

**LEEDS  
ARTS RESEARCH  
CENTRE**



# **SEVEN TABLES**

**DR GILLIAN DYSON-  
MOSS**

# OUTPUT INFORMATION

Title:  
Seven Tables

Output Type:  
I – Performance

Venues:  
Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art,  
Gateshead; Glasgow University

Year of first performance:  
2017

Output allocation:  
Live art



## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT**

Seven Tables is a live performance artwork exploring the relationship between the material objects of the home and the female body. Part of an ongoing body of work by Dyson-Moss investigating the 'unhomely', Seven Tables examines how this physical interaction deconstructs notions of a feminine homely identity. Central to the development of Seven Tables was the question: how might the use of repetition, animated inanimate objects, and stillness trouble the identity of the domestic object and feminine body?

The live solo performance was developed through practice-as-research performance methodologies including repeated rehearsals and physical explorations in the studio which were informed by readings of feminist theory, thus enabling instantaneous and spontaneous investigation through the live performance.

Following the project's research through practice and development in rehearsal, the resulting performance structure incorporates uncanny tropes of repetition, the animated utilisation of the inanimate, and disquieting stillness, making manifest the slippery relationship between the familiar and unfamiliar in physical encounters. Seven Tables contributes to contemporary discourses on reconceptualising notions of the domestic and articulates paradoxical dualities within the disturbance of the homely and unhomely through solo female performance art.

Seven Tables was performed at: Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (April 2017), as part of GIFT (Gateshead International Festival of Theatre) where it attracted an international audience of over 500 people; at Glasgow University (2019) and Leeds Beckett University (2019). Dyson also presented this body of work in conference papers and professional talks at the Leeds University (2019); the University of Glasgow (2018); Leeds Beckett University (March 2018; April 2018); and at Left Bank arts centre, Leeds (2017).











Seven Tables, Gillian Dyson





Seven Tables, Gillian Dyson



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Seven Tables, Gillian Dyson





Seven Tables, Gillian Dyson

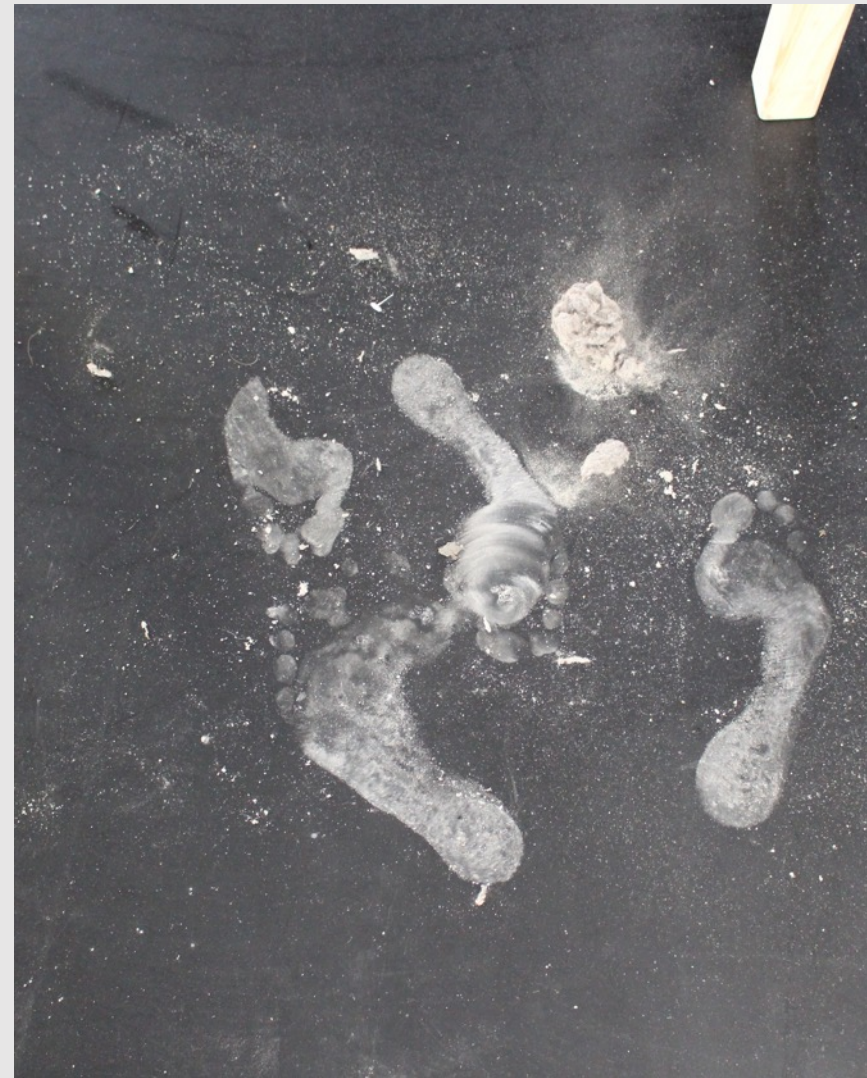




Seven Tables, Gillian Dyson







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Seven Tables, Gillian Dyson





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# SEVEN TABLES AT BAL TIC, GATESHEAD

