

Isobel Taylor-Rodgers  
*Grimm But Still Wakeful*  
Seventh Gallery  
18<sup>th</sup> August - 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016

*A Live Work*  
Kit Riley

It's the ~~fourth~~ fifth of July, and it's a ~~cold~~ rainy morning, and I'm beginning to ~~write~~ edit this essay. It's the ~~fourth~~ fifth of July, and it's after the eighteenth of August, and you're here to see *Grimm But Still Wakeful* by Isobel Taylor-Rodgers.

*Grimm But Still Wakeful* is a live performance about death. It's likely you've already missed the opening night performance, and you're reading this essay in a nearly unpopulated gallery, and you're just standing here, looking at a previously-live work lying in a white room.

Perhaps it's after the second of September, and you've missed even the installation, and the gallery is already full of somebody else's art. Or perhaps it's opening night, and you're actually here at the live performance of *Grimm But Still Wakeful*. Be that as it may, in my mind you're reading this having missed the performance, but not the exhibition.

It's after the eighteenth of August, and here you are amongst what's left over. If you had attended the live event, you might have had to deal with that peculiar anxiety where you're observing ~~the bereaved~~ the artist as if she were a body ~~of work~~, and you feel kind of awkward about just observing her, and you think maybe she doesn't want you to interact with her anyway, and even if she did you can't begin to think what you could do or say and you just feel lost, you feel that the usual social norms and expectations to which you are accustomed simply don't apply in this situation and you can find no appropriate alternative framework to guide your thinking and interactions so you're trapped in a worried stasis in which you can't seem either to observe or to interact which causes you to feel even more intensely the imperative to be able to relate with people in this container for ~~mourning~~ culture to which you cannot return after the dispersal of the group and the rehiring of the space for another person's ~~wake~~ show.

Luckily, you're here after the fact, so although you've missed the action, you've also missed the anxiety. Here you are, in ~~the gallery~~ ~~the funeral home~~ a retreating interior, a transposable space that, when empty, may as well be altogether absent. Here you are, in a

room that exists intermittently, a room made present by a procession of interchangeable ~~things people deaths~~ bodies.

It's the ~~fourth~~ fifth of July, and it's ~~forty-five~~ forty-four days until the performance of *Grimm But Still Wakeful*. The action is still unperformed, and the installation is still unconstructed. I'm trying to imagine the thing about which I write, and I can picture nothing but the blank walls I recall from my visits to previous shows.

It's the ~~fourth~~ fifth of July, and I'm remembering a past that has yet to occur, and it's after the eighteenth of August, and you're imagining a present to which you can't catch up.