

Professor Suzie Hanna
July 19th 2017

Research Project Report

In Other Motes of Other Myths

I participated in a collaboration with Dr Nicole Panizza, Dr Hannah Sanders and Dr Sally Bayley at the Emily Dickinson International Society Conference in Paris 2016 *'The Angled Road Preferred against the Mind' Experimental Dickinson*.

<http://www.emilydickinsoninternationalsociety.org/node/464>

We gave a performance, workshop and roundtable, exploring poetry fragments and Emily Dickinson's Music Folio, through voice, piano and improvised animation projection. This was extremely well received by an international audience including academics from Yale, Harvard, and the Sorbonne.

Our performance, (devised over six months of reading, conversations, improvised performance, animation and music rehearsals) referenced Emily's folio of pieces that she played on the piano and songs she sang, as well as the fragments of poetry that she wrote on the edges of envelopes and scraps of paper. Emily sang when she wrote her poetry. Her poetic form is 'musical' and has been scored, orchestrated and interpreted as choral and Art Music for over a hundred years. Her work is set in school curricula, and she has become familiar to a huge international community. The piano pieces that she played were dominated by the salon music of the time, large orchestral pieces re-arranged for domestic performance, as well as scored folk music, such as *The Rose of Allandale*. We approached our improvised live performance in the spirit of *Experiment*, the theme of the conference. The improvisation was built onto a structure of four sections, exploring Emily's routine rhythms, and her domestic daily life, interrupted by her passionate poetry.

We gave a presentation and ran a workshop on this project with over twenty participants at Worcester College Oxford University on Monday 26th June 2017. We gave an updated performance to a capacity audience in the evening. This was hosted by Dr Paula Byrne, (Lady Bate) for an international audience of students and academics as part of the *ReLit* International Summer School <http://www.relit.org.uk>. *ReLit* is part of a powerful creative and literary network.

Our combination of original performance, workshop, and roundtable, looking at Dickinson's poetry through the lens of her own musical life, is exciting, innovative and transferable in terms of embedding research in teaching delivery. It is part of an ongoing research output including further performances and potential journal publication.

The performances were filmed and will shortly be available for the NUA Research Repository. I also hold audio recordings of the musical improvisation process.

We have been booked to run the workshop and performance on March 17th 2018 as part the Oxford Literary Festival 2018.