

- Some thoughts
- (most of them aren't mine)

‘It is not down on any map, true places never are.’

Moby Dick

Digital technologies and the documents they produce are constituted as a panacea for our worries about practice as research as they are able to bring our performances from the domain of the ineffable into the more comfortable environments of the repetitively visible without inflicting on them the more obvious shape-shifting strictures of writing.

## Why document performance?

- To stimulate memory of the performance event (Phelan, 1993).
- Pressure to develop reproducible forms.
- Interest in developing reproducible forms.
- New audiences
- Economic benefit
- Professional benefit
- Because the Universities say we have to
- Continue and diversify creative processes

## Why document performance - contd?

- Increase cultural authority (Lycouris, 2000).
- Evocation
- To foreground the disappearance of performance
- To prevent performance disappearing.
- To acknowledge performance's incompleteness (Lycouris, 2000).
- To trace or map
- Reflection
- Understanding

“the archive...will never be either memory or anamnesis as spontaneous, alive and internal experience. On the contrary: the archive takes place at the place of originary and structural breakdown of the said memory.”

Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p. 11

‘On Exactitude in Science . . . In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters.’

Suarez Miranda, Viajes de varones prudentes, Libro IV, Cap. XLV, Lerida, 1658 From Jorge Luis Borges, Collected Fictions, Translated by Andrew Hurley Copyright Penguin 1999.

- what happens to documentation where the 'original' has never been present?
- should documentation evoke its absent object?
- what happens when documentation itself becomes time-based and ephemeral?
- where does a practice end and its documentation begin?
- what happens when documentation produces the work; where is the performance?

the insertion of limits are *“treacherous in the context of performance practices and their documentation” in which the performance is simply the live event, and documentation is anything afterwards and is “something other”*

(Joshua Sofaer, 2000).

Derrida's *Archive Fever*, Borges' fictitious maps and documentation practices all coalesce in a murky marriage of surveilled capital and anti-capital: in order to prove something's reality, we have to transform it into object — yet the only objects that can do justice to event are those that are so excessive, so data-rich, they lose all meaning for us while still facilitating the bean-counters and 'intelligence' communities.

Piccini, A. (2006). *e-Science and the Arts: performativity, place, space*. All Hands Meeting, Nottingham,  
<http://www.nesc.ac.uk/talks/ahm2006/762.ppt>,  
retrieved 2 April 2007.