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Book of Ways

Appendix I

by
Claire Pençak

Preface

This *Book of Ways* gathers together and evidences the artistic processes that I used to approach the somatic encounters with more-than-human others that makes up the core of this practice-led research – *Stone Ways*, *Moss Ways*, *Woodland Ways* and *River Ways*. Some of the material in this *Book of Ways* is referred to and drawn into the written thesis. In this appendix form it offers supplementary information on the artistic processes in the form of practice diaries, scores, workshop plans, reflective conversations and visual documentation. This Appendix is not required reading for an understanding of the written thesis but serves to bring the reader closer to the practice particularly by offering visual documentation which also contextualises the practice in place. The reader is free to dip into this material as their interest takes them.

In the pre(r)amble I reveal a scoring for the overall research that emerged from a walk, through, out of and around Jedburgh. This situates the encounters in a specific place and connects one to the other, offering some sort of overall coherence to the somatic encounters that follow.

Stone Ways, *Moss Ways* and *Woodland Ways* were each developed through a different artistic collaboration. The process of these distinct collaborations with Felicity Bristow, Audicia Lynne Morley and Tom Hawson are reflected on through individual conversations between the artist and myself. These conversations are presented here as transcripts and create a context for the practice scores, notes and visual documentation that are placed around it.

All photographs and images, unless otherwise credited, are my own.

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Pre(r)amble: A foray with Uexküll around Jedburgh

This is a foray into the broad territory of this research, into practice, place, and post-humanist philosophy. The Collins English Dictionary says if ‘you make a foray into a new or unfamiliar type of activity, you start to become involved in it.’¹ So, a foray could be a pathway into and around that offers different perspectives and brings us closer to our subject. In the Scottish context a foray might also be a *stravaig* – meaning to roam, wander aimlessly, to go up and down a place.² Stravaig also being the title of the online journal published by the Scottish Centre for Geopoetics.³ *Foray* also takes me to *forage*. An activity that moves through a place, seeking out and gathering what is already present.

June 4th, 2018, The Bakery Studio, Jedburgh

Today's studio practice shifted between moving and reading, between inside and out as it went on a wander into and around place following different paths of interest.

The studio is a high -raftered space on the top floor of what was Grant's Bakery. Windows along the length of one side overlook the remains of the former Corn Exchange walls and a scruffy courtyard where bags of flour, delivered by horse and cart were once hoisted up by a large winch and dropped down through a trap door to the floor below. Both winch and trap door are still there. Lime wash on the studio walls lets them breathe a little and leaves a chalky residue when you brush up or lean against them.

I abandoned some years back the routine of ‘warming up’ through a set of progressive exercises as this supports a specific movement vocabulary and habitual patterns which belong to a dance practice that I have moved away from. Instead, I follow a more instinctual path, which allows the possibility for beginning in a different place each time – from standing, walking or lying, from beside the wall, or where the light is falling, from the bones or the skin, the feet, spine or the head. These initial choices establish the ground for the work and the tone for what might subsequently emerge.

Three texts accompany the studio practice today. Going between moving and reading is both a strategy to assist understanding and a reflective practice. Freed from the page, I can be on the move with texts in a different way. I am not dancing the ideas, more like moving along with them, letting them settle into different anatomical crevices. The first text I pick up, is by the Scottish poet- philosopher Kenneth White, ‘Along the High Lines’: Figuring out the way towards a world culture (2006). It is a call for cultural renewal grounded in ‘sentient, intelligent, creative contact with the environment’ (2006, p.5). I'll translate this call for ‘a new cartography, both physical and mental’ (2006, p.7), as an

¹ Collins English Dictionary

² The Pocket Scots Dictionary, Aberdeen University Press, 1988 (Edited by Iseabail Macleod, Ruth Martin and Pauline Cairns). p 285

³ <http://www.geopoetics.org.uk/online-journal/>

enquiry into different scores for orientating towards and moving through the bodymind territory and dance to that!⁴

Being on the move is the best way to get under the skin of the second text by American Deanne Juhan, one of many somatic practitioners gathered together between the pages of 'Bone, Breath and Gesture' (Hanlon Johnson, 1995.) Juhan writes from the experiential perspective of material bodyminds, or perhaps mindful bodies that organise themselves through encounters with the world. I take on his observation that '(w)e do not feel our body so much when it is at rest [...] we get a clearer perception of it when it moves and when new sensations are obtained in context with realities, that is to say objects' (1995, p.363).

Objects become sentient beings in the third text 'A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans' by Estonian biologist Jakob von Uexküll which I have as an Audible book, one to take in through listening rather than through the eyes.⁵ Being read to, I can shift my listening attention to different degrees, using foregrounding /backgrounding as a real-time composing score to move in and out of focus with Uexküll's 'umwelt' and his closely observed, multi-species perspectives, where humans and other sentient beings exist alongside each other rather than one above the other.

Following ways is emerging as a composing score for the day's research so I set out from the studio with Uexküll in hand, joining the town trail past the Abbey in the direction of Jed Water. The interpretation board at the car park beside Jedburgh Abbey explains that Jedburgh, formerly Jedworo – Jedworth, means 'An *open space* at the *bend* of a river' (my emphasis). I go down to meet the river, and as being in movement is my mode of enquiry, I find Jedburgh to be 'an opening space at the bending of a river' where dippers and a heron fish and recent high water has gathered and entangled different materials in the lower branches of bushes and trees on the riverbank. A curation of sorts of what was passing by at the time.

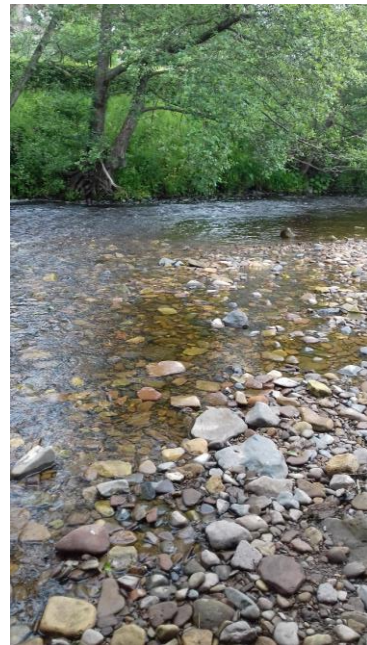
⁴ In relation to White's call for a new cartography, it was a Jedburgh born scientist Mary Somerville (1780 – 1872) who wrote the first book on the subject of Physical Geography (1848) in which she offered an extended view of geography that included the earth, animals, and plants as well as elements of cultural geographies.

⁵ Uexküll, Jakob von. A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans. With a Theory of Meaning. Narrated by Darren Roebuck – Audible book



It occurs to me that the bending of a river, a meandering, is how a river left to its own devices organises itself as it goes along. A side winding, serpentine course, a stravaiging river way that shapes the land on either side.

A more- than- human shaping.





Continuing along the path, are wild raspberry bushes full of bumble bees, and tellingly just one honeybee, pollinating thought-lines around relational encounters and collaborative projects.



I follow this river path through woodland towards Inchbonny crossing over a bridge to the site of a former textile mill, which had once been powered, by the river.



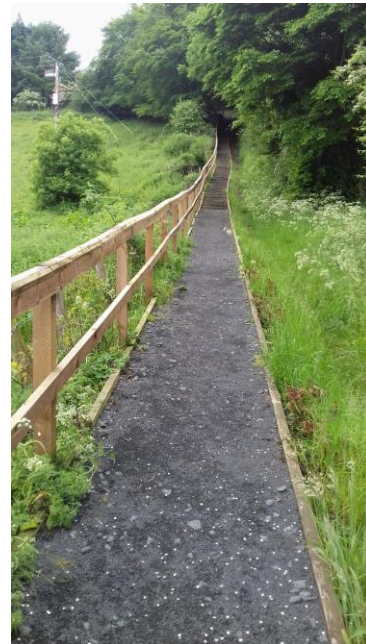
The site was then used for storing lime, which was commonly used as a field fertiliser. That is now gone, and the site is unoccupied. A gap site. Open to ideas. I thought it would make a great place to perform, *Field (Extract)* by Merav Israel.⁶

A few steps from here and you are beside the river again looking across to the opposite bank towards a geological site, Hutton's Unconformity. It was here that the Berwickshire farmer and geologist James Hutton was prompted to follow a thought-way into geological world- making processes and the vertiginous abyss of deep time scales.

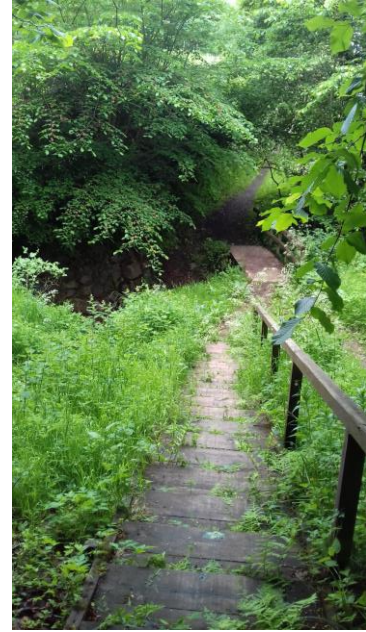
⁶ This was the plan for BATCH:1 but the weather got the better of us.



From the Unconformity I take the path up the hill.



I leave the town circular route and cut across to follow a footpath and a bridle path through woodland, following a burn upstream.



As there is no one else around I can listen to Uexküll through the speaker phone rather than earphones which would cut me off from all other sounds. He becomes a guide and opens up a kaleidoscope of worlds within worlds along the way - every plant, bird, sheep, or cow is a meeting of unique world-perceptions. The path merges onto a lane and then joins the Borders Abbey Way.



It is a pathway through fields – a *pilgrimage* in the oldest sense of the word - through 12th century Provençal *pelegrin*, the Latin *peregrīnus* foreign, to *per* through + *ager* field, land. Here the pathway through fields refers to agricultural land and to a transdisciplinary geopoetic way moving across and into the territory.



Coming to a gate I get back onto the Dunion road re-entering the town from a different direction to the one I started out on.



Back in the studio, I make notes on the excursion in the body and on the page.

Stone Ways

From blog post [Entr'actes: Alternative Arrangements | Claire Pencak \(wordpress.com\)](#)
October 22, 2017 collaboration, creative practice, deep time, event, scores

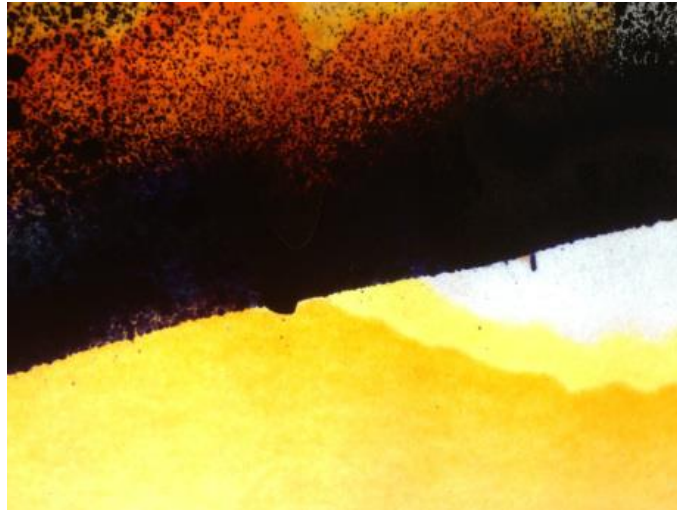


Image | Felicity Bristow

Entr'actes: *Alternative Arrangements* is the title of a collaboration with visual artist Felicity Bristow. For this project our site of reference and reflection is the geological formation of Hutton's Unconformity at Inchbonny, Jedburgh in the Scottish Borders.

The performance is part of a day long programme of artist- led events in Jedburgh on November 19th, 2017 as part of the wider 'Mapping the Borders' programme for the Being Human Festival.

'We are not to look for nature in a quiescent state; matter itself must be in motion, and the scenes of life a continued or repeated series of agitations and events'

James Hutton, *Theory of the Earth* 1788

To start with Hutton's Unconformity. There are various examples of unconformity sites across Scotland, Siccar Point, Berwickshire being perhaps the most well-known. It was in Jedburgh that James Hutton first saw the geological formation that was to lay the foundations of his 'Theory of the Earth' published in 1788. The theory was a cultural seismic shift as it proved that the earth was much older than previously calculated and from this emerged the concept we now refer to as deep time. It is this expansive scale of geological time which throws us as human beings into the shadows.

The Unconformity is the result of a major geological event when the land masses that became Scotland and England, collided and in so doing squeezed up and folded the rocks

which had lain at the bottom of the Iapetus Sea. The Unconformity makes this event visible through the unusual vertical folding and stratification which does not correspond to our usual expectation for geological strata to be built up and laid down in horizontal layers. It is unconforming also in that time is not present as a sequential and continuous narrative. The storyline is broken. The vertical folded rocks that were once mountains eroded and, in the process, erased 70 million years between themselves and the more recent horizontal sandstone strata. The geological story is revealed in its incompleteness. Time is seemingly not set-in stone. The geological structure is most clearly understood through the 1787 engraving by the Scottish merchant, artist and geologist John Clerk of Eldin. The site today is much overgrown and almost invisible. The horse and carriages are replaced by cars, trucks and bikes travelling along the A68. At its foot is the Jed Water, a flowing mix of timescapes as it contains both old and new water.

To attempt to approach the ongoing geological in- the -making process through artistic practice we have decided upon a durational studio performance that will take place over a 10-hour interval of time from the dark before dawn (7am) to the dark after dusk (5pm). We are working with live compositional processes through movement, architecture and materials with two related but different score(s). The scores are based on the overarching geological process of deposition – erosion – deposition, which we are interpreting through cycles of accumulation and dis-accumulation.

These are some of the processes and themes that have emerged so far and are shaping the preparation for the work.

Patterning repetition series folding alternative arrangements

strata

layering

bone tissue muscle nerves skin

overlaying

duration interval separation gap interruption

in between(ness) entr'actes

laying down

building up

horizontal – vertical – horizontal

deposition/ accumulation /growth & erosion/ dis-accumulation/decay

composition- decomposition -composition cycles

surface – depth /skin deep

archive, document, trace, memory

Let's pause here with the final words from James Hutton's 'Theory of the Earth'.

*'The result, therefore of our present enquiry is, that we find no vestige of a beginning –
no prospect of an end'*

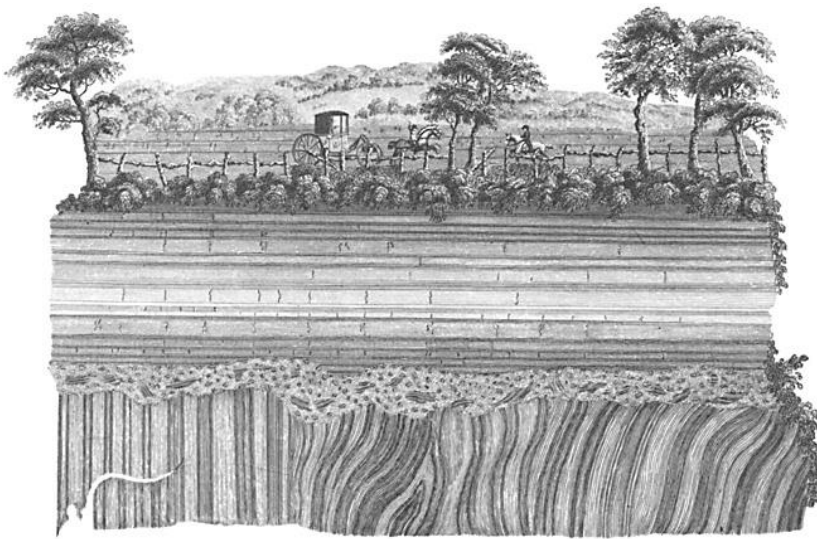
Theory of the Earth, 1788

Grounding Practices

November 2nd, 2017, Studio Practice
Preparing Entr'actes: *Alternative Arrangements*

(i)

Anatomy: Acts of Separation



Skin
Blood
Tissue
Nerve
Muscle
Ligament
Fascia
Bone
Organ
Gland

Engraving of the Unconformity at Inchbonny, near Jedburgh, by Scottish merchant, artist and geologist John Clerk of Eldin. In 'Theory of the Earth' by James Hutton. Image courtesy of © British Library Board, General Reference Collection 1651/958. 32.i.8-9.

It is a small leap of the imagination to make between considering the geological stratification of rocks to thinking about the 'strata' of the body. The different layers and systems that make up the human anatomy - Bone Muscle Tissue Organs Skin. These are different intelligences. Where do we situate the mind?

(ii)

[illegible]

(iii)

Plural Places: *here and there*

In the raftered studio,
(with the hoist for lifting grain sacks and the trap door to the floor below)
Mind falls into the soles of the feet,
Grounding the work in under_standing.

