



School: Bath School of Music and Performance

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Project Title: Dramaturgies of Hauntology through practice-based research methodologies in *Dwelling* and *The Strange Geometry of Time*

UOA: 33 - Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies

300-Word Statement

The Strange Geometry of Time premiered at University Theatre, Bath Spa University, June 2018. It toured to the *Dreams Before Dawn Festival of European Theatre* in Paris, 3rd-8th July 2018. A final performance took place in the University Theatre, November 2018.

Dwelling premiered at the Arnos Vale Cemetery, October 2019. The 2020 tour of *Dwelling* to venues: Poltimore House; Wycombe Arts Centre; and the Anglican Chapel, was postponed and rescheduled for 2021 (due to Covid-19).

Both projects aimed to creatively activate theories of Hauntology and Spectrality posited by Derrida (1994), Luckhurst (2016), Fisher (2013, 2016), Rayner (2014), Blanco and Preen (2010, 2013), Gordon (2008). The research methodology draws on terms and concepts derived from Derrida's *Specters of Marx* (1994), specifically the figure of the ghost as a deconstructive tool to explore the way in which the present is not present to itself, is haunted.

The Strange Geometry of Time posed the concept of the haunted subject, questioning the singularity of 'self' by placing this into doubt, as the subject/s is conceived as haunted by 'Others'. This understanding of the self has been central to a dramaturgy constructed around the concept of the haunted subject, and an atemporal notion of time in performance as a 'necessary condition for the successful act of return, or haunting.' (Shaw, 2020, p. 7)

Dwelling's dramaturgy of haunting tested the implications of Fisher's definition of the uncanny. Fisher defines uncanny in two modes: the weird and eerie. *Dwelling's* methodology interrogated ideas of 'agency' in places devoid of human existence, and looked at how they relate to Derrida's concept of Hauntology (1994). *Dwelling* explores what remains within such premises as Poltimore House, a derelict mansion, as Fisher defines as having a 'sense of the eerie', which can be found in 'landscapes partially emptied of the human.' (2016, p.11)