence of photographic knowledge (1997: 254). With emotion as departure and mother as guide I decided to explore ways to stage an encounter with the footage of me and my mother in a way that examined the textures of grief and the thickness of emotion in the time and space of performance. Working with this home movie footage from 1986, the piece was shaped to respond to Barthes's idea that the photograph cannot 'transform grief into mourning' to explore the idea of a performance that lingers in an extended period of grief, which '[forecloses] the Tragic, excludes all purification, all catharsis' (1993: 90).

The resulting performance, After Camera Lucida, was made in collaboration with artists Rachel O'Neill and Nick Millar, whom I relied on for visual, dramaturgical and technical support. The piece was performed on 22 May 2017 at the Citizens Theatre in Glasgow, UK. For the performance, I took 2 minutes and 40 seconds of footage of my mother holding me and slowed it down so that it lasted 27 minutes. I installed this footage in the nineteenth-century auditorium of the theatre, projecting it onto a suspended semi-transparent gauze. After introducing the performance in the foyer of the theatre—with contextualizing information about Camera Lucida and a snippet of history about a stage adaptation of Marcel Proust's In Search of Lost Time from 1980—I led thirty audience members onto the stage, via a side corridor, where they sat facing the auditorium. Initially hidden behind the theatre's safety curtain, the seats and the projection were slowly revealed from behind the curtain (only to be hidden again towards the end of the piece). Birdsong played out faintly in the auditorium for the duration of the piece. After an initial three and a half minutes of the slowed-down film, I took my place on a wooden chair at the front of the stage, facing the audience, and performed an increasingly extended series of stilled poses and re-

enacted movements and gestures from the video. The back-left chair leg was balanced on the last volume of Proust's In Search of Lost Time (Time Regained), which made the chair rock back and forward depending on my movement. Following the return of the safety curtain, the lights slowly faded to pitch-black and a slow rendition of Robert Schumann's Gesänge der Frühe played on loud speakers on the stage.

This article critically reflects on the ways that After Camera Lucida was constructed to examine the theatricality of grief as a suspension of mourning: an interval in the transformation from pity to catharsis. In order to advance this argument, I explore the idea that both Camera Lucida and After Camera Lucida employ theatricality as a certain kind of affective form and argue for the ways that After Camera Lucida practised the suspension of mourning and catharsis through the slowing down of movement and of time. These strategies are examined as specifically theatrical a/effects and ultimately I unpack how the performance explored a radical theatricality circulating between bodies, spaces and images.

[[Figure 1]]

[[Figure 2]]

Affect as form/Theatricality as medium

To develop After Camera Lucida, I experimented with processes of composing and layering elements in order to explore a range of performance textures. This process worked towards the development of what Eugenie Brinkema has termed affect as form. In her book The Forms of the Affects, Brinkema discusses the affective spaces of cinema in particular and argues for an approach that 'reintroduce[s] close reading to the study of sensation'—not as felt sensation in spectators (and readers), but as 'composed in specific cinematic, literary, and critical texts' (2014: xvi). In other words, Brinkema's approach is to read for the 'structures of... affective form' in works (ibid.). While the sensations that After Camera Lucida produced in the bodies of its audience were also of interest to me, Brinkema's study offers one model to consider the ways in which artistic media may compose with affect (rather than merely represent emotions in the hope that the same emotions will be produced in the spectators).[[note]]³ Drawing on Brinkema's idea of the forms and structures of

affect allows for an exploration of the ways in which After Camera Lucida was utilizing elements of performance to produce what Joe Kelleher has termed ‘affective temperatures’: qualities of a performance that encourage the audience to feel something before they can name what that feeling is (2015: 65).

Interestingly for this study, while Brinkema avoids discussing theatre and performance directly in her choice of affective ‘texts’, she does rely on a series of theatrical comparisons to discuss the affect of grief. When analysing Michael Haneke’s film Funny Games (1997), Brinkema draws on the concept of the tableau vivant to define a moment of uncharacteristic stillness from the actors; she describes the spatial dynamics in one moment to flatten out in a ‘collapse of the cinematic [space] into the theatrical’; and in another scene of the film, describes the play of light and dark as ‘one horrid little son et lumière’ (2014: 100, 105). Brinkema uses a variety of theatre forms to describe what happens to cinema in a moment of affective engagement. In other words, in these examples, the form of Brinkema’s affects appears to be the theatre.

