PRESENCE AND LIVENESS

Sepp's book (see yesterday) has got me thinking again about presence and liveness.

It is that temporal issue at the heart of archaeological experience – being there, in the presence of the past.

Mike Pearson and I circled around this in our long collaboration on theatre/archaeology. A label we adopted because it suggests associations, rather than accurately described what we were doing. We did describe theatre/archaeology as the re-articulation of fragments of the past as *real-time* event.

Question – How to document performance, social practice, experience?

When it is always a matter of remediation, of re-performance – never the same after … (nothing ever happens twice because it has already happened before …), of being removed and remote.

Links are, of course, with Walter Benjamin, representation and document, and we are at the heart of the archive (what remains, is to be kept, collected, cherished, and how).

Hence my comment yeaterday about Mike's scars – the document of past performances.

We went into performed lectures – a rhetorical hybrid of the didactic, epic theater, multimedia, and the presence of the performer. And deep maps – cultural ecologies in the way of reporting about place. Both were focal points of Brith Gof Theatre, over some twenty years of radical performance.

Sepp is surely right to emphasize that presence is a major cultural agenda item – and especially given the implications of digital rendering of virtual worlds, given the digital duplication and recycling of media.

Here are some interesting projects on liveness and presence at the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory, RMIT, Melbourne [Link]