Extending the gaze, I'm also
out on the rooftops
perched with the pigeons.

Existing in two places at one time.

Performance Scores

Under_standing Practice

Come to standing, your feet a fist width apart. Bare foot is preferable. It is helpful to begin with eyes closed. Let the bones of the arms and the legs hang long, the fingers and the toes soft. Take time to become fully present with the breathing body. Let the attention drift down into the feet. Relax the heels and let the soles of the feet open and widen. Where and what parts of your feet are in contact with the floor? Plant yourself but don't take a rigid stance. Stand rooted yet supple like a tree. Is there space behind the knees? Let the standing be dynamic, responsive. Allow your weight to drop. Notice where your weight falls. Perhaps it is back on the heels or forward through the toes. Search for the sweet spot where the weight falls through the centre of the arch. Sense the ground, the earth pushing back, supporting your standing - an energetic exchange. Stand, literally from underneath, from the soles of the feet. Be uplifted through your contact with ground. Let this contact register in the tissue, bones, muscles and enter into the cells. Responsive and responding your standing will never be static, there will always be micro adjustments around the feet, the pelvis, through the spine, into the neck. Let the head rise lightly out of the contact of the feet with the ground and every shift resonate and hum through the central nervous system, awakening the nerves. Let it re-compose your 'standing in awareness' as you open up space between the ground and the sky. Open your eyes. Continuing to work with this under_standing, take a walk through the space, allowing the ground to direct your going and the feet to carry you along.

Themes: Ways to connect ground- feet – skull – sky. Coming into contact. Situating learning through a relationship to ground.

Walking and Under_standing in Space

Using walking and under_standing focus on exploring the space

This is a variation of *Walking and Stopping in Space* by Mary Overlie
'Slowly develop familiarity and facility with space through observing the practice room as you change perspective by walking and stopping. Observe your spatial placement in relationship to the walls of the room and to the other performers. All paths, formations and positions will gradually become vocabularies [...] Use your body to feel relationships' (2016, p.145).

Extending the Senses

Move in relationship to what you hear and see beyond the studio

Walking in the Company of Stones: A deep time walking practice.

We are going to take a long, slow walk with stone. We can practice this in the open air or a studio space. If working inside, it is ideal to walk towards a window which has in view beyond the room to extend the sense of distance. In either situation, it is best practised barefoot if the ground allows.

To begin, choose two stones that you like and that will fit well into the palms of your hands. Hold one stone in each hand. Hold them securely but not tightly. Sense the density of them falling into your palm, and let the fingers have a looseness to them. Too much muscular tension reduces our sensitivity to the heft of the stone. Direct your attention to the stones and let them ground your focus and your breathing.

We are going to step in a way that is more a planting or dropping through the feet. Where we usually transfer the weight through the foot from heel to toe, place the foot down as a whole. On each step lift the foot just enough off the floor to move it forward, placing it down so that the heel is in line with the arch of your other foot. Each step is about a half a foot length. Feel that you are walking into, rather than on the surface of the ground, allowing the action of placing the foot down to finish completely. There is no hurry to progress to the next step. Take all the time that it needs and then a bit more. Only then take the other foot just off the ground sufficiently to be able to move it level with the arch of the other foot.⁷ Be aware of the quality of the gaze as you go along. Let the eyes be soft and fall into their bony eye sockets. It can be helpful to keep the distance in view rather than an inward gaze, whilst keeping the eyes light and alive. Continue like this either until you run out of space or have travelled some distance. Do not be tempted to stop too early. Let the patience of stone lead you on a long journey.

Remembering a walk to the Unconformity

Recall the walk we made to the Unconformity at Inchbonny to connect the rocks to the studio

⁷ I learnt this style of stepping from Australian dancer Russell Dumas, who in turn was influenced by his encounters with south east Asian dance.

Change of State

(1)

Tension and Release: A practice by Françoise Dupuy

Tension - a tightening of the whole body to its utmost

Release - a relaxation of the tension to its utmost.

Explore these different patterns and speeds:

Fast tension – slow release

Slow tension – fast release

Slow tension and slow release

Fast tension and fast release

Change of State

(2)

Porous Bodies

i

Start lying on the floor. Bring your awareness to your breathing. On each out breath imagine the air passing through the skin. Each in breath is a gathering in of the world around into ourselves. Become conscious of surfaces, the surface of the body and the surface of the floor. Let the body become porous. Work with seeping, spreading and porousness.

ii

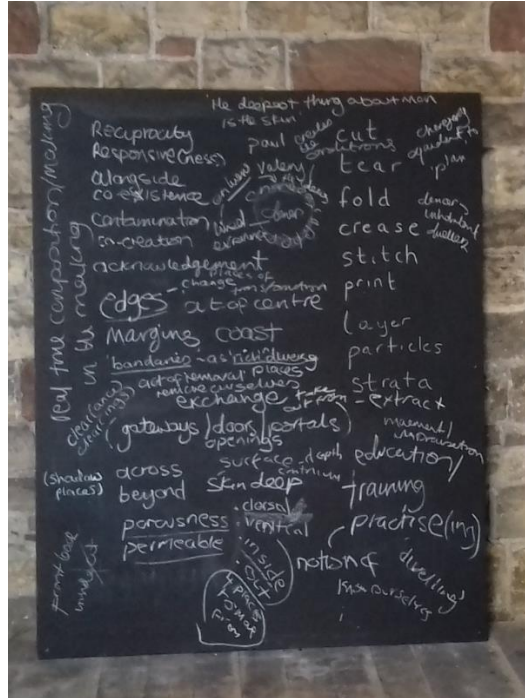
After some time use the outbreath to begin to move keeping porousness as a quality to work with. Slow rolling from side to side is a nice way to begin to move. Continue to explore this, increasing the size of the movement, and moving away from the floor and into the floor. Keep going until you find your way to standing and that muscles feel warm.

Other change of state themes that emerged in the performance: Crumple (as opposed to fold); Shake; Tear; Melt.

Score for Architecture and Figures

Written for 'Swings and Roundabouts' - In the Making, August 2017

Place yourself in relationship to the architecture of the space. Notice the locations that others have chosen. In your own time, move to one of the other locations. Place yourself in your own way. Continue visiting the locations. The score ends when everyone is in the same location as each other



Fold

Orientation: Fold, Unfold, Accumulation, Assemblage and Reconfiguration

Source material: Extending Practice session January 2017

i

To begin take a piece of paper and fold it in any way you like. As you do this consider what it is to fold. Lay out the paper piece on the floor.

ii

Stand with eyes closed. Fold the room into yourself. Take a minute or two to do this.

Then slowly open your eyes, unfolding the space.

Take a piece of paper and fold it in any way you like drawing on your experience of the activity you have just done. Lay out the paper piece alongside the other on the floor.

iii

Experiment with folding / unfolding in the body. Think of it as reconfiguring the body

Take a piece of paper and fold it in any way you like drawing on your experience of the activity you have just done. Lay out the paper piece alongside the others on the floor.

iv

With a partner:

A: find a starting position that is folded.

B: through verbal physical instructions - lead your partner to a standing /unfolded position

Reverse: Dancer A lead Dancer B back to your original folded position
Staying with your partner, take a piece of paper each. Give instructions to the other as to how you want it folded drawing on your experience of the activity you have just done.
Repeat taking the other role with your partner. Lay out the paper piece alongside the others on the floor.

v

Find a way to fold the space
Take a piece of paper. Fold it in any way you like drawing on your experience of the activity you have just done. Lay out the paper piece alongside the others on the floor.

vi

Select one or two of these paper pieces and use them as the basis for an improvisation









Sunday November 19th, 2017, The Bakery Studio, Jedburgh

Entr'actes: Alternative Arrangements

A small projector with a short film taken at the Hutton Unconformity, is tucked into a niche at the foot of one of three iron pillars. There is a whitewashed wooden table, different kinds of paper materials in black and white, and an assortment of cutting and shaping tools. A teaching skeleton is in the corner. Hanging from the ceiling, a fixed camera is set to take a photograph every ten minutes. Felicity is dressed all in black and I, all in white. A red Clarke Devil propane space heater, in a square area marked out with hazard tape, roars in the corner. The event will unfold over ten hours, from the dark before dawn to the dark after dusk.⁸ It was hard to see much out of the windows. We decided in advance not to use electric light so that the passing of time would be visible in the movement of daylight in the studio. The town bells chime 7am and so we begin.

Within the making sessions were further scores which we had agreed on in advance including *Near, Far and Infinite*; *Remembering a walk to the Unconformity*; *Walking in the Company of Stones*. Each offered a different starting point for encountering deep time and geological process. They could be explored in any order for any duration of time and returned to more made our own journeys through the day alongside each other but not oblivious to each other. The recorded conversations show that there were times when we experienced different degrees of connection. There was never though a sense that we were worlds apart rather that we were enquiring differently the same subject. The performance was the utterance of this enquiry and the conversations allowed us to share and exchange thoughts and ideas and brought us into dialogue in different ways. Whilst we had paid a lot of attention to preparing the conditions for the performance we had decided against actually 'practising' together in advance. There was no obligation to be working with the same score simultaneously.

We had no expectations that the public would stay for the duration, and it was designed as a drop in event. To encourage people to enter into the performance, to create some sort of context for it and to invite repeat viewings through the day it was programmed alongside other events. In discussion with Mike Collier of W.A.L.K and natural historian Keith Bowey, their morning and afternoon guided walks both started from and finished at The Bakery, with hot drinks as an enticement for people to linger. The walks itinerary took in Hutton's Unconformity along the way, interweaving the two different events as an experience.

⁸ Entr'actes: *Alternative Arrangement* was a collaboration between myself and visual artist Felicity Bristow. It was a durational performance event programmed as part of 'Mapping the Borders,' a week- long artist led programme curated by Inge Panneels and part of the UK wide Being Human Festival. Other events on the same day of the performance included two guided walks around Jedburgh led by Mike Collier and Keith Bowery of W.A.L.K. (Walking, Art, Landskip and Knowledge) a research centre at the University of Sunderland <http://walk.uk.net/> and a workshop by Zoe Childerley. Full details of all the Mapping the Borders events can be found here <https://beinghumanfestival.org/event/entractes-alternative-arrangements/>

To help the audience move from the reception space to the performance space we provided a series of instructions. We asked people to remove their outdoor shoes or to put on a pair of plastic overshoes provided at the top of the stairs in a big box; a notice politely asked people not to take photographs and chalked up words on the wall above a stack of black folded chairs invited people to take one. A *Score for Audience* was pinned to the walls in various places and printed copies were available for people to take on their way up the stairs. There was no designated area for the public to view from. The score for audience was my response to wanting to create the conditions for the audience to feel comfortable within the space and amidst the action and gathered together different scores I had been exploring workshops and events.

Score for Audience

Make yourself comfortable. Feel free to make use of the blankets and cushions in the space.

Allow time to pass.

Notice where other people and materials are placed in relation to the architecture.

Allow time to pass.

Extend your listening to include the sounds of the town and the sounds within the studio.

Allow time to pass.

Take the time to remember part or all your journey to the studio.

Allow more time to pass.

Move to other locations to view the work. Consider placing yourself in relation to the architecture of the space and/or in relation to the makers.

Take in what is happening beyond the studio and within the studio

Let more time pass.

Repeat any of the above actions.

Whenever you wish, exit the space.

Do something else.

Allow more time to pass.

Feel free to return to the studio at any point in the day and repeat all or any of the above.

In addition to offering ways for the public to engage with the performance, the score supports a process for becoming 'present' with what is occurring in and beyond the studio. A heightened state of awareness that the performers were also engaged with. To bring the public into the work in a similar way to the performers co-opts them as participants and creates the conditions for being witness rather than spectator. With the whole studio available to the audience, individual choreographies and group compositions emerged. Some people delineated the peripheries and edges of the space and others traversed it in more of a gallery mode. Everyone participated in a dance of walking and pausing.

Pushing the Boundaries is a short film documenting the walk can be viewed here. It begins outside The Bakery on Exchange Street. <https://www.ingepanneels.com/mapping-the-borders-project>



Time Lapse for Entr'actes: *Alternative Arrangements* | Photographs by Kevin Greenfield

Reflective conversations between the artists Felicity Bristow and Claire Pençak.

These took place every two hours during the performance.

9.00am

Felicity: Wow! Time – it's funny! I thought it would have seemed longer, but it seems to have flown by for that session. And the walking was really helpful in terms of understanding the space and beginning to watch you move as well. And making those connections physically myself - although I'm not a dancer - I can feel the muscles activating when you are just off centre. It was interesting in what it made me start to work with ... you mentioned the senses as well and not being able to see outside. So, I was printing on the paper and collecting the invisible data that's there but trying to make windows within windows too.

Claire: Yes, I saw that

Felicity: I guess there is the idea of repetition and applying the paper to the skin of the building I think that stuck with me and then the idea of the skeleton as well that felt quite strong in that section. The connection from head to foot.

Claire: For me, I was trying to stay on track with the tasks I'd set myself. The first hour I could have gone longer, I actually did, I carried it through working with the *under_standing* and with the lying and sitting and standing. Where you stand and where you face. If you just change your head that is already a shift, just a shift of the gaze is already a shift choreographically and in terms of what is being seen. It reminds me that a very small shift reads very large.

Felicity: The scale of it changes

Claire: Yes definitely. You can always do less, always less, trying to strip back down to less and less. Well, not less, it's actually going further in and making what you do resonate more. We must have picked up on something. I was looking outside and was working with what is beyond the space, and even though I couldn't see it, I know what's out there, lots of lines, and I was thinking of doing something in contrast, curves, which actually is what the birds do when they fly across. So, I was working with that, and I noticed you were stitching, and it felt like we were arriving to the same place there.

Felicity: I noticed that as well and when I was – I was looking at eroding – eroding the paper and I was noticing your movements and scraping the paper back

and how your body changed as well, just when you were turning in front of the table.

Claire: I was really working with what you were doing there.

Felicity: That was really interesting, but it was only when I tuned into that, there was an awareness of making something that made an effect.

Claire: The sound gave me the sense of something eroding away the skin. I enjoyed being close. I was meant to be working with near, far, infinite but frankly I only got as far as near! Working with what's just underneath the body. I know there were things falling, so this idea of things falling onto you, of being over-laid, that felt really rich. I really enjoyed being close but not in terms of eye contact but using what you were doing.

Felicity: Yes, awareness. I did as well. And it was about skin too. I eroded some of my skin too one of them! I was also on one of the books I was just doing horizontal strata but that whole thing about erasing layers. So, the whole book then contains evidence of erosion within it, so something will actually fall out when it is opened by somebody. The final thing that I just started on before we broke was testing erosion to the point of breakage. So, in a single page rather than a built-up signature, what it then becomes – a slash or a gash - it actually felt quite physical. In a way it was nice to stop at that point because it felt a bit brutal.

Claire: I'd picked up on that rasping sound that I was hearing. You said we had 4 minutes and I thought that I'd just take this pathway up and down. Well actually just up and then, reset and then up and go with that very fast, to get the heat up, and it was quite harsh compared to what I'd been doing before.

Felicity: No that's what I was doing too physically – cold hands – can I do it for 4 minutes and it's actually quite ... because its repetitive, it's not an action your used to, it's tiring.

Claire: Yes that 2 hours. It was a pleasant 2 hours, it flowed through it didn't seem hugely long.

Felicity: But it also felt, as you said, the sense of not needing to rush and that thing of reducing and reducing what we do – it feels like I want to do less things. To reduce what I'm doing. It's made me think about that. It's not about producing but refining.

- Claire: And the repetition, although we were both repeating, I wasn't working on trying to actually repeat, replicate the moves, so something specific. It was repeating but it's not repetitive! If that makes sense. It was doing it again and then doing it again and again and again and again but not in the sense of trying to re-peat something. it was just something that was occurring once more and once more again and then once more, which is different to doing something and then going now try to repeat that.
- Felicity: I think that's what I felt about pressing onto the windows as well. It didn't need to be the same pattern I did follow the front inside, inside row back page along the windows but that was enough it didn't matter where it was. That's repeat too.
- Claire: I suppose in terms of geology, the repetition basically, I was thinking but that won't be the same all the time it's just this ongoing action I suppose rather than repetition perhaps. But that ongoing action produces patterning.
- Felicity: That's quite interesting isn't it, that perception of what pattern is. That it has to be a mirroring or an exact repetition.
- Claire: So, do you know what you are going onto over the next?
- Felicity: Well ...
- Claire: It doesn't matter I was just wondering.
- Felicity: No nothing specific. I quite like this idea of building things up in terms of materials, maybe using some of the larger pieces of paper.
- Claire: I like the shavings and then the very fine cotton that's hanging.
- Felicity: So that was the thing about the width of me, so that's why I haven't cut it because it has been – if you were stitching a much bigger book it needed to stitch that amount of thread – I wasn't sure about hanging them up somewhere. I felt like they were kind of reference material something to hang. I think I am going to check the making words. Maybe going to put some making words back up on the chalk board just to have a visual cue for that. Maybe just put one up actually so it's not too busy. Folding, I haven't done much folding. What about you?
- Claire: I've got horizontal/vertical. So, working with moving between standing – lying- standing – that's one element. And the other is change of state. I

should have done near, far, infinite in this last section but I didn't. No doubt I'll go off piste depending on what you are doing.

