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**Maeve Connolly**

### **Blog Time**

As blog entries are often displayed in reverse chronological order—with the most recent post encountered first—they have the potential, as archives, to bring their readers on a journey into the past, encountered as a succession of “presents.” The activity of blogging can also be used to articulate a sense of time that is circumscribed by an institutional schedule, and defined by the duration of a conference or exhibition. These disparate temporalities of the blog form were at play in an event, consisting of a lecture-performance by Jutta Koether and film screening by Loretta Fahrenholz related to *Grand Openings Return of the Blogs*, a ten day performance at MoMA presented six months earlier, in the summer of 2011.

Retaining the project’s original focus on the calendar, the event was structured around Koether’s reading of short excerpts from each day’s blog entry (written by various people and posted anonymously), presented in chronological order. Before reading, Koether described *Grand Openings Return of the Blogs* as an attempt to use “the blog against what it is.” Countering conventional use of blogs to “distribute information fast” and suggest “democratic participation,” the entries were restricted to a physical environment and could only be read by those who stood in front of the calendar on the wall of MoMA’s atrium. Framing the words as “raw material, not treated or edited ... a piece of writing that is not a piece of writing as much as a theatrical entity,” Koether proceeded to enact this entity by reading. The first excerpt noted the presence of “Loretta, in skinny jeans and a modern art haircut,” described as “the camera,” and the next acknowledged the difficult acoustics of the noisy MoMA atrium, a striking counterpoint to the hushed conference venue.

Although the film compresses ten days of activity into a provisional edit of thirty-six minutes, the sequences selected by Fahrenholz were not dense with conventional “action.” Some cohered with the action described in the blog excerpts but others were more open-ended, communicating a sense of the atmosphere in MoMA’s crowded atrium. Occasionally, Koether’s presence as a reader in the lecture theatre heightened the emphasis on liveness and mediated presence

apparent in the performance program at the museum. The interplay between blog entry and footage from one particular day was vaguely reminiscent of a TV news report: “Georgia is Skyping ... this is happening live and projected on the atrium wall ... Someone asks a question about the situation in Athens.” But many of the excerpts emphasized reflection, or even rhetoric, over description (“What happens when the aesthetic category of performance exposes itself to this other economic, productive notion of performance? We say the ‘stock performs well on the market’ ... or a drug performs well ... we say a machine is high performance.”).

There were also moments in the lecture-performance where the issue of audience became pronounced. At one point, Koether briefly paused her reading, noting an absence: “Oh, he skipped one day.” The next blog entry seemed addressed to a specific constituency, suggesting an internal communication between *Grand Openings* collaborators: “Hey guys, I’m really sorry to have missed so much, including Formal Dress Day and Reception.” As the reading continued, other excerpts hinted at increasing introspection in the blog posts, reflecting upon the process of “writing as exposure” from the vantage point of “an embedded spectator uninvolved in any decision making.”

Subsequent excerpts underscored the centrality of the blog form, proposing that the activity of blogging could fulfill a representational function, serving as a stand-in for “the space of encounter between MoMA and *Grand Openings*—an idea of self-meditating liveness.” At the “TIMING” conference, a vivid sense of the live encounter between the museum and *Grand Openings* was preserved and articulated, through the interplay between blog excerpts and filmed action. But this focus on liveness was also tempered by an event structure that— even if it did not adopt the reverse chronology of the blog—nonetheless involved a self-conscious act of “returning,” in order to chart the gradual unfolding in space and time of a shared process of reflective thought.