

risk realised
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David Weber-Krebs is a sculptor of theatre space. This Performance begins as a kind of performance installation. He takes the well-worn interior of the University of Bristol's Wickham Theatre and fills it with suggestion until, by the end, we feel its breadth, depth and volume, its age. We begin in the semi-dark with 2 small speakers centre stage transmitting the series of measured statements that frame this performance. In this kind of work we've grown used to the list masquerading as meaningful text but, as lists go, this one is intriguing enough.

This performance will activate a process.
This performance will explain a situation.
This performance will catch attention.
This performance will establish a code.
This performance will provoke animosity.
This performance will claim originality.
This performance will try something out.

We riff on possibilities, until the list is so long, the claims so extravagant, we begin to lose hope. Maybe what we hear is all we'll get in This Performance? The body sinks a little lower in its seat, preparing for the worst.

Instead, the word gives way to slowly encroaching light and with it a new sense of expectation before slipping back into stasis. I insert my own violent little scenario into this performance. Any minute now, a door will open at the back of the stage and a very bright white light will momentarily blind us. As I'm making a mental note to discuss this idea with David Weber-Krebs in the bar if I see him, I notice the small grey puddle on the stage, then its source in the, till now, imperceptible drip from above. Small gestures ripple through the audience. Do you see

what I see? Another leak springs from stage left. Again, I begin to enlarge on the director's vision: a Bristol tributary of the Thames! The Weeping Theatre of Wickham! Meanwhile, in the airspace of one corner of the stage, the light catches a wondrous shower of dust particles.

Then we least expect it—could almost do without it—the performer Jennifer Minetti enters. She looks like one of us, dressed ordinarily. Her performance is uneventful. She simply stands, looking out. We take in her full face, her pleasingly solid figure, her curly grey hair. The theatre contracts as we concentrate on the forestage. Like a small figure in a Jeffrey Smart or Caspar David Freidrich painting, the woman reconfigures the space around her; in this case, the stage, the light, the water on the floor. Having exhausted the possibilities of mere presence, she 'performs' for us a funny, chaotic kind of tap-dance followed by face slapping and finally, a fall to the floor, a useless, fake death. She exits as discreetly as she arrived, disguising herself in the lining of her sweater, concealing herself in the architecture, melting into the wall.

We're left with silence and vivid memories of this place and time and all that has transpired. What more could be asked of a performance?

As well as showcasing the latest in Live Art, the Inbetween Time festival highlights the work of a host of interconnecting support structures that hold this movement together. At the opening forum, Nurturing Risk, Mark Timmer, Artistic Director of Gasthuis in Amsterdam described his project which sounds almost too good to be true. Gasthuis is a flexible venue with a multi-disciplinary focus, no fixed form and substantial resources to assist artists in their development, particularly when they're starting out. Some time ago, David Weber-Krebs came to Timmer with a proposal to try something out. He wanted to create a work involving 30 members of the public performing a simple task on a stage. In terms of audience response, his first attempt was a dismal failure but the artist-centred focus of Gasthuis ensured that the support continued. In no small part, we have that process to thank for This Performance.