Felicity: No change of state was something that I'd written as well for the middle of the day to think about. So that it was much more intense and that idea about skin so that would be good.

Claire: I've got porous bodies in between and fold/unfold So for the next two hours I have horizontal/vertical; change of state, porous bodies/skin deep and fold/unfold.

Felicity: I was thinking of material words, folding and then change of state.

Both: Great!

11.00am

Felicity: That felt much harder those two hours.

Claire: Me too compared to the first two hours. I was just starting to find something at the end actually. I could have gone on, but I needed to come out of it and go back into it earlier.

Felicity: Yes, I had that feeling as well that when I set up folding it felt that it wasn't ... I don't know if it needed to extend as a single thing or that I was getting this sense of panic that I didn't feel like it was working, so I didn't continue something. And then when you were moving and I set that piece up it felt like, yes, now I am beginning to work something through with the roll of paper and thinking about translating your movements into a score, what my folds – I was working with folding and change of state – so that's why I'd been using the wax paper doing it with both hands and moving it around like a game on the table. But it almost felt too small to do that in the space. Which is why it made sense to move on and change materials, do something else within the room rather than something made at a desk. I'm not quite sure what happened whether it was concentration breaking or just not feeling that I'd got into a rhythm of doing something.

Claire: Near the beginning you were crumpling, and I was able to work with the sound of that a lot. So that was great actually. I started to have a sense of what that means - how to crumple is different from to fold - in terms of the body. You could say it's fold – but it's not it's a different kind of going in on itself. So, I enjoyed that.

Felicity: I liked that because it was less precise. Maybe that's why I changed. I was folding pre-folded paper, so it had like a technical thing – it wasn't straightforward folding paper you had to work it to get it to fold but that felt a bit dull so after a while ... which is why I then turned the paper sideways and started to crumple it at different points so ending up with the different shapes which was nice when you were working under them.

Claire: I had a real sense of the subterranean doing that. Either subterranean or above it like the atmosphere around the planet. So, something above you not pressing down but just there, then when you shift where it is it's like having your head in the clouds, moving with your position.

Felicity: Yes, that looked interesting I think when I placed them on the floor, I thought I could set them out and then if one was going to be useful to you where you were, it felt that that was testing something else as well. I was wondering if maybe those two different things didn't settle together well.

Claire: Folding and?

Felicity: Change of state. Maybe as a pairing that was helping my mind respond to it whereas erosion and deposition has that relationship. Maybe linguistically it didn't make that connection.

Claire: I worked a little but with change of state, having the muscles in complete tension like stone I suppose. How hard can you hold the muscles and then letting that go, so then you feel really open. As soon as you let go everything opens out so that changes your state. The other one I started to play with was setting up a shake through the floor and into the body and then when you stop again the muscles have changed the way they are.

Felicity: I wanted to watch that more but ...

Claire: The lady was in the space!

Felicity: So maybe that is also what happened in the last 2 hours, allowing the conversation I was distracted from concentrating on what aspect, and that's just part of the day, how to deal with that. Maybe try and avoid people's eye contact!

Claire: It's hard. It's obviously more easy with making but when you have a mover in the space you can see them thinking don't engage with her!

Felicity: I think that was the thing though because it is that – it's perceived as your movement – and people came in and absolutely watched it quite intensely and were interested and then stepped forward into what I'm doing to have a conversation I actually thought – and maybe that's me being slightly reserved – to come out from the desk to be making somewhere else so that it's not a kind of point for people. So that's what I was going to do next, to come away from there.

Claire: I'm thinking because we are going into the halfway mark and the second half that I might return to some of the things I've already done and add on the two final tasks – to gather up some moments – not to do them, repeat them but to glean a few bits of material, to try to summarise the morning in a way.

Felicity: That sounds like a way to do it. It feels like the morning is too short in a way.

Claire: Well next time we'll do dawn to dusk at midsummer!

Felicity: Speak to me at 3pm when you're peeling me off the floor. Maybe it's just my mind as wellbeing quite absorbing in terms of output so I like the idea of revisiting things to get back into a place where it felt more settled. To come back to things.

Claire: We could maybe start with ... the space is moving on in terms of what is happening in the space, I might start on the edge and then move back into it. I'm just thinking about that standing and placing.

Felicity: And if you want to take anything away or are you happy with it at the moment that's fine. Maybe at midday we could see if we want to reset if that makes sense. I too will revisit things and then I was going to work with near, far, and infinite as well.

1.00pm

Felicity: It felt like a joining phase. It was good to revisit a few things, language from earlier. I enjoyed watching how you interacted with the gloves and then also without them when you were looking at the particles on the floor. I guess I've been trying to listen to how you are moving as well, so rather than watching you, to be aware of the sounds.

Claire: There were some points when it felt like we were very separate and then I always like to come back close again. It can feel like different worlds going

on and it helps to sort of tune back in a bit. I tried using your making words to create a loose kind of phrase and then did an accumulation and dis-accumulation.

Felicity: When you did that thing just behind my head, it gave me the shivers.

Claire: The area over there is a very nice area to work in. Certain kinds of movement make the paper move and then you let it have its say. Looking here now I wonder if the back paper we could take away.

Felicity: I was thinking that as well.

Claire: The green's good too. It makes a different space, and I haven't worked there yet.

Felicity: What it does make me think is that maybe I'm not brave enough doing things. I guess it's a way into leading up to bigger scale things. Although it is all supposed to be human and human scale so that's fine but it's maybe just not what I expected.

Claire: I think there is something nice about the scale of this kind of thing in a big space because of that sense of time/deep time being a huge thing and we are such a tiny thing, and it makes sense to me. There was one bit I tried to do that exercise of remembering the walk to the Unconformity because I felt like I was getting into just doing stuff and I needed to get back to the Unconformity.

Felicity: I did a bit of that when I was back working with the black stuff which is partly why I got the brush out again, to erode the paper and to think about that moment in time and the change in direction. I felt as well at that point that a reminder is a good thing.

Claire: A strategy for the next bit. I was wondering about whether – they look like different continents- about treating each area – to put a few chairs around each area to invite people to sit more closely rather than stay on the periphery. It might not work but at least it suggests ...

Felicity: There is also a hesitancy still at the head of the stairs to step in. Once they are in that's fine. We can do that.

Claire: We can always move them away again.

- Felicity: And I was thinking to work with edge or corner because I haven't so far. I've engaged with roof structure and steel structure, but I don't feel I've looked much at edge and corner. There's a thing about layering and obscuring I remember when we had tracing paper over the etching. I actually wondered about going to get a copy of the etching illustration and taking a section and drawing on the wall just so that it is an extract from it. These are too regular, this kind of idea of building up, I still think they are important but trying to make that link between drawing and making. Site again. Somewhere there might be appropriate. What do you think you are going to do?
- Claire: There is something about going deeper into the source material from this morning.
- Felicity: Does it feel comfortable doing this length of movement?
- Claire: I think I need to be braver about stopping. To remove myself a bit more. But you can have been moving and moving, and just then someone comes into the room and you think Oh I'd better move some more – telling them that I really have been moving this morning quite a lot.
- Felicity: That's a good point and I am aware of that as well. Something that I also think, and I did it with Helen, but I felt uncomfortable, stopping to catch up with where you were because I felt like I wasn't doing anything, so that's fine, but you being still, is still working.
- Claire: Yes, because it is about the presence of the figure in the space.
- Felicity: We haven't tried the metronome, have we? That could be a way of ...
- Claire: I haven't noticed as much sound from outside as there was this morning.
- Felicity: No, I haven't. I guess it is a Sunday. I think I expected there to be more noise from the town more to-ings and fro-ing's. Quite a number of people have come, seems like good numbers. I think there is quite a big thing about taking a seat and placing it in the space when people are working. Not many people have sat. They are more comfortable to walk around. Maybe they think the seating is staged. I know that I trip myself up by wanting to make something look aesthetically pleasing in the space, how a knot is tied, where the paper is, those kinds of things I think that extends the time of the practice.
- Claire: That's an important part.

Felicity: I am pleased with how things are building up, making spaces, quite unexpected things too. I was charging the film to see if we could put that back on as well. It works best when it is quite small.

3.00pm

Claire: I really enjoyed that whole session.

Felicity: What did you enjoy most about it .

Claire: I wasn't thinking so much I was working much more intuitively. I wasn't working with a single thing, it was more an accumulation of stuff, sometimes there were instances when I went Ok let's work with skin for example, then I'd start and just follow where it took me.

Felicity: My score's out the window, partly I didn't want to be clock watching, that sense of accepting that something might take longer, and I found that stopping doing something and then attending to something else was quite a nice break. Just when I went from the table to remake the plastic piece again and your friend was standing there and that felt quite comfortable, so he stood there and watched me wrestle with it. And I guess I haven't been thinking about the end product either which is good. Maybe that's because of setting things earlier in the day and that has allowed more freedom to work. I was thinking about layers and strata with the translucent book – and I thought I'd do a book inside out and then it became quite an odd shape but that's fine. It's like a test.

Claire: So, have you found that you've started making in a slightly different way at all?

Felicity: I definitely did with that because...

Claire: I would say I'm finding new vocabulary that's not something that I've done before, there is a new vocabulary coming out.

Felicity: That's good .

Claire: So, I was wondering if you were finding the same?

Felicity: I'm less precious with paper and that's something that is slowly developing. Actually, working with paper generally I am very careful about keeping it pristine but that's becoming less and less so and that paper

having memory is something I'm quite interested in. certainly, with folding the larger sheets earlier – there was already a folded memory within in. And it's been quite nice to have the smaller pieces I made this morning just sat there – a reminder of inside outside, books as containers of space.

Claire: I found myself working more texturally maybe having all these materials in the space is slowly dropping into the body a bit more, in terms of like textures.

Felicity: I was amazed to find myself very comfortable lying on my front – Ok that's good – although in my head it's more because of how I've been sitting so that it was a kind of stretch. I guess maybe a question that I keep thinking of is about working directly with you in some way.

Claire: We haven't really explored that so much have we?

Felicity: I'm not saying that has to happen, I was just conscious...

Claire: I thought that time although we were in our separate spaces most of the time, I didn't feel like I was in a parallel universe to you whereas earlier before lunch sometimes it felt like I was doing my thing and you were doing your thing and it was like two different worlds. This time though I was aware of what you were doing although I wasn't always paying direct attention to that it felt a bit more connected.

Felicity: And I liked dipping and out of your movement, I've certainly become more aware of, more confident in watching movement too and relating to that in a way. I realise it's my own interpretation as well, so I don't have to stick rigidly to what you were doing, maybe that sounds obvious but in terms of working alongside you. It did feel like more pressure to do something when the audience came in that session, and I don't know, maybe it is what I was doing but I thought ...

Claire: We've just got one more double session left. Do we want to remove anything? Maybe the mirror away?

Felicity: Yes sure, that would be fine.

Claire: I quite enjoyed having people witnessing for a longer length of time. It feels like they are settling into what's happening as well and that makes you feel more relaxed because they are taking the time to watch so it feels like you don't have to deliver instantly.

Felicity: That's' maybe where my slight panic was because it was an extended audience where before it was more snapshot.

Claire: Yes, in and out.

Felicity: Where this is like oh actually – it made me think – am I continuous, do I break and maybe reset the plastic thing. So that was good it was nice to have people for staying for a time. And it was nice to that they had a chat – even though you didn't know what it was about.

Claire: There is something in my head about a strategy. I did do a bit of accumulation in the corner actually: 1, 12, 123 etc. with different points on the wall. We could maybe think about disappearing. I know we have two hours but maybe a slow erosion of some description. That doesn't mean we need to be taking things away but something around ...

Felicity: That could be nice.

Claire: It might start to build up into something new as well. It doesn't need to have an end as we know. For me I feel like I don't want to add more movement ideas. I'm happy to go more into them and to have the idea of cutting them back.

Felicity: In terms of making that is probably something I would quite like to do now. To think of binding, accumulate some of the material in terms of sets, to work round these things. That would be quite nice. I'm not saying to have product but to experiment with curating the research really. Like the black pieces, how it was made, so when we take it out again – that kind of language of making is still there.

Claire: I may work with being removed, not out of the building, but taking myself out rather than always putting myself in. Extraction is perhaps a better word.

Felicity: Extraction or erasing.

Claire: That thing about gap. What's there when I'm not there.

Felicity: I know we will have these still photos but there is something interesting about thinking about the space when everything is removed too in terms of objects. I'd anticipate that you could still move in the space with the memory of – so once things are moved around there would still be that memory or something that remains. So that is interesting too. Absence.

Claire: That sounds like a plan.

Felicity: I think we are doing well Are you OK?

Claire: Yes. I didn't last long with the anorak so maybe I'll try it again. It absents me.

Felicity: Yes, that's true. And the skeleton. I've referenced the skeleton but in terms of memory as well the initial under_standing I found really useful when you talked about the eye sockets and the ear, the spaces in the body.

Claire: There is tendency to think of the eyes being at the front of the face, but it gives you a much softer focus if you think about looking out from the eye sockets within the skull, further back in your head. It relaxes your eyes, eye sockets, whereas if you think your eyes are at the front – it gets a bit like 'Jazz eyes' in terms of dance.

5.00pm

Claire: So, let's think about the last 2 hours and then we can think about the whole event.

Felicity: The way we planned thinking about how we were going to bind things together or remove things and the idea of absence was a really positive way to work. I felt in terms of the duration that was quite an uplifting thing to be looking at, because it meant that you reviewed the movements that had been made earlier in the day. I think I found particularly when I was stitching the paper over the copper binding, that I was remembering the way that you folded or the way you were lying down by the creases so there was a kind of memory from making that.

Claire: I really liked it because I joined in with your stitching activity there – I liked that whole thing there actually. It felt like a consolidation of different things.

Felicity: I did feel bad about dropping the paper there. It was a point of finality. So, what do I do? Do I leave it? It was a kind of no more thing that was left in roughly the location. And I liked it when you moved the debris and worked with that.

Claire: I was kind of sad that I had moved stuff once I started to move it.

Felicity: Were you?

Claire: I thought it would be a nice idea and then I went, no! I liked it as it was. I think especially as you are getting towards the end of a long period of devising that there is a tendency to go, oh I'll do something with that, and actually it's not doing something with it, it's maybe doing it alongside is as good. I don't know I liked the first thing I did when it scattered really well but then it didn't do that again.

Felicity: No, I know because it seemed to clump. That's why I noticed that when brushing it off the desk, which is why I worked over the edge thing because then it did just dissipate. Well, that's interesting finding out about the material. I think there was a realignment of the pieces like the green tubing.

Claire: That's a nice term realignment I'll have to write that one down. I didn't notice you take the paper away here (*indicating to the black paper*) I like that. What's left.

Felicity: It was interesting because I wanted to open up the hands and then I tried to put them on the paper and it felt like it was 'here is a picture', but it was quite nice because the fingertips were over the edge and I just removed them and then it's just under the table and I worked with the book.

Claire: The arrangement of the black pile and then the particles is lovely.

Felicity: It was really interesting when you were working with the film on you, which you wouldn't have seen. There was that thing about textures, when you were lying down, because some of the footage is river to earth and then you had that real sense of, it was that under_standing that came back, that through the floors down to the earth. So that felt really connected.

Claire: Yes, terrain.

Felicity: I had quite a few chats.

Claire: Yes, it was kind of a weird experience because suddenly there was an influx at the end of the day.

Felicity: But returning, which was nice we talked about, like someone who wasn't sure if I was preparing, getting ready now realises that that was the work. So that's a nice thing as well and I guess in a way not needing concentration to stitch as I knew what I'd decided to do with it, it was fine.

Claire: There was different audience activities at the same time. There was engagement with you through conversation and there was like witnesses over here – so those different activities bring something different into the space. It's like an informality and a formality mixed together.

Felicity: So, like traditional audience.

Claire: Ok there is people here giving some attention to the material and informal over here.

Felicity: But they really connected with seeing you work and talked about it because they said - they really absorbed what you were doing – Lise – she was the one that came back and then had another interpretation and understanding of what we were looking at as well. I'm just amazed we got to the end.

Claire: So, thinking about the whole ten hours, since this morning, this journey – the hardest bit was the second set of 2 hours for me.