# SEVEN TABLES BY GILLIAN DYSON

Sunday 30 April 2017 / Various Times 11:00 – 16:00 / FREE

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# BALTIC

**BALTIC**

Gateshead NE8 3BA  
Open daily

**LIBRARY**

Gateshead NE8 3BA  
Open daily

**ARCHIVE**

Gateshead NE8 3BA  
Appointment only

**BALTIC 39**

Newcastle NE1 1EW  
Open Wed-Sun

Performance listing on BALTIC  
Centre for Contemporary Art  
website, 2017



Documentation of *Seven Tables* at  
BALTIC Centre for Contemporary  
Art. Photo credit: Richard  
Kenworthy. 2017



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# **GATESHEAD INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THEATRE IMPACT STATEMENT & FIGURES**

Audience figure for *Seven Tables* at GIFT: 58

Impact statement from Kate Craddock, Director of GIFT:

"Seven Tables by Gillian Dyson activated an otherwise underused space within BALTIC, opening up an area of the building that is not normally accessible to the public. The work created great intrigue and moments of surprise for the audience members who engaged with the work, many of whom were otherwise attending BALTIC exhibitions and were exposed to live performance work at BALTIC for the first time through this encounter (evidenced via audience evaluation forms). The presentation of Seven Tables within the context of GIFT at BALTIC altered the way in which performance works have subsequently been negotiated and presented in the building, as it opened up the possibility of presenting other live performance works at BALTIC in non-conventional spaces (specifically for GIFT 2018)."



## Review

**Miller, Matt. (STAGE REVIEW –  
GIFT Festival – Day Three  
(30.4.17)  
NARC Magazine Online. May 3rd  
2017.**

**[https://narcmagazine.com/stage-  
review-gift-festival-day-three/](https://narcmagazine.com/stage-review-gift-festival-day-three/)**

Durational With Tables Immediately after To Suit I came out into the first floor foyer of Baltic to find a woman moving between and over several plain wooden Ikea tables, arranged in a stacked-jigsaw. This was Seven Tables by Gillian Dyson, a durational piece examining 'the relationship between the female and domestic objects, and what the performance of these does to unsettle our understanding of the homely.' Slow but mesmerising to begin with, Gillian de-assembled the table fort, and laid the tables out individually in the space, before covering six of them with white sheets and pouring a jug of water over another. This last event may not sound shocking out of context, but following the care and diligence with which the performer had laid out the rest of the space, almost slow-dancing with the tables, this act of apparent defiance, though performed with the same controlled quiet, seemed to brim with suppressed anger and rebellion. Further disruptive acts followed, with the result being a piece of work that felt like a window into a private and restrained breakdown in the face of expectations. Though only an hour, the piece certainly earned its description as durational. Slow, steady and considered, it required patience and faith, but paid off brilliantly and felt immensely satisfying as a whole piece of work. Part of a practice-based doctorate, the wider work continues.

**Keywords:**

Live Art  
Performance  
Feminism

**Key Dates:**

May 3 2017  
Public Performance. For the Theatre,  
Film and Television Studies and CCPR  
Postgraduate Symposium, University  
of Glasgow, Gilmore Studio.

April 30 2017  
Public Performance. For GIFT (Gateshead  
International Festival of Theatre). Baltic  
Centre for Contemporary Art.  
Newcastle Gateshead.

November 17 2016  
Public Performance. For Where From Here —  
Third Angel Symposium, Compass Live Art  
Festival. Beckett University.

**Funding:**

Arts Council England: Grants for the Arts  
Jerwood Charitable Foundation

**Links:**

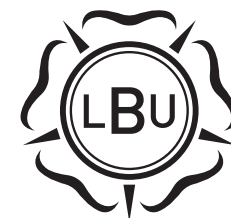
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a78r5MYhGbA>

**Email:**

[g.dyson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:g.dyson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**[WWW.LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/LARC](http://WWW.LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/LARC)**

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