Writing from Memory

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12
12:30 PM - 1:30PM
2339 FACULTY/ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
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This talk proposes that the affective turn in performance scholarship requires a corresponding re-examination of existing models of reflective practice, which compartmentalize reflection temporally and orient the writer towards reflection as a form of “problem-solving,” implicitly encouraging narratives of amelioration. This talk draws on fragments of reflective writing that I have collected, collated and manipulated in response to a performance training experience now seven years old. Seeking out examples of a hybrid form of performative-reflective composition, I have endeavored to work from Anne Brewster’s idea of a writing that “literalizes a post-retrieval idea of memory” in which writing “is not an instrument of the retrieval of stored information” but instead is “characterized as a technology of memory, and memory as tekhnê, writing.” I will explore these writings as a set of attempts or gestures that seek to include, to incorporate, to absorb reflective writing as a performative act and as a generative process that lives within the “what” and “when” of performance-making, although it occurs after the “performance” is over.

Mary Elizabeth Anderson is an Assistant Professor in the Maggie Allesee Department of Theatre & Dance at Wayne State University. Her essays about performer training, community performance, and the human relationship to place have appeared in About Performance; African Theatre; Arts Education Policy Review; Australasian Drama Studies; Brolga: An Australian Journal About Dance; Canadian Journal of Practice-based Research in Theatre; Journal of Dance Education; Research in Drama Education; Teaching Artist Journal and Theatre/Practice. Mary is currently at work on a manuscript about site-specific performances in the Australian Central Desert.