Felicity: No, me too.

Claire: And then maybe just before 1'ish, I was starting to like feel, what am I doing?

Felicity: Yes, and I wondered whether it was because the first 2 hours had gone well and I felt it was really positive and a kind of expectation, but sometimes you need a kind of dip don't you to ...

Claire: Push you out into something else?

Felicity: Yes, so well it can be kind of uncomfortable and I appreciate that. I think also knowing that we were doing it for a longer period meant that I didn't feel panicky. I really enjoyed it and learnt a lot too about watching you move and work and ... two different brains thinking about two different worlds and ways of making that overlaps as well.

Claire: Yes definitely.

Felicity: And just how much I've learnt about this space too and it's one of those things we said we'd not do too much before starting so that first hour for me where I did take longer to look and to think about the space and the materials was really valuable research.

Claire: I think it was a good move to have not tried things in advance. I know we were practising in our own ways- you were trying some things with materials and what things you might like to work with and in the same way I was thinking about those different scores that I would work with in the morning to source material. Part of me was going this is absolutely the thing to do, to not try anything together but I was also going, is that a good idea? It was a good idea. It would have been a different - there is something about coming completely fresh in and then doing a long spurt rather than – what would we have achieved if we'd tried something for half an hour really? What would we have known? I don't know.

Felicity: I think that long durational research together is really valuable, no I thought that as well – how will I be in the space – I'm doing it with my shoulders now – will I be like that? Hidden in the corner going – go away! And being present and being a presence that is recorded up there (gesturing to the stop frame camera) and that thing about being on show which as a performer is what you do but a lot of exhibitions and things you are not there, you are not present.

Claire: Yes, you are represented by the work. And so, did you think you learnt anything about the Unconformity or geological processes?

Felicity: Even though it was a long time it feels like it's the start of then looking back as well, there are images that I remember like the engraving – I have a vision of lines that I can visualise when I was rubbing the paper or moving it or something. I think through your movement is probably something that has made it more obvious in terms of ground and how you spoke at the beginning ... that connection to space in the body and the ground. I was probably quite absorbed for quite a lot of the time because I didn't prompt myself and think about it regularly apart from the walks. But do you think you did?

Claire: Well, I think the 'compression' thing, watching you doing that (indicating the plastic and book press) gave me a different sense in the body when I started working with compression. I wouldn't normally have done that, and it did give that – obviously super speeded up compared to deep time – sense of what it was like with these two different bits of land squashing together or rock and how it is not a smooth progression. It is irregular. It goes to a certain point and then something else has to give so that it starts to fragment around the body. compression and something around the kind of patterning, quite a lot of complexity. There are so many possibilities to fold and crumple and compress and shatter. There are so many ways of it happening and I think that is interesting, that it's not just ... People talk

about how it all gets pressed up for example and it suggests that there is one kind of pressing up, like it very generically gets pressed up but actually when you start working with 'pressed up' for example then you realise that it can realise itself in so many different ways.

Felicity: No that's true. I think it's the word 'erode' probably because it was about particles, the idea of erosion can be friction or water or thinking about the elements. Also, the heater, the fire, the element of having that sound.

Claire: Furnace.

Felicity: And I was saying as well that the skeleton although I didn't work with it, felt that it was right. It would be very different without.

Claire: It's a reference point isn't it? I used it as a reference point sometimes or to decide I'm going to work with pelvis or knee, when I was needing something else to start with.

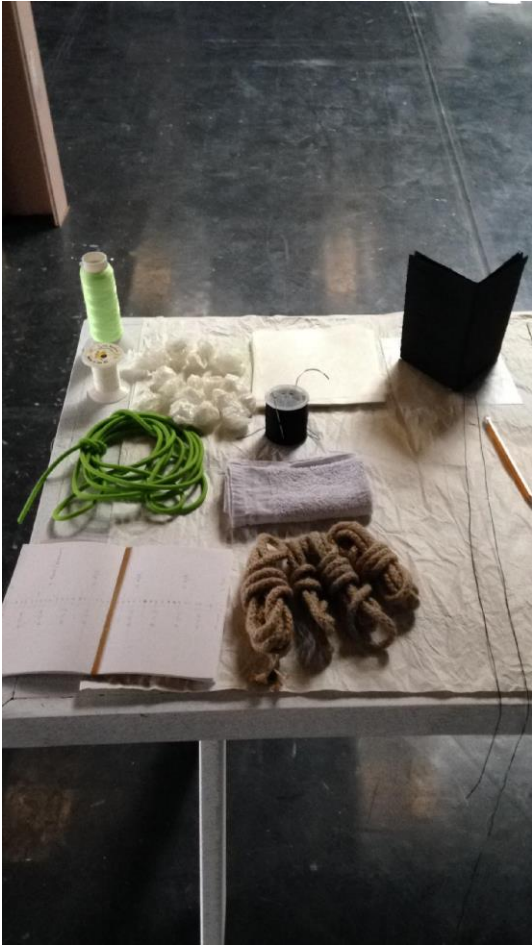
Felicity: And that's probably what I've learnt that I wouldn't have made that connection before between the body and geology so that was something new to be thinking about. I really enjoyed it thank you

Claire: I really enjoyed it to!











Photographs | Felicity Bristow, 2017

Reflections on Performance

Notes from meeting with Felicity Bristow, WASPS Studio, Selkirk, January 15th, 2018

- We noted how many people said they found it moving to watch/experience. Felicity wondered if it was something to do with the endeavour of it, and that we had put ourselves in a vulnerable situation
- How it entwined different temporalities: ten- hour performance dawn to dusk; two-hour sections with reflective conversations; personal experience of how these sometimes passed quickly or slowly; audience coming in for shortish periods of time; the time that is created in the performance; we were responding to deep time.
- Spoke about how creating the conditions for ourselves and for the audience was really important. Note: to make score for audience available on the wall, rather than in the hand as more likely to take note of it. Make it more visible and to make it a way of reminding people of it
- Idea of running it alongside other events which brought an audience to the studio worked very well. People came in more than once and it created an audience by the way. Planning as 'reassuring'.

- Felicity enjoyed the unscriptedness of it.
- I noted how the idea of using a score (accumulation/dis-accumulation) from the choreographic perspective seemed strong but that this was not the experience as the dancer. Had to ditch the score as it became too much about trying to fulfil the task, a memory task, and that this would have stifled the performance and made it impossible to be so responsive to what was occurring.
- Documentation – real time photography done remotely was ok, but the result wasn't wildly interesting. What was interesting was what was not included/missing. What it hadn't captured. All photos also from same place/angle, same proximity etc
- Audience would have experienced the work as a fragment

End of project report for Entr'actes: *Alternative Arrangements*

As part of Creative Scotland Reporting

Through the process of the artistic research and collaboration, what was initially conceived as a short 20-minute performance piece, became a 10-hour durational work that took place from the dark before dawn to the dark after dusk (7am to 5pm).

To develop an audience for an experimental durational work in the Scottish Borders was going to be a challenge so the artists developed a 'curational' strategy that would help to address this. Entr'actes: *Alternative Arrangements* was programmed in parallel with three other events – two walks by Mike Collier of W.A.L.K. and the naturalist Keith Bowey, and a workshop with the artist Zoe Childerley. All three events started at the Bakery and both the walks finished at the Bakery. This brought an audience to the space and created the possibility for people to experience the durational performance at least twice throughout the day.

To document the event in a manner that was relevant to the creative process the artists collaborated with photographer Kevin Greenfield to develop a time-lapse photographic documentation that would evoke the unfolding process of the work throughout the day and the shifting light states in the space. With the use of a remote camera, two images were taken every 10 minutes throughout the day. The resulting photographic series offers the potential for a future piece if work perhaps in the form of a small publication combining text and images.

Entr'actes: *Alternative Arrangements*

- initiated a new artistic partnership between choreographer/dancer Claire Pençak and visual artist Felicity Bristow and the beginning of a creative process for a future piece of work.
The artists intend to build on what was established in terms of the working relationship and the creative process in 2018/2019 as a series of works.
- Stimulated artistic activity in Jedburgh and brought people to The Bakery space. Galashiels, Selkirk, Hawick and perhaps Melrose, are the most likely locations for this kind of cultural activity, so it was important that the Mapping the Borders programme was able to extend its reach to a different town. Jedburgh is also in the early stages of undergoing a period of town regeneration, so the timing is important. The Bakery building along with the Port House will be part of this regeneration programme in the next few years, so it is useful to have opportunities to be able to establish it as a cultural space in the centre of town at an early stage.
- Brought attention to the Hutton's Unconformity which in the last few years has become a rather neglected site. The project created the impetus to begin to develop a conversation around the development of the site with the Jed Alliance group. It's potential to be a visitor attraction along with several other geological features along the stretch of Jed Water that runs through the town is being explored as part of the Jedburgh town plan.
- Tested a way of developing audiences for more experimental performance work by curating it alongside other events
- Tested a way of documenting durational work that can be developed in the future.

Comments received from audience members:

'I thought your performance on Sunday was very moving - and quite beautiful. I saw a little of it before we started the walk and then stayed a while longer when we got back.'

'I felt this was an extraordinary event, especially in that atmospheric place. Especially too in that coldness. I thought it showed huge strength and courage and it was very thought provoking.'

'Just wanted to say how much I enjoyed your performance yesterday. It was very affecting – which I hadn't really expected for some reason. '

'It made me think deeply about landscape, feeling and dance'

'A big feeling of folding, layering and time.'

Sunday August 19th, 2018

Field (Extract) *A shifting arrangement of stones*

Choreographer Merav Israel. Dancers Merav Israel, Claire Pençak

Background.

The starting points for this project by Merav Israel was a book of photographs by Sean Scully of the traditional stone walls of Arran (2007) and 'Mending Wall' by Robert Frost.

*'...And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each...'*

The 'Field' of the title refers to field in the sense of an enclosed area of agricultural land and to the spatial concept of field as practised by the choreographer Merce Cunningham, and visual artist Jackson Pollack, where there is no hierarchy in space, where 'centre' is equal to any other point in space. This is one episode of a longer piece of work by Merav Israel for more dancers, hence the bracketed (Extract). Extract also speaks to the removal of stones throughout the work which changes our perception of the space.

The stones used in this performance were re-purposed from a pile found near Allar's Mill, close to the Hutton's Unconformity, Jedburgh. Perhaps leftover from some former construction purpose? Erratics of a sort. They are angular, not stones that have been worn smooth by river or sea.

Field (**Extract**) commences as a 'game' with the two performers taking it in turns to arrange and rearrange stones which in turn reconfigure the studio space. By the end of the performance, the relationship between the performers and stones has shifted so that the performers themselves are shaped and figured by these more than human others, rather than being objects to manipulate and move around. The agency of stone emerges.

Before the performance begins the audience are invited to take a chair, stand, sit on the floor, move around throughout the performance. There is no obligation to stay at the edges.

Description of Work

A pile of stones has been placed mid-way into the studio space. Merav and I are taking turns to redistribute the stones from the pile laying them out in a discontinuous diagonal line. The stones are placed in ways reminiscent of drystone dykes found around the Borders. You can hear the sounds of our feet and the sound of stones as they contact each other and the floor.



The space is gradually being divided. The audience moves around. About 5 minutes in, I lay down on one side of the stone divide. Merav occupies the space on the other side. We move between sitting, lying, crouching; shifting our relationship to each other and the stones.

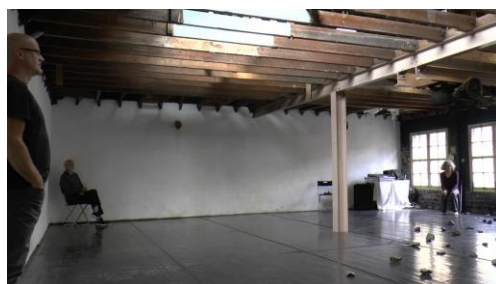


I remove some of the stones to another location in the studio and from there scatter them – we hear them rolling across the floor, settling into their own places. The scattering is repeated several times, the stones become dispersed and the space recomposed. Merav remains where she is but everything has changed around her.

The context shifted.

I take a seat on the edge of the space

Merav makes circles of stone in the studio. She places some around an audience member sitting in the corner. The remaining stones she gathers into two piles.



We take it in turns to re-compose the space, working from what has been left by the other. Each time we withdraw to the edge – a cue for the other to resume the 'game'. A shifting territory emerges. Members of the audience also redistribute themselves - mainly around the edges.

25 mins in I take a single stone place it and rather than withdrawing to the edge, I lay down around it, covering it. The stone is concealed, and the figure is foregrounded but in covering stone something stony appears in the shape of the figure. Merav invites the audience to continue the 'game'.

Merav uses the new arrangement of stone to move into the space and transition into a new section where she is no longer the shaper but the one that is shaped.



I gather the scattered stones and place them around her – they outline her, contain her. Remaining close to the ground she slowly moves away.



The stones remain as a reminder of where she has been. A marker in the space. I continue the activity of placing the stones around her as she moves along. Merav arrives at one of the iron pillars in the space.

She pauses. I withdraw to another place in the space, a stone in either hand.



An audience member spontaneously moves towards Merav balancing a stone on his sandals.

I am holding the stones loosely, sensing the weight of them, so that they can fall into the palm of my hands without falling out of my hands.

I begin to move guided by their weights, following stone. I arrange myself around the movement and mass of the stones.



What emerges feels disjointed, fractured, I shift directions and axis, sometimes extending out into the space, and other times taken towards the floor. I roll away. a rolling stone gathering no moss.

Merav hands stones to the audience who are making their own explorations. As this is happening, I gather stones together and Merav begins to work with two stones in her hands. She is being shaped by stone. I join her in this activity.



There is much activity in the room. At some moment Merav must have stopped doing this as she is now directing a bright floor lamp towards me. We are finding a place to finish. An audience member continues to explore working with the stones. Merav and I remove ourselves to the edge. The improviser continues.



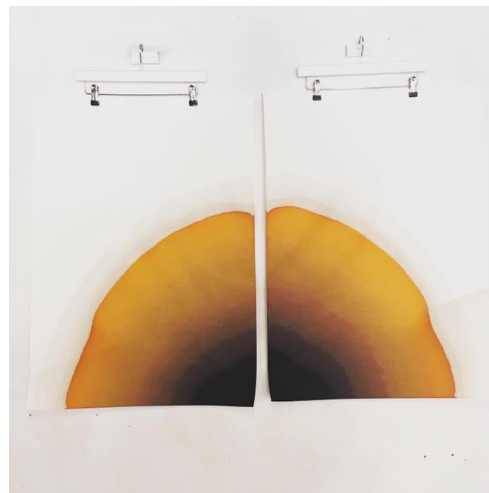
Merav calls 'The End'.

All images are stills from video documentation of the performance.

Unconformities: An installation by Felicity Bristow

BATCH:2

Throughout the month of August, visual artist Felicity Bristow developed an installation of her experimental paper and pigment 'Unconformities' exploring the physical structure of the middle floor studio space in The Bakery and its own unique environmental conditions, revealing ephemeral and 'alternative truths' about the site. The work accumulated over the duration of BATCH:2 and any audience that made repeat visits would have seen something additional each week. The work followed through on the thinking through practice of 'Entr'actes: Alternative Arrangements'.



Images | Felicity Bristow, 2019

[We have loved Felicity's accumulating... - The Bakery Studio | Facebook](#)

Sunday March 17th, 2019, Wylam, Northumberland
Dance Improvisation North East (d.i.n.e.)

Re: Grounding

*Where the path ends
the changes begin
and the stones appear
ideas of the earth.*

Kenneth White, From Stones of the Cloudy Forest, Book VI
Handbook for the Diamond Country



Rocks at Siccar Point.

A geopoetic theme shapes this session.

We will work in the company of stones through a series of guided improvisations and perception practices to allow stone ways to shape and score our moving – minds

Re: Grounding Session Plan
Part One

Beginnings

Emergence: (10 mins)

Go with what emerges in the body

Stone Walks

i

Choose two stones. Hold one in each hand. Go for a walk with your stones when you feel like it, pause, do the 'understanding practice' for as long or short as you like, move on and repeat. After some time, you might choose to walk or pause in relation to another stone walker.

ii

Slow walk with stone from one end of the room to the other, as a group in a line.
Reflections

Ruth Hayward finding that it was too much to hold the stones for a long time decided to leave one of her stones on the way. On looking back over the hall at the end of the walk the abandoned stone appeared as an 'erratic', a boulder dropped off by a moving glacier 'commonly of a quite different stone-type to that on which they rest' (Clarkson & Upton, 2010, p.189) For White, erratics are evidence of the quest of 'a man engaged on an erratic path for a far-out thing. What people see are the erratics (the stones he leaves on his paths), what he sees are flashes of the far-out thing' (White, 2005, p. 208). Paula Turner mentioned that she had trained with a Butoh practitioner once and his work was to slow walk leaving stones in his wake. Karen Rann held her stones to her belly rather than holding them in separate hands. This could be an addition to the score, to hold the stones as you wish.