Thinking of theatricality as an affective form in Camera Lucida counters the argument, made by Michael Fried, that Barthes’s book is an exercise in ‘antitheatrical critical thought’ (an argument based on the well-rehearsed derogatory coupling of artifice and theatricality) (2008: 98).⁴ Fried’s reading of the book echoes his arguments elsewhere—that privilege the concept of absorption over theatricality—and is centred on Barthes’s desire for the accidental and the non-intentional detail in the photograph. Fried claims that if the photographer’s intentions are too easily discernible, the image becomes artificial and loses its affective force. In other words, if the photograph shows itself being seen it displays an artificiality, a theatricality that must be overcome (102, 109–11). In a discussion of Fried’s earlier work, Nicholas Ridout claims that this antitheatrical position is a result of the ‘unease’ of theatre’s acknowledgement of the beholder’s body (2006: 8). It is true that Barthes treats theatricality and artifice with suspicion in Camera Lucida—he celebrates his mother’s ability to be photographed ‘without either showing or hiding herself’, avoiding ‘the tense theatricalism’ of the pose (1993: 67, 69); however, Barthes’s supposed anti-theatricalism is contradicted by his focus on a ‘co-presence in the act of spectatorship’ (Ridout 2006: 8), both in Camera Lucida and in his earlier writing on

theatre.{{note}}5

To argue for theatricality as an affective form that can mobilize across media is, along the lines of Samuel Weber, to explore theatricality itself as a kind of medium. Weber defines theatricality as ‘not the same as theatre, although also not separable from it’ and reads a series of philosophical, cinematic and dramatic texts where the ‘reader is called upon to play an active part’ (2004: ix). For Weber, theatricality stages an exposing of self-presence that takes place in the ongoing ‘singularity of the theatrical event’ and an ‘exposing of the present’ where the medium reveals itself (7, 109). Additionally, for Maaïke Bleeker, theatricality signals the moment at which the spectator is made aware of the ways that theatre constitutes the audience’s perspective in particular ways. She writes that ‘theatricality (and by extension the theatre itself) is what has to be repressed in order to safeguard the illusion of the seen as evidence, as truth and fact’ and that, paradoxically, theatre’s inauthenticity exposes this as an illusion (2008: 3, 38). Following Weber and Bleeker, it becomes apparent that positioning theatricality as medium encourages a reading of the theatricality of performance, photography and writing as an exposing of the illusion of authenticity and of claims to self-presence.

What insights might be revealed if we consider the affects that Barthes explores in Camera Lucida as certain kinds of theatrical effects? How does returning Barthes to the theatre (and in this case a literal theatre building) help to explore theatricality as medium and affect as form as it takes shape in writing, photography and performance? The remainder of this article explores these questions in dialogue with my performance of After Camera Lucida.

[[figure 3]]

[[figure 4]]

Suspending movement

I took the 2 minutes and 40 seconds of footage of my mother and me in the family movie from 1986 and experimented in the studio with slowing the film down. I noticed that when the film was slowed to 10 per cent of its original speed, so that it lasted 27 minutes, there was an interesting effect where each frame was shown briefly as a

still image. The result allowed for a more direct focus on the details of facial expression, gesture and movement in the film. It produced an initial jolting rhythm that, for me, became more fluid as the eye got used to the pacing of the footage. This slowing down of the video also exposed the cinematic illusion that 24 frames per second constitutes an unmediated reality, thus exposing the medium in quite a theatrical way: 'placing it before' the audience in its primitive form—as a sequence of still images. This slowing of the video recalls artist Douglas Gordon's work. In 24 Hour Psycho (1993) Gordon slowed Hitchcock's iconic film down to two frames per second, resulting in a 24-hour version of the film. Michael Fried claims in his 2011 book Four Honest Outlaws that Gordon's work first theatricalizes Hitchcock's movie only to 'unexpectedly and ingeniously' defeat this theatricality through a 'reorientation of the viewer's attention' onto the actor's absorption in their task (consequently leading to the viewer's absorption) (2011: 185–91). However, others have claimed that Gordon's work relies on a staging of the film that holds theatricality and anti-theatricality in tension (see Wilder 2012). Moreover, Mark Hansen has drawn attention to the way that Gordon's work produces physiological effects of 'affective anticipation', arguing that the single frames of the slowed-down film 'call attention to the body's crucial role in mediating the interstice or between-two of images' (2004: 592). At play in my slowed-down family movie too, was a simultaneous process of exposing the medium of representation and presenting the physiological a/effects of moving light in ways that foregrounded, rather than overcame, a theatrical encounter with the film.

