Audiences, Live!

Cognitive Science Research Group
Queen Mary University of London
Ethics: you are on camera!

- For research and demonstration purposes only.
Overview

14:20: Introduction Pat Healey.

14:30: “Gathering and Training Audiences” Colombine Gardair.

14:40: “Sensing and Modelling Audiences” Kleomenis Katevas.


15:00: “Audience Dynamics” Toby Harris.
Round Table

15:20: Moderated roundtable discussion:

1. How does this connect to (your) existing audience research and/or audience development activities?

2. What would you like these techniques to tell you?

3. What new opportunities does it suggest in your area / sector?

16:00: Summary and Q & A

16:15: Drinks and networking
Gathering and Training Audiences

Colombine Gardair
colombine.gardair@gmail.com
Gathering and Training Audiences

Street performers have to assemble and train their audiences:

1. Configure the Environment:
   • transform a street into a ‘performance place’

2. Build an Audience:
   • convert ‘passers-by’ into members of an audience
   • train people how to respond
   • develop a sense of collective identity
   • ‘build the obligation’ (take money)

   90% of the ‘performance’ is building the audience.
Configure the Physical Environment

- Proscenium theater
- Arena theater
- Open stage
Convert ‘Passers-by’ to ‘Audience Members’

Get people to stop and look:
• define the edges of the space,
• use direct address, announcements and ‘commentary’ to engage people,
• distinguish the interested from the uninterested
  – mock people who don’t stop
  – police people’s behaviour e.g., treat ‘walking past’ as ‘intrusion’
• draw people together and reduce gaps
Build a Collective Identity

• orchestrate collective responses
  – which country / gender / side can cheer loudest’?
• train in specific responses as a prelude to the performance
• select a member of the audience and “give them a round of applause”
• identify (possibly non-existent) ‘leavers’ who are not paying.
• loudest (usually rhythmic) applause immediately before or during the ‘act’ not at the end.
Build a Collective Identity
Street Performance:

Audience building as an immediate practical problem:

- Achieved through interaction: a continuously managed process not a state
- Audiences have an important internal social dynamics
  - our own responses are affected by others.
- Performer-Audience and Audience-Audience interaction matters.
- Performances design the audience and audiences design the performance
  – Covent Garden vs. Southbank
Sensing and Modelling Audiences

Kleomenis Katevas
k.katevas@qmul.ac.uk
Sensing and Modelling Audiences

What sensors do you have on you?
Cognitive Science Research Group
http://cogsci.eecs.qmul.ac.uk

Camera(s)
Ambient Light Sensor
Magnetometer
Accelerometer
Gyroscope
Water sensor

NFC
GPS
WiFi
Bluetooth
Microphone(s)
Proximity Sensor
Accelerometer  Gyroscope  Magnetometer
Bluetooth
What can we measure?

- Audio signals
  *Who is talking? Who is not?*

- Activity recognition
  *Who is having fun? Is he standing, walking, running, dancing?*

- Outdoor and Indoor localisation
  *Where is he located?*
Interaction between audience members

• People rarely remain silent throughout an event.

• People cluster in social groups.

• They remain structured and organised among most situations.

• Audiences can interact using non-speech responses: body position, orientation and movement.
Kavin Preethi Narasimhan
k.p.narasimhan@qmul.ac.uk
Where are my friends?

What are they doing?

Are they dancing?

There is a massive crowd watching this
Performance Experiments

Pat Healey
p.healey@qmul.ac.uk
Performance Experiments

Demo
Comedy Lab at the Barbican (Katevas, Harris)
Performance Experiments

- Sensing the moment-by-moment dynamics of audience response
- Responses to content and to ‘others’
- Powerful research tool
- Opportunity for novel interventions
Audience Dynamics

Toby Harris

toby.harris@qmul.ac.uk
Robots, pointing
Beyond live
Digital innovation in the performing arts
Live vs. Recorded
Round Table

15:20: Moderated roundtable discussion:

1. How does this connect to (your) existing audience research and/or audience development activities?

2. What would you like these techniques to tell you?

3. What new opportunities does it suggest in your area/sector?

16:00: Summary and Q & A

16:15: Drinks and networking