Shaped by Stone (with witnessing)

Based on a practice by Merav Israel

In 2's one moving and one witnessing (10 mins each)

Holding two stones, place the 'mind' in the stones and allow them to shape your moving. Don't hold the stones too tightly, instead allow the stones to sit in your hand in a way that lets you feel the weight, the heft of them. Too tight a grip tenses the muscles and cuts off the flow of movement.

Change over roles and then spend a few minutes reflecting together on the experience from the perspectives of witness and mover.

Part 2

Removing yourself from space: Extraction Practice

Based on Charlie Morrissey's de-materialising practice

i)

Rolling across the floor. Pour yourself into the ground, allowing the weight to fall into the floor,

ii)

Rolling again but this time with the intention of 'removing yourself' from the space rather than materialising the space.

iii)

Find a partner, work together (not necessarily rolling) and remove yourself from the space using the motion, momentum of each other to help this.

Reflections

I found a natural connection between the stone practices and the extraction practice. Stone being extracted from the ground. Working with stone shapes us in less familiar ways and Extraction practice brings attention to the space as we remove ourselves. A kind of extinction practice??? We noticed a tendency to hold our breaths.

Stone Ways

Group improvisation for 30 minutes

Using everything we have done so far as material to work with move in and out of being witness or mover. There should be three witnesses at any one time. You can witness from within the improvisation, in a moment of pause, and then continue.

Reflections

I remember that Karen Rann walked with one stone on her foot – slowly – for a very long time. It was fascinating and brought the attention to the stone, not herself.

Documentation of workshop:

[Past Workshops | danceimprovnortheast \(wordpress.com\)](http://danceimprovnortheast.wordpress.com)

16th June 2019
Expressing the Earth Scottish Centre for Geopoetics Conference,
Wiston Lodge, Biggar

Perception Practices: Stone Ways Workshop



This workshop explores our relationship to stone and ground through embodied practice. We will work in the company of stones through a series of structured movement improvisations to allow stone ways to shape our moving and our mind and to discover what we can learn from stone about ourselves.

This workshop draws on two collaborative movement research project's – *Stone Lives* with Merav Israel, Tim Rubidge and Kate Foster (2014) and *Field (extract)* with Merav Israel (2018)

No previous movement experience is required.

Workshop Session

The workshop drew on the 'Re: Grounding' workshop for Dance Improvisation North East on March 17th 2019 and included:

Under_standing Practice (Standing and Lying)
Deep Time Walking Practice
Shaped by Stone

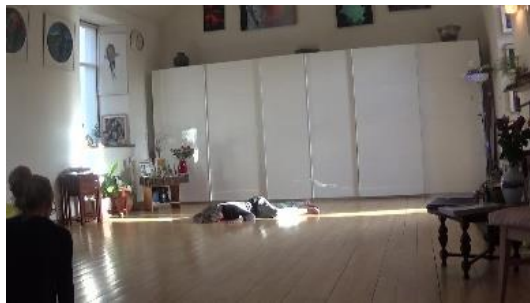
Reflections

We worked outside and as the ground was mossy many of us worked barefoot. This contact with earth/moss rather than a studio floor brought a heightened experience to *Under_standing* and *Deep Time Walking Practices*. One of the workshop participants shared her experience of the Deep Time Walking with the group when we came to the end. Part way into the activity she felt compelled to throw away first one and then another of the stones. In casting one and then the other away she found that she started to laugh followed by a strong upwelling of grief.

Moss Ways

Finding Moss: Creative Process Documentation

Stills taken from video documentation by Audicia Lynne Morley.



3rd Feb 2017

First meeting, practice, reflecting on moving through drawing

8th March 2017

Dancing with Charlotte
Jarvis and Derek Houghton



18th March 2017 , Working with photos of moss by Alan Watson Featherstone



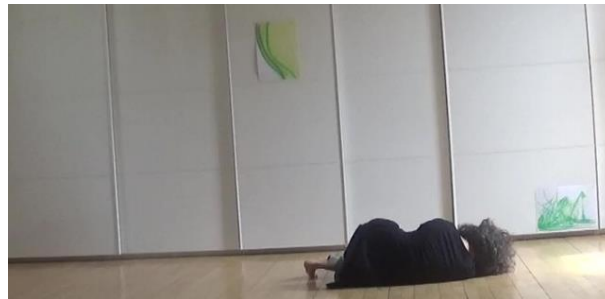
March 22nd, 2017, Porousness, Covering and Being Covered



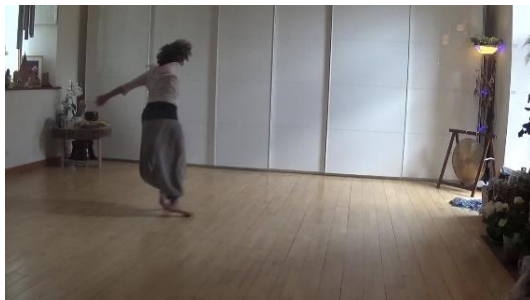
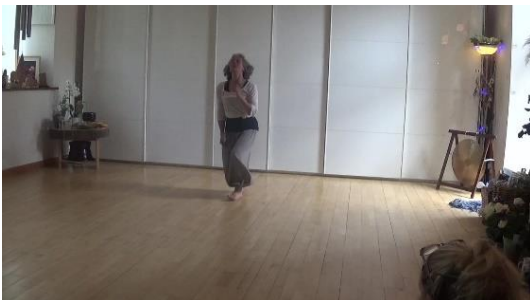
April 27th, 2017
Contact-Contour / Witnessing/ Reflecting
through drawing



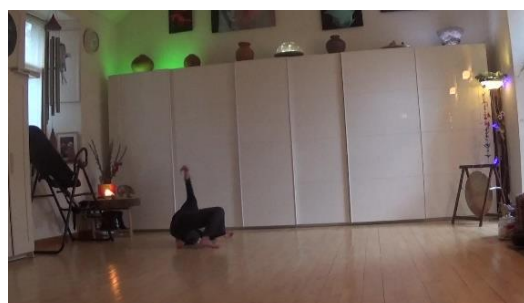
May 9th, 2017
Moss Drawings



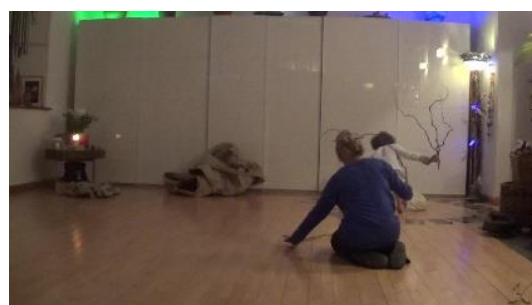
11th July 2017 finding verticals and spirals



23rd October 2017 Relinquishing the head



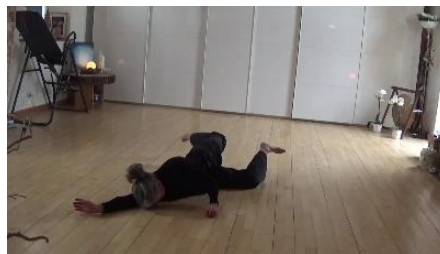
28th November 2017, circle of moss photos



February 22nd, 2018, Finding Moss Protector



22nd March 2018
Water bodies

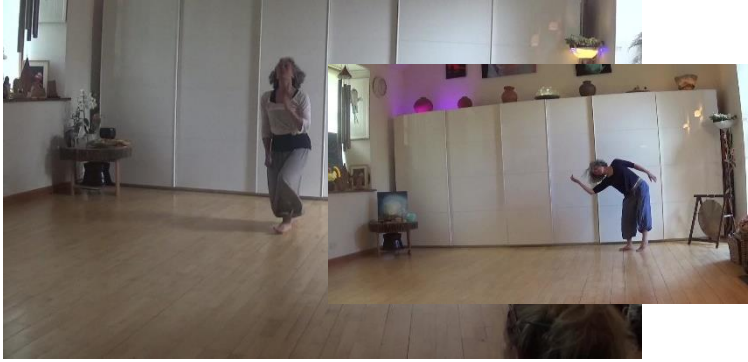




17th May 2018
Introducing silks to extend the spiral.
These become elongated sleeves in the performance.



2nd May 2018 Moss Protector



14th June 2018
 Verticals & spreading around wall, letting go of head



15th June 2018
 Introducing paper

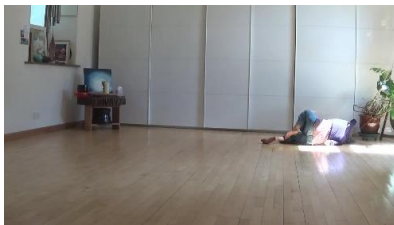
26th July 2018

Towards unfiguring / letting go of the head



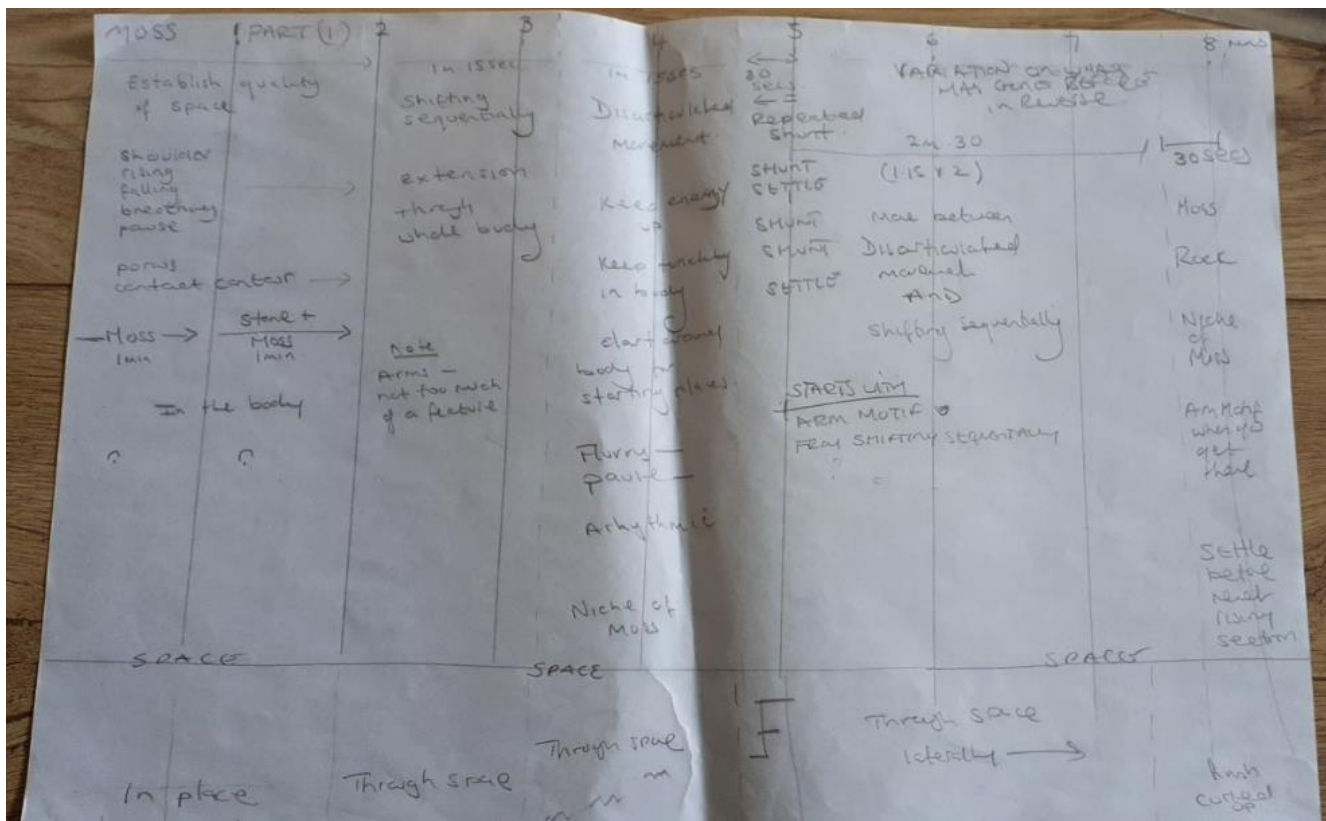
15th August 2018

Spreading, Moss Protector



18th October 2018
Finding spreading





Developing Moss Performance Score (Part I)



Recorded Conversation with Audicia Lynne Morley
Friday April 10th, 2020

Claire: I can't remember exactly when we started on this whole project, the date, but I do remember very clearly how we began, which was when Charlotte Jarvis was involved, and I remember we began, at least my memory of it, with contact- contour and us lying, Charlotte was in front and I was behind, and you asked us just to work with that as a starting place. And so, I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about contact- contour. What that means to you, where it comes from and how they are different contact and contour and why you like that starting point.

Audicia: Great Ok. Well yes, I don't remember the actual time we started. I do have that in my Moss Diary which isn't present with me as we are in self-isolation, but I think what I want to do is actually cycle slightly further back and then come forwards to contact-contour because the theme of the work *Moss: In Appreciation*, really came from my explorations of working with Anna Halprin in nature at the Tamalpa Institute between 2005 and 2008. So, I was studying at Mountain Home Studio, I was doing the level 2 training programme and I remember being there on my final days and walking outside the iconic dance deck, out into Anna Halprin's Redwood grove. And as I was walking, I was aware of all these beautiful large moss-covered stones and also within the Redwood grove there's old Redwood growth, new Redwood growth and there's the old grandfather roots and bare trunks. And these also would be covered in moss. And we had done a lot of work in the grove, and I don't know where it came from, but I just heard this voice coming up saying 'You must dance me. You must move

me' and it was the moss, definitely. It was the moss. And then I did a drawing, the final drawing of the workshop and it was about what we were taking home with us. And it was an abstract drawing and it turned out to be a bird carrying some kind of seed. And I didn't really know what that was about, but I trust the work so, I knew I was coming back with something. Some kind of seed. (*laugh*). And I then used that drawing, just the abstract colours of that drawing, in our website and at the same time I was developing State Theta Galleries, so all these things were kind of...so all this new growth was happening let's say. And then it took that seed from that little voice of moss, over ten years to germinate, and I had been working with Charlotte on a yoga training about a year before that seed started to really come through and say, 'You need to really attend to this'. And we had previously worked with Rosemary Butcher and other improvisational settings where I'd always been curious and felt very inspired by you and your way of moving. So, the two things were kind of doubling up and I just knew I needed to pay attention to them. So, I'm bringing that in because where that seed came from is Anna's Redwood Grove and the mossy rocks underneath Mountain Home Studio and contact- contour is one of Anna's key, let's say she has several key environmental scores that are designed to really help people connect. So, contact-contour, the languaging as I'm discovering, is a mix between her languaging as a dancer of how to make contact with herself on an inner level but also how we make contact with our environment. And very much Anna works with the senses, so physically when we take the body outside, we're surrounded by a very, very alive studio space – the environmental space and the body is contacted by so much information. Be that the air, the breeze, the smells, the sounds, the tastes. So, every sense is alive, and she does scores working with these different senses to deepen the relationship that we have to what we're doing and what we're moving inside. And contact-contour is a languaging around how do we make contact? So, we can make contact through our senses, looking through a soft gaze, through a focus gaze, through a wide gaze, through a gaze that's close to us, a gaze that's far away. So, there's all kinds of dynamics within just the realm of sight. Then there's the eyes closed, there's touch, contact which is how we normally take it, but actually we're making contact with our awareness. So, the contact piece came up for me in terms of just looking at moss, its architecture. It has no roots it grows over things. So, it's an immediate contact. It's not a plant that is suspended in space it relies on the contact that it has with the substances around it and that's how it grows. It doesn't really, it has little vertical shoots but mostly its horizontal. So, in a way ...and also what it does it contours. It moulds itself around the specific shape of that which it is moving and growing over. Now contour, the word, now in your question, I thought now I need to do a little bit more

research because I'm the sort of person that Anna says contact-contour and I just go for it. I don't ask where does that come from? So, the interesting thing that I found out, which is what's always lovely about asking questions, is that it's asking you to deepen into your understanding. And Anna worked very closely with her husband, Lawrence Halprin, who was a landscape architect and so they shared a common language. They were constantly working together on the relationship between space and environment and the body. And contour is very much to do with landscape architecture, with landscape. The contours of the land, how the land moves and then if you bring something into the land, like a path, how does that pathway move within the contours, within the structures of the landscape. So, what I understood there, this isn't something Anna told me, but what I understood was that the language of contour comes in from this language of landscape and the language of contact comes in from this language of the body, of the movement. And so, what I'm with is this beautiful marrying of the language of the land and the language of the body coming together. And so, it feels like a really apt metaphor for what we were working with in terms of *Moss: In Appreciation*. And you also asked for what I feel is the differences between the two and what I'm with there is that, and again I sort of felt this about some of the other questions. These are subtle differences. They are often somatic differences so differences in awareness. So, if I make contact with something, there are lots – I'm going to make contact with my water bottle – there's lots of different ways in which I can make contact and I can make contact as a functional – I can pick this up – as I do that, I have to contour my hand around its shape. I can also make contact – (knocks bottle)- and I can knock it over. Or I can make contact with my eyes but if I was to contour my eyes around it my creative imagination starts to move around the object as opposed to seeing the flat surface. So, it's a subtle difference but in terms of a somatic awareness it stimulates different aspects of our nervous system. So, our micro movements, our muscles, the activation of the nervous system starts to change when we give ourselves a different instruction.

