ON PERFORMANCE
ARCHIVAL PRACTICE AND ITS CHALLENGES
Trisha Brown’s “Homemade”

Understanding the dynamic nature of performance is integral to its preservation
Performances are always transforming and reinventing themselves through the interactions that create them.
Each one is a unique manifestation or expression and no two are identical
What makes performance archives different?
Ephemerality

“Performance’s life is only in the present.

Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so it becomes something other than performance.”

From Peggy Phelan’s “Unmarked: The Politics of Performance”
Diversity of archival material

- photographs
- video and sound recordings
- performance logs
- notation scores
- artifacts
Reproducing ephemeral performances
Resistance to Standardization
Lack of Conceptual Models

- European Network of Information Centres for Performing Arts (ENICPA)
- International Association of Libraries Museums, Archives and Documentation Centres of the Performing Arts (SIBMAS)
- Spanish Theatre Documentation Centre
- Digital Theatre
- Digital Dance Archives
Internship at a Performance Archive
The Trisha Brown Archive in NY

TRISHA BROWN COMPANY Inc.
BROOKLYN ACADEMY of MUSIC-Lepercq Space

JANUARY 8 at 7:30 P.M.
JANUARY 9, 10 at 8:00 P.M.
JANUARY 11 at 7:00 P.M.

Further Information:
Tel. 636-4100

TICKETS $4.00
Expectations and experiences
What I learned
Some solutions to documenting & archiving performance that I found
Conceptual

- Trisha Brown Dance Company’s “kinetic oral history project”
- Merce Cunningham’s Dance Capsules
Technical

- Motion capture technology
- 3D Modeling
Practical

"The mission of the Performing Arts section is to encourage the exchange of information on historical and contemporary documentation of music, dance, theater, motion pictures and other performance media."
Some final questions about performance archives
THANKS!
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