‘ACTING WITH FACTS’: ACTORS PERFORMING THE REAL IN
BRITISH THEATRE AND TELEVISION SINCE 1990.

An Arts and Humanities Research Council research project.

SYMPOSIUM, FRIDAY 8 MAY 2009
Department of Film, Theatre & Television, Bulmershe Court Campus,
University of Reading

9.00 – 9.45: Registration and Coffee

‘ACTING WITH FACTS’ – PRELIMINARY FINDINGS
Bob Kayley Studio

Lib Taylor [University of Reading – Project Co-Investigator]
'Bearing witness: fact-based theatre since 1990 in Britain'

Jonathan Bignell [University of Reading – Project Co-Investigator]
'Conditions of possibility: docudrama, television and change since 1990'

Heather Sutherland [University of Reading – Project Postdoctoral Researcher]
"The Truth": Reflections on Interviewing as a Primary Methodological Tool for Research into 'Acting with Facts'.

Derek Paget [University of Reading – Project Principal Investigator]
'Some Facts about ‘Acting with Facts’"

Rapporteurs for the session will be:
Geoff Colman [Head of Acting, Central School of Speech and Drama]
Chris Megson [Royal Holloway, University of London]

N.B. Chris and Geoff have been asked to respond briefly to the ‘Acting with Facts’ team’s papers [and principally to Derek’s].

11.30 to 12.00: Coffee Break – Studio 1
12.00 to 13.30: Session Two

Panel 1 – Studio 2 – Documentary Theatre

Tom Cantrell [University of York]
‘Max Stafford-Clark and Robin Soans’s Talking to Terrorists: (Re)considering the actor-researcher in verbatim theatre’

Sheila McCormick [National University of Ireland, Galway]
‘Textual or Tangible: The Body as a Document in Documentary Theatre Abstract’

Amanda Stuart-Fisher [Central School of Speech and Drama]
‘“That’s who I’d be, if I could sing!”: reflections on a verbatim project with mothers of sexually abused children’

Panel 2 – Bob Kayley Studio – Screen Docudrama

John Cook [Glasgow Caledonian University]
‘“Don’t forget to look into the camera!”: Peter Watkins’ Approach to Acting with Facts’

Lisa Gaughan [University of Lincoln]
‘It’s no time for sound bites: The praxis of travesty via the new labour of political comedy’

Dave Rolinson [University of Hull]
‘Gesture politics and control freak actors: New Labour as performance in The Deal and The Queen’

13.30 – 14.40: Lunch – Studio 1

14.40 – 16.10: Session Three

Panel 1 – Studio 2 – Documentary Theatre

Peter Billingham [University of Portsmouth]
‘Not Drowning But Waving - A message in a bottle from a collaborative, devised, post-graduate performance project Marooned.’

Phil Green [De Montfort University]
‘Lying for a living: contradictions in the work of an actor and the production of documentary plays’
Carole-Anne Upton [University of Ulster]
‘I Was There!’ Agency and the actor in documentary theatre in Northern Ireland

Panel 2 – Bob Kayley Studio – Screen Docudrama

Alison Forsyth [Aberystwyth University]
‘Documenting Postmemory: Oral Tradition and Fictionalised Truths relating to War and Trauma’

Stephen Lacey and Ruth McElroy [University of Glamorgan]
‘Real performance: ordinary people and the ‘problem’ of acting’

Reina-Marie Loader [University of Reading]
‘Documemory: Acting with Re-membered Facts’

16.10 – 16.40 : Coffee Break – Studio 1

16.40 – 18.15: Session Four: PLENARY 2.
IN CONVERSATION WITH…..
Bob Kayley Studio

Derek Paget will ask actors Phil Davis and Ian McNeice to talk about the Acting with Facts that they have done on stage and screen in their careers, concentrating particularly (but not exclusively) on their screen work.

For example:

Phil Davis
*The Firm, Vera Drake, The Curse of Steptoe, Wall of Silence*

Ian McNeice
*Cherished, Conspiracy, Never So Good, Valkyrie*

This will be followed by a Q&A.

N.B. Having two such eminent actors with us, it will be too good an opportunity to miss if the questions were *just* about Acting with Facts!

18.15 – 19.00 Wine Reception