Claire: I worked in one Extending Practice session a few months ago, and I took contour – because I was curious about the word myself – and there was quite a lot of – well certainly Helen Douglas is a visual artist there – and I was kind of saying – just to explain the exploration a little bit – well, it's around something to do with shaping or outline in some way. And having worked with it, she said 'No, it's not outline it's much more than outline', it's to do with – because contouring is also about perhaps depth or other spatial elements, because if we think about contour lines say on a map, we're just thinking about lines but actually what they're expressing are height or gradient or all these other things. And I thought it was very

interesting and it was a very rich experiment actually. Everyone found it fascinating because there was so much you could work with and you started to have a completely different awareness I suppose or imagination of what form or shape might be. More subtle, more refined way of working I suppose around the bigger theme of shaping in some kind of way.

Audicia: Yes, I think what I'm with in terms of – they're similar contact and contour – in that in order to contour you are in contact so they're not too different, distinctively different, they hold different qualities and the thing about contouring, to contour you have to deeply meet what you're with. Whereas to contact is more on the surface in a way. But to contour – it's like I've got this image of a Redwood tree and the bark of a Redwood tree. So, I can contact that Redwood tree I can feel the texture of it but to really contour it I have to go into it. I have to really kind of find its pathways which for me it's a softer and a deeper form of contact.

Claire: Yes, that's interesting.

Audicia: Because I can contact at a distance. I could contour at a distance by mirroring but if I can contact and contour together what they allow is like a first step of relationship and then a second step of relationship, the deepening into.

Claire: So, I suppose going on from that. When we started to work without Charlotte to be there in contact with, if you like, we started to work with being moss and being stone. So, when we were working along the floor it was like, am I working with being moss or am I working with being stone covered by moss, so covering and being covered. And I remember, I have a very distinct recall of the difference physically in the body, if you like, or somatically, but I always sort of wonder (sorry my eyes are going, there's a big bumblebee just gone past the window!) how, from witnessing that on the outside not by doing it, how that registers differently. Is it possible to explain that?

Audicia: Yeah, yeah. Well again I think that this level of work that we were working with at so many different levels and it's not just what we visually see, but what you are experiencing in your body, sets a kind of atmosphere into the space. And so, me as a witness or as a choreographer, I'm not, I'm seeing your shape but I'm also experiencing you and if I offer you different doorways through words that we were using, dependent on where your creative imagination and your body experience took you, I would receive something different, I would receive something differently. And so, in some respects we were working on subtle unseen levels, but they have an

impact on the body. If I just take these two substances, moss in one hand and I take a stone in the other hand and I am with the quality of moss in my left hand and I am just holding that moss I feel something in my arm that's very different to the hand that's holding stone, even in my creative imagination. I can feel more of my bone in the hand with the stone. I feel more solidity. It's like the quality of what I'm holding has also become part of my body. So, it's that process, and I think that's also very influenced by Butoh dance and the history that I've had with Butoh dance and also with the Alexander technique, that the creative imagination has a huge impact on us somatically. And a huge impact on the nervous system. So, on a subtle level when I invited you to be either moss or stone something happened in your system. Now if you weren't moving, say you were still and you were just exploring that, someone without that sensitivity might not notice the difference but I could sense something. But then coupled with that, so I want to say that's like a base line, that's a tonality on the system, coupled with that is that there are different movement motifs that come forward when I imagine myself as moss to when I imagine myself as stone. Or when I imagine myself as moss covering a stone or I imagine myself as a stone covered by. So, the thing about moss is that it spreads. It's kind of like an amoeba, it doesn't have the vertical axis that all mammals have. It's spreading out in all sorts of different directions. So, it's more amoeba-like, more fluid-like. So, this invitation to be moss allowed your body... and we worked a lot on how your body could expand in all directions, because quite a lot of the time there was a sense of the legs, kind of hanging there (*laugh*) and then there was a centre and then there was a movement out from the centre, but it was pretty much upwards based. But we did quite a lot of work on how we could get this sense of equanimity in the body, that had a shift from the mammal into the moss species and became multi -directional but we're multi directional in contact and contouring, whatever it is. Whether it's in our creative imagination of stone, or if it's the wood or when you had Charlotte, it was another body.

Claire. Yes. Well, that's kind of, maybe we...

Audicia: I don't know if that answers your question?

Claire: It does actually. It was interesting for example, that you said, if I hold a stone I'm more in the bone, it takes me to a different strata of the body, but I would also say, maybe because I have worked quite a lot with Francoise and Dominique working with objects, is also that it's not only that stone, if you like, comes into the body in some way, but that I go into stone. So, there's like a reaching into the material as well, so it's not just a one-way thing it's also a going out towards something or approaching something.

You mentioned when you were just speaking about the porous thing and having an equal sense of spreading in the whole body and I kind of see this as an un-figuring. If I think about even in choreographic work that might be quite abstract, in my recall even if it's working with space or a particular dynamic or whatever, it's still me being figured as person if you like. It's still a figure even if it's not about an individual or it's not to do with relationship but something more abstract, it's still figure. Whereas I very much recall when I was working with moss, that it was very much about un-figuring, not being, I mean you are never going to not be human, it wasn't to not be human but to find another figuring, perhaps that's what it is, to find a re-composition of the body in some ways that was approaching moss. And particularly we were working a lot, because I was very slow with that, with letting the head go. I clearly remember, because when the head is on the top of the body which is where skeletally it is, that is such a human thing, so to be a different kind of figuring had something to do with allowing the head to be different. Not on top, but looser, not a focus for movement in some way. So, what was the question I was going to ask you?

Audicia: Can I speak to something there? You reminded me of something, it was before we got to the head, this sense of unfiguring, the process of unfiguring, was we did a lot of work on isolation and that was actually... there were several scores. One of them was not to... to always have the extremities connected to the ground and that came in quite early on in terms of our exploration of contact- contour because moss doesn't really come away from the ground, but the human body does, the human body can, the limbs can reach. And so just in terms of witnessing, I brought in other elements of the score to, if you like, restrict the capacity of the human body. And one of the things in terms of this unfiguring, was to find different patterns of movement. We've all got preferential patterns of movement and what we were exploring in the early stages was how to bring, in terms of this equanimity in the body, how to bring equal consciousness to different parts of the body and how to find motion, very isolated, in different parts. So, I remember we did a lot of work on just moving one part of the scapula, then finding a part of the rib and then moving down to a pelvis. This kind of separating out of something we so often bind together as a whole to create beautiful, sensual, large, complicated movements. What I was doing was really taking, sort of like de-structuring in a way and within that then we met different rhythms, different tones in the body, different capacities of movement that a rib can move very differently to a shoulder blade. So, it was like opening up the vastness of this inner landscape which can get, if we string it together, there's a lot in its parts. So, I just wanted to speak to that because I

remember working with that a lot in the early stages. How do we not have a sequential movement going through the spine?

Claire: Which for someone like me who very much goes with flow, was like ...
(*Laughter*)

Audicia: Yes. The image that I was with is that if moss can go in any direction, I want to be able to have a growth here and a growth there and so it's completely ...even though it's one thing, it's not moving in the way a mammal normally moves.

Claire: Yes. It's interesting also you used the word 'growth'. I'm just sort of extrapolating to 'growth', if we think about things like, in terms of the environment and economic growth and all that kind of thing, but the idea of growth not being a vertical thing, but it can have a different shape, a different rhythm, a different patterning, it's still growth but it's a different version of growth. A different figuring if you like of growth.

Audicia: So, I wanted to talk to that before the head, because the head's something big and we see it, but actually underneath that what informed then how to release the head from this responsibility of being on top of the spine, was that we'd done a huge amount of work in the body on finding different body parts and the head then becomes another body part as opposed to being the organiser. And there is something for me very particular about the head and I wrote about that when I was preparing your document, which was when I see the head on top of the spine I'm immediately flooded with stories, like so much comes from seeing the figure, the human figure and those stories were connected to moss, those stories were connected to the human and so it was really clear how I was looking for - how is the head a continuation of, instead of something that is organising? And you know, a very human head, how we survive, looking, sensing, organising, will power, mind - how to let that not be the driver, how to surrender that and how to let the head be part of, as opposed to a place.

Claire : And it's also very attached to someone's identity because not only their face but hair and all that kind of thing, it's the site of so much that identifies an individual I suppose, or is characteristic of, so there is also kind of trying to remove that element in a way is - yup - which is a perfect segue into the costume that you chose and the fact that we had the head piece and you were trying - well perhaps you'd like to speak about that I don't need to interpret it for you!

Audicia: You can say what it was.

Claire: Well, it came ... obviously we'd been working for a while on the choreography and the costume came, well we had worked with cloth and paper in the process, but because we had a performance there was a lot of energy into finding the shape to perform and then the introduction of the costume. Well, the head piece, which took away the hair for starters, and also whilst it contoured the head, it also had the long extension, it gave it a different shape, it gave flow I suppose. Hard for me to say because I was in it, I was seeing it, I have only seen still images of it. But I'm imagining it gave the head a length that it wouldn't normally have and also that idea of extension and elongation went into the sleeves as well so there were the extra-long sleeves and it was long to the – well it was two pieces wasn't it, it had the sense of length in every direction I suppose.

Audicia: Yes. So, you want me to talk about?

Claire: Well, it's an observation the costume came quite late, you just arrived with it as a surprise and I just wondered if there was anything you wanted to say about the process of that of what you were wanting to do with the costume, I suppose around un-figuring, I suppose I'm thinking about the figuring conversation.

Audicia Yes. Well, I guess the costume for me, I guess part of it was about shifting identity, shifting perspectives, shifting points of view. And if I'm, we both have very distinctive features, we both have very distinctive hair we have a distinctive kind of look and distinctive way of moving and in terms of working with this sense of moss and this sense of un-figuring, the costume for me was aligned, was resonant with that process. So I'd been envisaging every time I saw you move I saw something else, it's just the way that I see things, I either saw a setting or I heard sound or I saw a costume of some sort, or something that was also with you and when it came to the performance and the energy of bringing that performance to people I had to work quite quickly with the resources that I had and so I have to say, I did rely on some of my past resources in terms of knowing certain fabrics, I had a certain design that I've used in the past, so it was a kind of recycle, so it wasn't totally a whole new thing for me, but then, so it was like, the blueprint was a recycle but then things started to kind of add and for me I love working with costume because it's sort of like the movement, it's organic and it starts to shape itself and one thing leads to another. And so, what I was with, was just this kind of dialogue between myself and imagining you, because I made the costume elsewhere, and also this sense of shifting your form. How to change the form. How to change the head. And also it being white meant you became a reflection, a mirror of the

beautiful slides that we were using and how that elongation of your head, for me it was like a growth, a moss growth could be, but also the nature of it allowed for an extension of the movement to be happening and the same thing with the hands and the same thing with the sticks that we also used, that they allowed you to have a different perspective, it allowed us to have a different perspective of your body but also you had a different perspective even though you couldn't see it you could feel it.

Claire: Yes absolutely.

Audicia: And I was very pleased with how, you know sometimes when you're working you really feel like you're co-creating and so I was co-creating with you, but I was also co-creating with moss and other forces and so that costume came together and I'm grateful for all the spirits that came to help (*laugh*), to manifest it because it worked. Without being too expensive, without being too difficult. It came together. And you know we've got beautiful photographs of you moving with that costume that can go along with this report, whatever we call what we're doing now!

Claire: Well, let's speak a little bit, because you were talking about resources, that takes me straight into the RSVP Cycles, the language of the RSVP Cycles, that you were working with in the process that we were doing and obviously there is the book the RSVP Cycles by Lawrence Halprin, so there's a lot been written there. But it would be great to hear, I suppose about your experience of using them. What you like about it I suppose, what it offers to you for your creative process, rather than what Lawrence Halprin or Anna Halprin, it's what you get from it and also whether there was anything in there that you would change about the RSVP Cycles ?

Audicia: Mmm, interesting. So, I'm just going to, I think I've got, there's some sort of metaphor that's coming up for me about what they are, what they symbolise for me. So, I didn't know anything about the RSVP Cycles until I worked with Anna and Lawrence and my Tamalpa training and the whole training is embedded in the RSVP Cycles. The RSVP Cycles are not like an external structure, they are they are like the fabric out of which creativity, the creative process happened, and I guess they are, it's a particular way of seeing that process in action. So that process, the creative process is happening all the time and dependent on your training and your perspective you could name the process of creativity in different ways and this is the language that I've been introduced to from my training, and all these are natural, and they are happening at the same time. It's a bit like various different, for example contact-contour is two and the same. I'm contacting something and I'm naturally contouring to part of it because I'm

naturally contacting it. So, the RSVP Cycles if we break them down are Resources, S - Scores or Activities, V - Valu-acting, P - Performance or Enactment. This is a specific language, but we do it anyway. So, if you're going to write a shopping list you get a piece of paper and a pen – resources. You think about your shopping – a shopping list – score, activity - go to the shops, we're doing it all the time, but it was just broken down in the training to these aspects. And why I find it useful, especially I think, you know within the Tamalpa work, resource is a really emphasised piece because quite often we go about an intention without having the resources to fulfil that intention and so somewhere along the line, the intention doesn't manifest. And so, there's something about, I have an idea. Moss. Who do I want to work with? Claire. She's available. Great! Resource. State Theta Galleries. And it's also, I have to have certain elements in place in order to have something happen. I could have an idea to perform something and then I'll think, just because it's the way I think now, well what do I need in order to make that happen? These are the resources. So, OK that isn't going to work right now, what resources do I have? What can I do with those resources? It's not that it's, I think it just enables you to think in a certain way it's not that it has a certain order, some people ... I am very loose how I work with the RSVP Cycles and scoring. I have friends that have worked with Anna all their lives and they score everything. So, scoring, meaning they outline the time they are going to do something in, the kind of activity, in the intention, what they want to do, actually that's first, the intention what you want to do, even if it's not-doing, you know. Like right now actually we're in lockdown, so that is a score that's been given to us by the Government and so in lockdown if this is my score, how am I going to perform this score in a way that I want it. So, I can take back some control from what has come to me from the outside I can say right this is how I want to use my time, as opposed to saying I'm really fed up with this. It allows me to have a sense of ownership, have a sense of being able to ...

Claire Agency

Audicia Be my own, yes have self-agency and I think in terms of, you asked me how I experience it, but I have to say also in terms of how it was devised, and it was - Lawrence worked with big groups, Lawrence and Anna worked with huge groups. People with AIDS, cancer, large groups in the community and it was really important that people felt like they had a voice, that they had advocacy and so this was a way for people to feel like they could make their own choices within the overview, within whatever the meta- theme was, there was a structure that allowed for freedom of creativity, but it also gave everybody a sense of holding, of containing in

some way. But it's kind of like, a bit like a musician whose practiced their scales enough to just go and play, I think I use it a bit like, that. I don't cross my T's with it. I could be more disciplined and that might be good for me to have more what we call closed scores. But I'm not like that, I like to improvise, and I like to give space for the unknown, I like to be in this place of a kind of co-created sense of ok I'm here what else is here? Ahh this is showing up for me right now, this is emerging and so I think another thing about this process, it's like one size fits all. It can be used in so many different ways and it is used in so many different ways all around the world ... it's been adapted, and we know many, a lot of the postmodern dance world has taken on aspects of the RSVP Cycle in ways that support the creativity of that individual.

Claire: Yeah, I think there's more of a ... a lot of dancers might talk about scores but not necessarily around the other aspects. I don't hear that, even if they are not using the same vocabulary resources or valuation, it might be , what might you use – reflection or revision perhaps, something like that, even if we talk about scores there's quite a – Lawrence and Anna Halprin - they're quite specific things that he writes about scores and how they operate. Obviously, you can have open or closed scores but beyond that there are other things, that it has a time element, you know these different factors, so I think it's quite prescriptive, I don't mean as in , you feel that you've got no space to do stuff, but it's quite filled out in a sort of way. So, when we were writing out the scores for 'Moss', I thought there was quite a lot of detail! You know because we had time factors OK this is for about 2 minutes, even though we weren't working with a musical cue, you know it was like it's two minutes of this and in that two minute, we're working with spreading or contact or whatever, and it's going to be in these parts of the body. So, there was a lot of information. So, although it wasn't down to, because it's not that kind of work, down to this step or that step, there was room for me to, it materialised in the performance of it in slightly different ways each time, but still it was quite scripted I would say.