I accompanied the footage with a sequence of stilled poses performed at the front of the stage. I was positioned in the centre of the space, slightly below the projected image from the audience's perspective. The ten poses I developed for the performance directly responded to the footage of me and my mum. These poses were all situated around a wooden chair: the tableaux moved from more obvious photographic poses 'delivered' to the audience (with less explicit relation to the video), to more abstract positions that either developed a relationship with the chair or attempted to place my body in similar situations to the baby in the video. The poses were timed to get progressively slower, I held the first pose for 60 seconds and then 90, 120, 180. Finally, I turned to face the screen and attempted to directly copy movements from the footage (sometimes of me as a baby and sometimes of

my mother). Most of the 'still' poses were activated with subtle movements: the wriggling of fingers or toes, or the accidental trembling of my body attempting to plank. As I was developing these poses I added another element to the sequence by balancing the chair on the last volume of Marcel Proust's In Search of Lost Time. The book, placed underneath one of the legs, disrupted the stillness of my poses by adding a gentle rock or tilt to the chair as well as resonating between Barthes's references to Proust in Camera Lucida and The Citizens Theatre's adaptation of In Search of Lost Time in February 1980.

Both the decision to slow down the footage and to slow down my movements can be considered as forms of suspension. Multiple senses of the word 'suspension' are resonant here: the slowing delayed progression; it let the movements and images 'hang' in the time and space of the performance; and, in the musical sense, the images were elongated like a suspended note. Samuel Weber draws on the idea of interruption to describe the way that citable gestures suspend teleological progression. Weber, building on Walter Benjamin's ideas, references the German word for pose, Haltung—literally a 'holding' or 'stopping'—to argue for the ways that gesture is a kind of presenting that suspends 'progression towards a meaningful goal' (2004: 46). In Benjamin's use of Haltung he is discussing epic theatre's interruption of action, whereby gestures make conditions strange through interruption, 'destroy[ing] illusion' by creating 'astonishment rather than empathy'—an effect that enables the spectator 'to adopt a critical attitude' (1998: 18–21). The poses in After Camera Lucida harboured similar political potential but did not aim to present an argument or instruction, as epic theatre might do but, instead, an opening up to time. Foregrounding the unquantifiable encounter between myself and the audience members, the poses interrupted the forward movement of time, opening up a space of 'incommensurable singularity' (Weber 2004: 46).

The effect that this suspension produced in some audience members of After Camera Lucida was of a slowing down of time, described by one spectator as a kind of 'time dilation', which they related to the crisis of perception in traumatic events 'like when you're falling or when you're attacked'.^{[note]6} This shift in the perception of duration may have something to do with what Weber, again drawing on Benjamin's discussion of epic theatre, terms the 'citability of gesture', arguing that gesture is

'never simply present, but split between past and future' (46–7). This idea is foregrounded in After Camera Lucida as the gestures I am performing explicitly refer back to those performed by me and my mother on that day in 1986. There is also nothing particularly unique about these gestures and poses; they are common interactions between a parent and their child and therefore cite a future in which they continue to be (re)enacted. The suspension of movement in the pose, then, not only suspends time, but it also messes with time; it troubles the present moment by calling backward and forward to its citational references, invoking what Rebecca Schneider has termed the theatricality of time: 'the warp and draw of one time in another time' that challenges notions of presence, immediacy and linearity (2011: 6). This is not about revealing history, in a Brechtian sense, but perhaps about feeling time. A kind of pathetic astonishment.

[[figure 5]]

[[figure 6]]

Suspending mourning

While the suspension of movement through the slowing down of video and the pose shifts our perception of time in quite a theatrical way, the question remains of how this relates to the affective realm of grief, as the starting point for this performance. We can approach this by returning to Barthes's claim that nothing in the photograph 'can transform grief into mourning' (1993: 90). Eugenie Brinkema notes important distinctions between the often-conflated terms of grief and mourning, where grief is the 'private passion (feelings, sentiments, experiences) and mourning the public manifestation of that interior state to the outside world (rituals, customs, shared beliefs)' (2014: 72). From this position, grief can be considered as the felt affect and mourning as the naming of the emotion and subsequent cultural practice of working through that emotion. In Camera Lucida, Brinkema argues, 'we are offered the fullest picture of grief as something radically different from mourning' (76).

According to Barthes, the photograph interrupts the processes by which grief is transformed into mourning as its haunting presence constantly reminds us of the death of the loved one, leading to a prolonged state of suffering. As a result, we are suspended in an affective state that cannot be understood culturally. He classifies

the photograph, and therefore his grief, as undialectical (in opposition to dialectic as 'that thought which masters the corruptible and converts the negation of death into the power to work' (Barthes 1993: 90)).⁷ In other words, Barthes's undialectical grief resists the idea of the self-present mourner who is able to transform their grief into something productive.

