

FrenchMoothershead. My Word is My Bond. Throgmorton restaurant and bar, London.

15, 22 Mar & 5 Apr '02.

Reviewed by Philip Stanier.

I went twice, thinking this would provide insight. It only emphasised what a bizarre and paranoid encounter the event was. An old bar near the Stock Exchange (The motto of the Stock Exchange is 'My word is my bond') filled with people, of whom 25 were micro-performers. Including the trained and the untrained, possible performers included the girl who looked lost, the city boys in their suits and the chap in the leather jacket, but it was impossible to be certain. Possible micro-performances recounted to me included: hair tuggings, tongue pokings, being manhandled, being told that you are a fabulous teacher and the DJ demanding silence for the Queen Mother when everyone was dancing, but no one was certain about these moments either. Some people seemed disappointed because there wasn't enough performance. Other people were delighted and saw performance everywhere.

Squeezed together and given an

excuse to talk, this was people watching and social interaction under pressure, repetitions of action, or idiosyncrasies of personality were collectively dissected. Yet, while the company and atmosphere made me comfortable, there was also a prevailing fear. What if I get mistaken for a performer, if due to my paranoia or personality I appeared fake, if people smiled, but later said 'Phil was a dead giveaway'? When talking to people in this environment I wanted to meet a micro-performer because to recognise the fake, verified my authenticity. Either that or I wanted to become an illicit performer, to join in and play with the performer/audience ambiguity. It is on this basis that the micro-performances succeed or fail, we have to know they are there and we have to surrender to the event and play the game. I personally enjoyed it, on the last night I was spotted by someone who had been there before, 'You're here again' she said suspiciously, 'So are you' I replied.