Audicia: It was structured in terms of space, time and force let's say because these are what Anna calls the elements of the dance. So, where you were in the space, there was an outline for that, the timing of things, there was an outline for that in terms of force, quality there was an outline for that. Within that there was freedom for you to explore within that kind of three-tiered structure.

Claire: Yes. Which allowed for, suddenly I might find myself somewhere I hadn't been before but that was ok you can still discover in the moment, even in the moment of the performance you were still allowed to find something

new within the, whilst keeping the tone of what we'd decided was that section if you like. It didn't close things down even in the performance stage, it was still available for something else to appear. And I suppose I haven't really spoken to you about your work or the time you studied with - I might say this wrong- Suprpto?

Audicia: Suprpto, yeah.

Claire: Suprpto Suryodarmo, and I just remembered because he quite recently died, passed away, and you sent something out and I happened at the same time to come across somebody else, I think it was actually Sandra Reeve writing about him in her 'Nine Ways of Seeing the Body' and because I know you've had a very broad, your movement training is very broad, and we mainly always spoke about the Tamalpa process and Anna Halprin, so I suppose I was curious to know what Suprpto, what you've brought from his teaching into 'Moss'.

Audicia: No, I was thinking about that, and it made me smile when I read the question and you know I was thinking about these two iconic, real iconic figures, Anna Halprin and Suprpto Suryodarmo, a Javanese dancer and I met Suprpto before I worked with Anna. I met him in Devon on a ten day retreat, we were camping and we worked in a little village hall and we camped, and remarkable teacher coming from Indonesia, a whole different way of being and if you've had the opportunity which I'm sure you have and anyone that comes to read this or listen to this, if you have the opportunity to work with a teacher from the East who's really steeped in their own tradition it's like entering another world, another universe. And that's what his teaching was like. And even though he used words, his English was good, but his way of speaking was in the landscape of poetry. And so, you were guessing at what he meant! (*laugh*) and it was like where you were taught was not through here (*indicating the head*), not through the mental, well not through the cortex but through really witnessing him, which is a very traditional way of learning from Eastern teachers and also kind of also what came to you. I want to tell a story here because I remembered it recently about him and I don't know how it's related to moss, but because I had that experience, I imagine it's somewhere in there. We were sitting in a circle, and we were probably on day seven or eight of this time together with Suprpto and the lady sitting next to me in this circle asked him a question. And I do not remember what the question was, but I remember his response and I don't know what happened, but I started to see, I had my eyes open and then I closed my eyes, I started to see his response to her as light. It was extraordinary, it was like this kind of shimmering presence. And I can't remember if they were talking while

this was happening, if Suprapto was moving, I just have this sense of him being very directed towards her but because I was right next to her it was as if whatever he was sending her way, I somehow received some of that. And I just retain that as a body memory, there was something there in which the way in which he could communicate, I was gifted in that moment to witness that. So that, he stays with me very closely and that felt like a little, well big gift. Then, in terms of something, I'll say more, so that's in the heart and maybe in the spirit. In the practical realm, I remember very specifically seeing Suprapto while I was working with you and it was when we were working with the sticks. And I remember being actually up in your studio The Bakery , and I was, we were working with this image that we'd had with Robin Wall Kimmerer's book 'Gathering Moss' of the mossy open rock complex where she had found herself one day and we'd started on this whole section of moving around the moss wall. But when we got into the studio, somehow the thing started to change for me and what I remember speaking to you about was as if you could touch different directions in space, so we were, the sticks would go – like the Michelangelo man (*laugh*) but imaging yourself at a 360 degree sphere and that one limb goes one direction and then you're going in another and this whole... and this is very much from Suprapto, you know, you don't work in a linear way, you, he works with something called space-time. So, and also, that couples with this whole idea of moss growth, that it's not, whilst its flat it's going in all sorts of different directions. So that piece came in and it's not ... he came in, he just came in. Like you were saying it's very difficult to say oh this is this and this is that, but they've both been incredibly powerful and influential teachers to me in different ways and he shows up at very important times.

Claire: And does the way he works with let's say environment, not the best word, nature also not the best word, is there a difference there to say how Anna Halprin works with nature and environment? Is it possible to say, obviously they are coming from different East- West traditions, coming from different starting points but I'm just wondering if there's a way of articulating anything about that?

Audicia: Yes. Well, my experience of them is both very different. Anna has with Lawrence created this incredible language around how we dialogue with ourselves, our moving bodies and with nature, so she's, over her many decades of moving and creating scores, she's really honed, she's really fine-tuned the language of how we make connection. So, her scores are really clear, very simple, very direct. You know what's she's saying. Like go out into nature, stand use your senses or – it's our language. Suprapto is working, as I sort of said, it's a kind of poesis where I can't quite ...

Claire: It's more ambiguous.

Audicia: Pardon?

Claire: It's more ambiguous?

Audicia: What happens in my mind when I think about Suprpto is I need to lose my focus, I need to kind of dissolve this head and he'll say things like 'space time', 'time- time' (*laugh*) but there are certain phrases that he uses and so I cannot attend to those through my normal thinking.

Claire: Right so it sounds like the - he's not working in the verbal realm in the same way that Anna Halprin is.

Audicia: I don't think so, but they are both attending to how we connect, they're both attending to something very similar, but their way is different. They're coming from two different cultures, they're two different beings. But with Suprpto I can say 'I don't know! (*laugh*) And a lot of people, a lot of students say, what's great about working with Sandra Reeve is that she's been working with Suprpto for so long that she's kind of digested his language and then has formed a language that is kind of like a regurgitation, like birds, that helps people and I have to say I'm so steeped in Anna's languaging because I teach for the Institute, whereas I'm slightly ... if I connect to Suprpto's language I'd have all those words at my fingertips but at the moment I'm sort of steeped in the training, so my training is more Halprin orientated. But it's lovely that you actually even thought to bring him in because I didn't mention him. I don't think I mentioned him to you in the studio but ...

Claire: But his presence is in your studio isn't it, there's a picture?

Audicia: Well, actually that's another Indonesian teacher that's Bensahato, beautiful man. Yes, so he's in the studio, he's very present.

Claire: Are you OK with time at the moment because we've gone to 3.30pm?

Audicia: Yes, shall we say that we'll go on, I can go to 4pm and then I think ...

Claire: Yes, that's great. I suppose, I've got here 'What did you learn from moss?' By which I don't mean, 'Moss' the performance but moss the species. At the beginning you started telling how in a way that moss called you to make something, to work with that. And I was just wondering what you

learnt from working with moss or how moss perhaps shaped your composing differently. In a way we have addressed that a little bit and I don't really know how to phrase the question, but I suppose, 'What did you learn from moss? What have you taken from moss? Or has it changed something?

Audicia: Yeah well, it's interesting isn't it. I think for me it comes back to this co-creative question and sort of like what wanted to come through? So, I have a starting point, a seed and we're working together, and things start to come through. So, some of the things that have come through haven't been developed they're like, more seeds! So, in particular there was the character that appeared that felt to me to be – how do you say that – when you change something from being, that isn't human to human?

Claire: Anthropomorphising?

Audicia: Yes. So, this being of Time came forwards and you know, we know that moss is some of the oldest living species on the planet and also, I think I discovered while I was working with you that there was a moss which had been dead, dormant for thousands of years and somehow it came back to life – the power of regeneration – and so I didn't know that I wasn't in touch with that but this Time being came forwards. But not a time-time, perhaps Suprapto would say, time-time is sort of working with clock time, but it was more like a sense of universal presence that has this depth of time about it and so that came forwards but it's still to be gone into if you like. The other thing that I felt very strongly come through the dance and again I didn't know it, it just came through, was this sense of , and it's really potent in our time, is this sense of that each species each plant, each animal, vegetable and mineral in terms of a traditional view, had some kind of spirit that governs it that supports it that protects it and if we look at the American Indian traditional viewpoint, each person has like a spirit guide with them and those, so what came forwards in the dance was the Moss Protector and this very, very different dynamic to the dynamic of moss. Alert, alive, I want to say astringent, not aggressive but really present and like a kind of a panther – a mother panther or something – protecting her children type of fierceness but not aggressive, not angry, just fierce. Standing for life. So those were figures if you like those were metaphors of presence that came in that I did not know about, they arrived in the space between us. What also I'm with in hindsight when I go back to the form that eventually we came to; I recognise that form. It's like a life cycle. It started low down and slow and then it grew and then it went from sort of down to up. It's sort of like the journey of spirit that the last piece was this spiralling, very light and if you had a harness, I would have had you going

up into the air! It was this kind I guess the archetype of birth and I don't want to say death – but that cycle of moving from one state to another and again it wasn't a design that I had in the forefront of my consciousness, but I recognise that same design, it kind of recycles itself when I do work. It's not that I'm thinking about it, but that cycle wants to keep coming through in different ways.

Claire: But I also remember in some ways it did ... because although we always think of moss and in one part of its life its low its covering, its spreading, but then there is the vertical, the little spore things come up, little verticals and then it's wind-blown, you know, it goes into air, it gets carried by air. So, although you see that also as a pattern for other compositions that you have done, it was also the pattern of moss.

Audicia: Yes, it was inherent. It was inherent in moss. And again, I didn't know it. But it's interesting isn't it how that subject matter also mirrors that.

Claire: Yes, exactly. And you don't think of moss being airborne, as an aerial species, plant but actually when you know more about it and there are all those wonderful pictures by Alan Featherstone, its life becomes more complicated and complex.

Audicia: But also, what you are saying there Claire, is that it has a life cycle and that also, that journey is its life cycle and that revealed itself, I mean we knew about it through Robin's book, but it revealed itself. Well, no, actually, that's true, I was working with that structure because that structure was there but what I'm reflecting on is that it's mirrored back to me that oh, I know that cycle.

Claire: Yes, its' familiar, in other forms.

Audicia: Yes.

Claire: I think maybe some of the things ... I haven't quite covered all the questions I had here, but I think we have been covering them, we have been talking about time, that came through interestingly as we were just talking about moss. But maybe just sort of heading towards the performance and you've kind of spoken about the theme of *Moss: In Appreciation*, one thing that came out, when we moved to the Bakery and were working towards the BATCH performance is this. I call it a *Score for Audience* I don't know really whether you thought of it as a score or not, but that was a new thing that came out, so we were going to show it to an audience and then it was ok here's a score for audience and you used the word witnessing before actually, we used it a lot in the studio. So, it would

be interesting to talk about the *Score for Audience* that emerged, maybe you could describe that and how that relates to how you understand audience as I suppose, witness, rather than audience, as 'bums on seat'! It's a different way of looking that you are encouraging.

Audicia: Yes, I guess a 'witness' as opposed to an 'audience'. A 'witness' is actually like a live participant, their presence is participating in what's happening. An 'audience' I can sit back from, and I don't necessarily make contact. I can see. And also, the concept of witness is very much part of the Halprin process and it's sort of like, when something becomes witnessed, when something is seen, somehow a dynamic changes, it's like there's a - it becomes often more alive, sometimes it can also become more conscious, self-conscious but it heightens something. And an audience will do that as well, but I use the word witness. So, the *Score for the Audience* kind of created itself through the limitations or the characteristics of the space, the pillars, the sense that, what I had was the sense that if you were out in nature, if you were interested in something, you'd go close up to it, and you have a look at it or you might look at something further back. So, I was playing with a score of Anna's, which is to do with focus, which is Near, Mid, Far and it was a work in progress, I would say, we just performed it once it was a first time to work with an audience as witnesses, first time to work with witnesses, so I was playing, exploring the idea of how does the witnesses become part of. And it's also an education because most people in our culture associate going to see something with themselves being an audience and so they're pretty passive. They come in, they sit down and they're with themselves, if they like it great. If they don't like it, other stories start to go on. In California and in the work that the Halprin's have been doing for years, you're involved! And you are part of and your energy impacts, and this is reminding me of a story that Anna writes about in terms of the Planetary Dance. And she went to a - I'm trying to remember the name - it was a particular type of tribe of Indians and she was invited to a ceremony and they were part way through this Sun Dance Ceremony and I think Anna got distracted or something, I don't remember the whole details, and suddenly she got a slap around her, and it was another member, and they were saying, you pay attention here because your energy is part of this, you're not, not part of this. And it brought her into this place of oh my gosh! Everything we think, and we feel, and we do when we're witnessing something or with something, has an impact on the performer. And so, not that I was wanting to simulate that situation, but the sense of how to involve, how to invite a sense of participation instead of a - and it's also what we're wanting to do with our relationship with nature, how do we participate with nature as opposed to stand back and use it? It's part of us, we're part of it, and so the different scores that arose

just kind of came. How to bring people really close to you so that they could see the micro movement at the beginning and then to kind of come back, as we would in nature, explore the vista. To have you moving through, like being outside, feeling the kind of breeze, so I was playing basically with the resources that were there and also there were coloured pens and paper for people to bring something to the page to express how that impacted them. I can't say for me it was – I'd want to recycle it, I think. I'd want to explore something a bit simpler. It was quite a complex audience score and I think if you give too much complexity it takes away from what is being witnessed because they're thinking 'Oh I'm going to have to do this or that' so it was a learning for me and ...

Claire: But it definitely – it's about bringing people to the work, this work in particular, although I would say that it was the kind of audience that really choses to come and see movement work, so you are already half way there in a way but offering a different way to connect to the work and also I suppose although you were talking about audience, it's for me, it's a parallel between how we maybe consume things in our society. So, it's not performance to be consumed from back here. You do and I watch and then I go away, and I have no need to be involved in any way. I pay my money and that's that. So, there's no co-opting of the other person in a way. Whereas the witnessing brings a responsibility to the audience. They are not implicit, what's the word? They have a responsibility also because you are asking something of them. There is something interesting there in terms of relationship to environment and how we need to review our relationship to wild which is kind of already happening in the world of some kinds of performance, that we can learn from.

Audicia: Yes. I'm interested to hear how it was for you because you were the performer. How did that impact you as the performer?

Claire: I liked, it was nice to have, it was great to have people quite close, because it , there's, I suppose it comes from a training thing, well my earliest training, where you're trained to project to the back of the theatre and this kind of work it's not what this is about, it's about showing the detail and in a way it allowed me to have more integrity with that work knowing that I didn't need that to carry through a larger amount of space. They were there and I could just work with what it really is because the moment I need to project that, something gets lost because I'm already extending beyond myself in a way. So, it was great because it gave me more confidence in being able to just work with the, just do the work and not have to amplify. I mean I think where, which I didn't really know until afterwards, was there was maybe that thing, because we had the

projections going on the wall that was to the side of me, there were people having to make a choice that didn't affect me as a performer, but I noticed that in the recordings. There was a lot of things for people to look at. Being further away, well obviously it gives me room to move differently. It's nice I like going close to. It was different, they came close to me and then later in the work I was going to close to them. They were seated further away and obviously I had the big branches, so I needed more space, but it was me being closer to them. Again, it wasn't the usual distance that you would dance to an audience in a very traditional format. Obviously, there's more obstacles, chairs, people, bags, but it keeps it alive. I liked that and because it also, it helps, it brings the performer to the work in a different way which means the performer can concentrate on doing the thing rather than trying to do the thing and feel like you're needing to bridge that distance. Also, the audience themselves, they are in movement, they're sitting here close, and they need to move back so they are already bringing some sort of experience of moving in the space. I mean that's what we're working with isn't it. So somehow, we're existing in some sort of zone that's similar, they become part of performance rather than external to performance from the performers perspective I suppose.

Audicia: Changing points of view as well.

Claire: Yes exactly.

Audicia: Otherwise, you can get stuck or bored or like you say consumer, the consumer metaphor whereas actually they are a participant.

Claire: So, in the way that we want a performer, it's about being live and being very present. So, in a way that's what you're setting up for the audience, for the witness. That it's the same. It's not just, sit here for twenty minutes. It's applying some of the same qualities to the witness position as it is to the performer's position. So, it's more shared, more shared as an experience.

Audicia: Yes.

Claire: I don't think we need to go through everything I have written here.

Audicia: I'd just like to say I loved performing with Tim. You asked what was it like to perform alongside *Hope Etudes*?

Claire: I suppose I was thinking, yes it's something else but again – yes, carry on – it was partly because the strap line for that performance was '*Pioneers and*

Legacies' and we've talked a lot about a lot of pioneers - Anna Halprin, Suprapto all these different people, and in that performance we then had Leeder, Sigurd Leeder through Tim and I was thinking, and the practitioners that are working now what are they bringing to it. So, I was interested in that.