It is at this point in Camera Lucida that Barthes makes a crucial link to the theatre, terming the photograph a 'denatured theatre... the foreclosure of the Tragic' that 'excludes... all catharsis' (ibid.). In stating that this suspended mourning forecloses the tragic, Barthes is positioning photography in opposition to a dramatic paradigm in which catharsis turns opsis into synopsis, gesture into action, images into a 'complete and meaningful sequence' (Weber 2004: 104). In the suspension of mourning and in the refusal to master the 'corruptible' forces of affect, Barthes's version of photography is a kind of theatrical suspension of action and can be compared to Weber's interruption of movement in the gesture, which destabilizes the dramatic movement that transforms what we see into something culturally legible.

Furthermore, grief as affect can be understood in even more nuanced ways by locating it outside of the grieving subject. When discussing affect as form, Brinkema radically argues that, in situating grief as undialectical and by locating his suffering in the structure of the photograph, Barthes 'prompts a thinking of grief outside of the grieving subject' where grief 'inheres in material objects, takes shape in exteriority and in formal structures bound up intimately with light' (2014: 76–7). It is not (just) Barthes who grieves, but grief as a structure of the photograph that shapes Barthes's suffering. Drawing on the etymology of grief from the Latin gravare (to make heavy), the suspension of mourning in Camera Lucida explores ways of composing with grief, of exploring the ways that the force of this particular affect 'pulls weightily down' on the textures of his writing (Brinkema 2014: 72, 77). Brinkema's ideas necessitate a shift from thinking of the ways in which After Camera Lucida may or may not have produced a sensation of grief in the audience to thinking about how the performance composed with grief, the way that grief inhered in the formal structures of the work and the affects that this produced in the spectators: a force placed upon the audience by the form of the work.

[{figure 7}]

[[figure 8]]

Suspending meaning

The audience responses to After Camera Lucida suggest a slightly different relationship. Rather than the gravity like weight of grief, many of them talked of a kind of hollowed-out space that they were able to fill with their thoughts and feelings. These responses are similar to what Joe Kelleher describes, glossing Rancière, as ‘the withdrawal of action’ that might allow a space for ‘critical thought, for imagination, for sensation as such and its reflections’ to enter the stage (2015: 130). This suspended action can also be understood through Hans-Thies Lehmann’s concept of the tragic, as a ‘moment of hesitation’ that allows for a ‘reflective pausing... a cathartic connection to thinking’ (2016: 423). Crucially though, in my performance, this is an extended moment of hesitation: and, therefore, a suspended catharsis. A suspension of action, then, that was also a suspension of the usual dramatic activity of The Citizens Theatre, that took place when the theatre was ‘dark’—in an interval—in the ‘un-illuminated gap between productions’ (Kelleher 2015: 87). This withdrawal of action as a space for thought is highlighted by one audience member who commented that the performance ‘provided an enormous amount of space for me to place myself and my thoughts in your work’. While another audience member stated that their thoughts and feelings were ‘(an essential) part of the piece’.

This reflective space that the performance opened up had to do not only with the suspension of time but also the formality with which I performed the poses and the neutrality of my facial expression that allowed one audience member ‘passage into dealing with that emotion... I’m able to focus on emotion and place myself in that because you’re not displaying them.’ To think about the neutrality of facial expression, however impossible a ‘neutral face’ might be, brings us in proximity of Barthes’s idea of the pensive photograph, where a thinking body suspends meaning—a split between the subject’s attention and the viewer’s perception that subverts processes of interpretation by inducing thinking (1993: 111–13).[[note]]8 While far from Barthes’s desire in Camera Lucida for ‘a body which signifies nothing’ (12), the attitude with which I performed these poses did allow meaning to circulate in interesting ways and also invited the audience to fill the space with their thoughts

and feelings. As one audience member commented: the performance: 'seemed to willingly deflect critical interpretation, and instead emphasised the affective encounter with the theatre, the film and your own careful and controlled presence', a presence that was 'so simple and unimposing that it sometimes seemed to not be happening at all'.

