

Shonky

Tags:

#shonky

#care

#mistakes

"Shonky" is a concept coined by the British curator and artist John Walter, who won the 2016 Hayward Touring Curatorial Open with the exhibition *Shonky: The Aesthetics of Awkwardness*. Shonky is a slang term meaning corrupt, bent or unreliable, standing for a particular type of visual aesthetic that is hand-made, deliberately clumsy and lo-fi, against the slick production values of much contemporary art. *Shonky* allows for new ways of thinking that privilege shonkiness over other aesthetic forms that have dominated visual culture (according to John Walter). From a curator-choreographic perspective I'm interested in Shonky as a way to care for the un-dutiful, the misfit and the strange, to acknowledge and give space to artistic materials and situations derived from shonky practices, or to valorize materials and situations that provokes a shonky feeling or atmosphere. The shonky doing (as curator, choreographer or dancer) might also allow for increased risk-taking – to combine materials and situations that seem to be incompatible with each other, since paradoxes and illogical reasoning seems to be just what a shonky universe embraces. I also understand shonky as an invitation to drop the effort to build a reputation, in favor of what seem to be practices of mistakes and flaws. The leading idea for this kind of practice/concept is to assume that the most interesting thing to explore is often something that stretches beyond my knowledge/control/realm of comfort (to go beyond capitalist, individualist and neo-liberal grounds?).

Lecture by John Walter

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2KVyaR5BGw>

Hayward Gallery touring

<https://themaclive.com/exhibition/shonky-the-aesthetics-of-awkwardness>

Tove Salmgren