This unimposing presence can be understood in relation to what Stephen Bottoms describes as the 'anti-presence' of Goat Island's performers (1998: 425) or Jérôme Bel's celebration of his performer Frédéric Seguet's ability to 'almost disappear... from his own presence on stage' (Lepecki 2006: 137 n18). Discussing his attempts in the 1990s to find the 'minimum requirement[s] for choreographic-theatrical practice'—through works like Nom donné par l'auteur (1994) and Jérôme Bel (1995)—Bel discusses this anti-presence as a way for the audience to bring their own readings and associations to the work, a way of 'activat[ing] the spectator' and encouraging 'the audience's movement towards the actor' (Bel 2002). In After Camera Lucida, my attitude to performing the material, and my unimposing presence, also encouraged the audience to 'meet me half way' in the hollowed-out space between us. A suspension of meaning, then, in the sense of deferring the artist's imposition of one meaning over another. Neutrality, as Barthes says in his lecture course The Neutral, as that which 'outplays the paradigm' (2005: 6–7).

...

Eugenie Brinkema writes that in Barthes's configuration of photography, grief is not expressed (as in represented) but expressed; it 'puts great pressure on, as though to cast in rock, the form of a beloved body' (2014: 84). Brinkema notes that situating grief as form avoids conceptions of grief as expressed by characters 'in narratives of loss, marking the subjective pain through gestures that exteriorise and communicate emotion' (95). Instead, Brinkema thinks of bodies as 'lines weighted down with loss's pain'. Less of a representation of inner psychological states but 'materially vulnerable to the image of gravity's effects on flesh' (109). As explored in the above discussions of After Camera Lucida, the suspension provided by grief absents meaning from expressions and gestures, and instead draws attention to the circulation of thoughts and feelings and the affective materiality of objects, bodies and space. Theatricality in this context, then, is an interval in the dramatic logic of representation; it explores

what Rancière has termed the ‘suspension of activity’ in the image: ‘emancipated from the unifying logic of action’ (2011: 120–1). It also relates to Weber’s argument of theatricality as a suspension of synopsis, and a frustrating of the Platonic ‘desire for self-identity’ that ‘informs the condemnation of theatre’ (2004: 7). Grief’s suspension of meaning functions to challenge the self-presence that the ‘unifying logic’ of classical drama seeks to maintain. Grief exposes the theatre at the heart of the performance: a space that is full of thoughts and feelings but emptied of meaning.

[[figure 9]]

Notes

1 In particular, there have been productive applications of Barthes’s studium and punctum in examining moments in performance that escape semiotic analysis. See Bottoms (1998), Bleeker (2008) and Duggan (2012).

2 This approach is influenced by the work of performance company Goat Island and their use of creative response, whereby, instead of approaching a work based on ‘a collection of problems to be corrected’ there is a focus on what is inspiring or miraculous about a work (Bottoms and Goulsh 2007: 211). Additionally, my methods were informed by Laura Cull’s writing on performance philosophy where she argues that we must move beyond mere application to practice a ‘felt knowledge of unknowing’ (2014: 33).

3 In her book on affect and performance in cinema Elena del Río argues that, while affect and emotion are ‘connected and coterminous’, their differentiation should be kept in mind. Del Río refers to affect as ‘the body’s capacities to affect and be affected by other bodies... [which] precedes, sets the conditions for, and outlasts a particular human expression of emotion’. On the other hand, emotion refers to ‘habitual, culturally coded, and localised affects (such as a character’s sadness or happiness)’ (del Río 2008: 10).

4 For a useful summary of this coupling see Ridout (2006: 1–15).

5 See Barthes's essay 'Baudelaire's Theater' from 1954, collected in Critical Essays (Barthes 1972). For an in-depth discussion of the theatricality of Barthes's text see Wilson (2017).

6 The audience comments in this article were collected in a feedback session directly after the performance, as well as through email correspondence with audience members in the week following the event.

7 This is in contrast to Benjamin who celebrates the 'dialectical image', the photograph that opens up history, allowing us to see a relation between the past and the present. For Benjamin the photograph is 'dialectics at a standstill' (1999: 462). For a discussion of Benjamin and Barthes in relation to photography and history see Dant and Gilloch (2002).

8 Barthes's references to pensiveness in Camera Lucida are brief but can perhaps be read in relation to his discussion of the pensive text in S/Z (Barthes 2002) and are also unpacked in useful ways in Rancière's discussion of 'The Pensive Image' in The Emancipated Spectator (2011).

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Captions

Figure 1 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.

Figure 2 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.

Figure 3 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.

Figure 4 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.

Figure 5 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.

Figure 6 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.

Figure 7 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.

Figure 8 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.

Figure 9 After Camera Lucida, Citizens Theatre Glasgow (2017). Image credit Julia-Kristina Bauer.