Audicia: I mean that for me really worked. It was a very different – he is a very powerful performer, and it was beautiful, funny, light but really also touching, process and it took me into his journey with him and so I felt like they were two very, very different offerings but they stood alone, to me they stood alone but they stood together. What I would recycle is the film element. Whilst for me I love the film but, in this context, I felt like the live work was the experience and somehow the film element, especially when we came to do the sharing, it lost, I felt like it lost some power. The film element was draining on the power of the live element. So...

Claire: I guess it's another way, because it was at the end the audience had a full menu but also the thing about watching the film, was that your way of seeing is different isn't it? As a viewer.

Audicia: You become an audience.

Claire: Yes, you become more audience and again more 'consumer' perhaps. Ok here we go watch the screen, that's what's may be - but it's interesting though what that brought up, I think it was still great to show the film but also it highlights what it is about live work, about liveness that is quite different and ...

Audicia: And also, what I was with was actually we're enough. We don't need to have anything else. The two pieces were really powerful and strong on their own and so for me, yes, the film is great and what was offered by these two pieces was strong in itself, was enough. And so that was a big learning for me in terms of just having the courage to say, yes, this is enough!

Claire: It doesn't need to be supported.

Audicia: Pardon?

Claire: It doesn't need supporting with or underlining. In a way the presence, I suppose what the film did was brought the presence of Anna Halprin herself and all of her into the room when actually her presence is through

elements of the work, we don't require to see her for her presence to be there.

Audicia: Maybe it was another kind of intention. Yes fine, but what we were offering and also thinking about the amount that the witnesses were taking in, that it was enough with the two pieces and the intimacy. There was something very intimate about the two pieces and the live nature whereas the film somehow abstracted us out into a whole other landscape and so it lost its intimacy, and it lost its directness. And also, the film is quite old and whilst it , I like that film, there was something very immediate about what we were working with in the space and so and this is where the RSVP Cycles comes in, because you just recycle. You just go ok, this is what we are doing now, this is a little bit of a valuation.

Claire: Yes, absolutely.

Audicia: We don't need this piece, but we could develop this kind of thing, which is so, that's one thing I love about Anna, you know, nothing is wasted. It was good to have that experience, we needed to do it like that for the reasons that we had at the time, and now we've recycled, and we would do it in a different way.

Claire: I am looking forward to getting back to it. I was thinking the other day, how much of 'Moss' is still in my body? (*Laughter*) You know.

Audicia: Yes, that's the place that I'm with, like when you said what did I learn from it? I, we only performed it once and we worked on it for a few years and that last sort of month of coming up to performance, that was like a lot of compressed energy and I felt like it kind of moved us into a whole new place with the work and it needs to be on that level now, it needs to be performed and worked with and so, I'm with the place that it's in suspension right now (*Laughter*). It's waiting for the life to come back in however, I not quite sure how that's going to happen, and you know maybe, it's lovely to hear that your excited to tap into that again and maybe this time is a time to think about how to get some funding.

Claire: Yes. Whilst I think about it actually, obviously because we're in lockdown, Covid – 19 and everything, actually the arts council have reshaped the whole funding thing, because they want to support independent artists because so many people have lost work like yourself, and so they are accepting applications that are for development that is, I'm just thinking that, they are really wanting to support independent practitioners, if you have the head space amongst everything else, it's not like they have to be done right now although applications are open, but they are having a much

more open kind of open project application – it's so that people can sustain their practice, that's what it's around – Sustaining Practice -so it doesn't have to be, you don't need an application that has a whole tour schedule and it doesn't have to be a huge thing, it's to help people fund the next part so that practice can continue. So, I don't know if that's something that's useful. It could be because its lightweight you know.

Audicia: Brilliant

Claire: It doesn't need to be huge, big projects.

Audicia: If you've got the time, if you're able to send me a link to that that would be fantastic.

Claire: I can do that.

Audicia: Yes lovely.

Claire: It's wonderful to talk to you Audicia, it's just great hearing you speak, I mean you are always very articulate but bringing all the different threads together, it's great.

Audicia: I also wrote about breath. You know you asked a question about the presence of breath? Can I just speak to that, as I think that's quite important in terms of time? Because one of the things that was very important to, and we spoke about it a lot, was how do we slow down this kind of fast paced, adrenalized way in which we often see and interact with things? And so, we worked a lot on the breath and so this whole opening section, I can't remember if it's seven or nine minutes, but it's about dropping and that sense of being able to drop into a real presence with our own bodies, is really instigated through the breath. And I spoke to you, we did a lot of work on the breath and how could we articulate that motion, just the ribs moving in this breath pattern, and it's such an archetypal movement for life, that by focusing on that it brings the witness to that place in themselves as well. And so, when we all come to our breath, we really shift in our nervous system, we really come into more of the parasympathetic space and this where, it's not that I think about this explicitly, but healing happens. The body starts to self-regulate when the parasympathetic system is allowed some space and some time. So, the blood sinks down into the organs, there is a kind of sinking which is a metaphor for moss close to the ground. So, I feel like this sense of the breath and the presence of the breath in the work is really symbolic of a process of coming in to meet ourselves, and this is something you were talking about in terms of

the witness coming close to you, they're also coming close to themselves by coming to the breath. So, I just wanted to mention that and speak a bit about it but it's something to do with changing I guess, a lot of it was to do with changing perspectives if I think about it. We were changing the perspectives of the body, we were de-figuring the body, we were changing the perspective of the audience moving out of our normal realm into some other kind of realm to allow for some other information to come, you know keeping it as open as that. And it's reminding me of, and this is my last story, of being in Ireland and I was on a Shiatsu training and there was a dolphin in Dingle Bay I can't remember what his name was, a famous dolphin, and all the pubs were named after him.⁹ So, we went out in a boat, and we could go into the water and swim with the dolphin. So, I had a snorkel on, and the water was kind of muddy and dark, but I had this moment of seeing the dolphin just underneath me and I thought he was really close, so I reached down, and I was trying to touch him, but he was further away than I imagined, and I took myself further into the water, and had to come out again because the water had come into the snorkel. But in that moment, I was transported into his life, you were talking about going out into rock, rock comes to you, but you can go out into it, and I suddenly, it was like this flash of experiencing life from the dolphin's perspective, from being under water and it was so alien from my usual on land, gravity, air. And so I'm reminded of that story in terms of what was happening with moss, was this shifting of perspective coming to a different place in ourselves with what we're with but in a bigger context it's with this sense of an appreciation for nature – *Moss: In Appreciation* – how do we start to shift our perspectives of relationship, how we're in relationship to our environment, whilst that wasn't explicit I think there are some implicit themes here and even themes that I haven't articulated and I don't know, they're in it (*laugh*). And a huge sense of trusting, trusting that there is something else here that's wanting to come through that we are vehicles for what's wanting to come through and I felt so touched by some of our final rehearsals where I felt, like Maggie Stead shared about Tim Stead's work, the artist, that when he had a piece of furniture that he felt was really there, it sounded, it had a sound for him, and that happened for me a couple of times when we were doing the final rehearsals. It didn't happen for me in the performance, there were too many other energies and moving around but I think the two dress rehearsals before the performance something really happened and I felt this feeling of my heart and it was so beautiful and you know when you see nature, and there is something in nature that is just so astoundingly beautiful that tears come, and it had that

⁹ The dolphin is known as Fungie. Retrieved from: [Fungie the Dingle Dolphin \(dingle-peninsula.ie\)](http://dingle-peninsula.ie) [Accessed 28th March 2021].

sense for me like yes this is it! But it's a very hard thing to capture, you know, these things they're ...

Claire: ephemeral

Audicia: They're ephemeral, they're here and they're not here, they're possible and they're not possible. But I'm really glad that we met that place and I felt incredibly, all the time, incredibly grateful for your presence and the artistry and the skill that you brought to my language, you were the one that was bringing that out into form.

Claire: Yes but again it's always a meeting, it's the information that you give me that allows me to work with that ... and for me it was a huge I wouldn't say learning curve but I was being stretched to move in other ways which was just great and actually that's where I'm working, I'm trying to work with, there are some other things I've been working with recently, Steve Paxton, you were talking about working in 3D with Suprpto, working all around, and he talks about 'working from the dark side of the body' by which he means, for example, if I think about turning my head normally we're thinking about the front, you're moving this part of the head (*indicating the face*) but what if I'm thinking about the back of my head, I'm turning my head but yet that means the back of my head is moving to the front so working from the side, working from what we can't see of ourselves really. So, this other side, which he calls 'the dark side'. Whether it's the back or the back of the head, so every movement has a counter movement, but we start from there rather than from what we know, and it opens out a whole other world of movement. It's very powerful, as the mover you kind of go – ok, that's a whole different load of connections, it's more than another perspective, it's like another domain of material, movement, to work with and it brings, it makes everything more 3D. You start working with surface but it's not just this surface it's all the surfaces. There is so much more for us to explore all the time. We actually work in a very limited way so much of the time if I think about dance training, typical dance training for young dancers – it's quite narrow. I know there is only so much ... but some of that is something that you come to, it's a slow process, these somatic practices, it seeps into the body. It's not, you can't change fast, you know we worked for a long time with moss and it's like this gradual going into, going into and then change starts to happen. It's not instant. We have so many resources, if you like, that we don't use.

Audicia: Yes, yes and that's what's so exciting isn't it. It makes the possibility of practice really alive and that's what's wonderful to hear.

Claire: And enough for more than a lifetime – I mean you're not going to run out of things to explore. Energy maybe!

Audicia: Yes, ok well we could carry on, this could be another call!

Claire: Another conversation! Anyway, well it's great, thank you so much. Lovely to see you up there in Forres.

Audicia: And again, thank you for your presence throughout the creation of Moss and creating moss with your body. And these questions have been great, I actually enjoyed – after my initial oh my gosh I haven't got anything to say, I sat down with them I realise I do have something to say and yes, it's been great to bring it into this format and then it's opening other doors and it's lovely to connect with and that you have a spark to continue.

Claire: Yes absolutely!

Moss: In Appreciation Performance documentation

Images courtesy of State Theta. | Photographs by Alan Watson Featherstone

Part I Moss

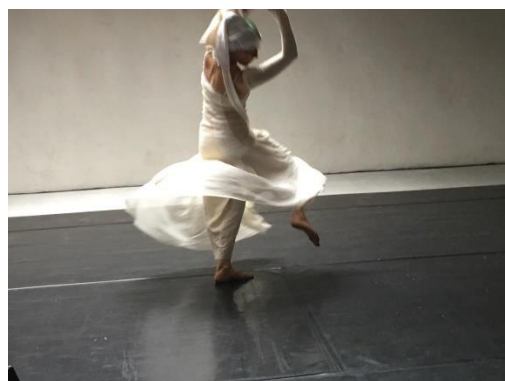


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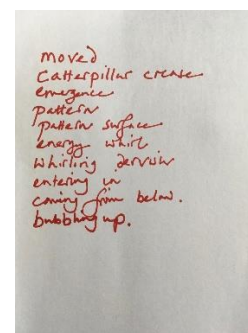
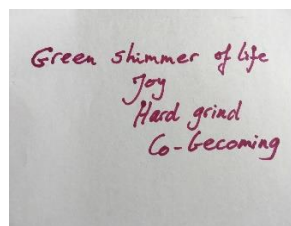
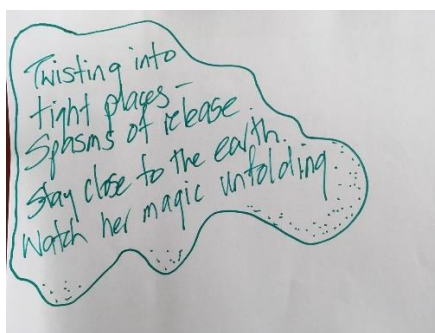
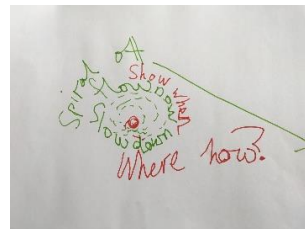
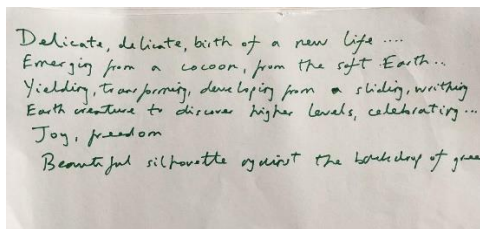
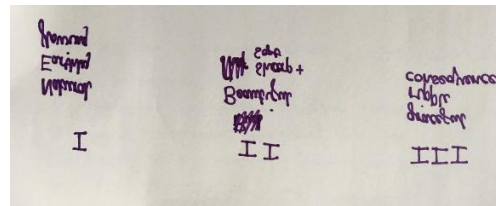
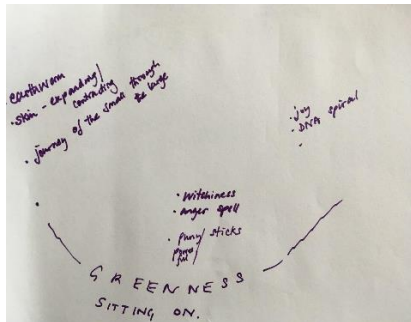
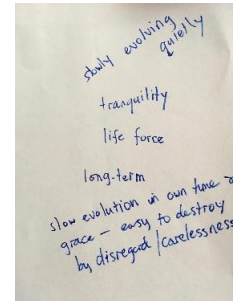
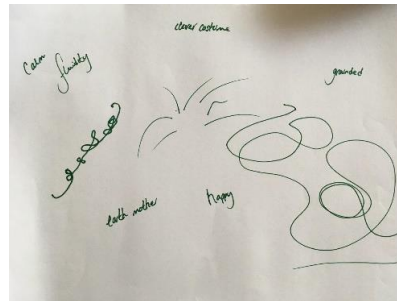


Part III

Spiral



Audience Responses through drawing and writing



Extending Practice Session: April 21st, 2020

This practice score was emailed to the group and was invitation to move during the first Covid-19 lockdown.

Orientation: material bodies, boundary layer, unfiguring, spreading, covering and being covered. If you have easy access to moss and stone, then feel free to work with them. Otherwise, you can use your kinaesthetic imagination, which will work just as well.

Moss Bodies

Hold or imagine holding a stone in your right or left hand. Let the quality of stone be absorbed into your hand, your arm.

Now hold or imagine holding moss, in the other hand. Be with the moss. Let the quality of moss be absorbed into your hand, your arm.

How does moss feel different to holding stone? Where do you sense this difference? What changes in the hands, arms do you detect from each?

We will put stone down and turn to moss with its lightness of touch. Let the quality of moss move you.

Boundary Layer

'What is this interface between atmosphere and earth? Every surface, be it as small as a leaf or as large as a hill, possesses a boundary layer. We've all experienced it in very simple ways. When you lie on the ground on a sunny summer afternoon to look up and watch the clouds go by, you place yourself in the boundary layer of the Earth's surface.' Robin Wall Kimmerer (2003)

Lie on the floor on your back. Take some time to sense being in this boundary layer.

Unfiguring

Bring the focus to moss, to the smallness of moss. Picture a place you might find moss. In your imagination take yourself there. Lying on your back or on your side return to the creative imagination of moss in your hand. Locate the fascia layer. Use your breath to begin to let go. Use the out breath to let go of the muscles and any voices/thoughts in the head space. Let go of the skeletal frame, the bones as your structure, the head as the organiser of what you are doing, let go of the eyes as the vision of what you are doing, let go of the muscles as the activators.

Explore moving with surface and boundary layer and let the qualities of spreading and porousness shape the moving. Remember the fascia

Rest

This is focused work. Pause for time to time to rest and then return to the exploration.

Spreading

In restarting perhaps consider working with small isolations.

How might the shoulder blade spread, pour, slide? The pelvis, the ribs, hands, legs etc. It might not travel you very far in space but the movement within the body might be experienced as further than it registers to an eye. Sense how the fascia, the connective tissue lets you slide over bone and wrap around muscle.

Drop into body-time rather than clock -time.

Imagine the growth pattern of moss and how it spreads from and in all directions. It is omnidirectional. Explore what this means in the body. How might you work with all parts of the body and all directions equally? Are there directions or parts of the body that are harder to include? Stay with these areas for a while.

Continue working from this moss shaping of the body. Let go of how the skeleton and the head organises us and keep dropping into the connecting tissue, into where moss takes you.

Rest

Find moments of rest in the moving and just settle where you are.

Covering and being covered

Return to moving as moss and work now with alternating between the image of moving as moss covering stone and then stone being covered by moss. Covering and being covered. How do you experience this differently?

Do whatever you wish with any of the above.

Woodland Ways

Introduction

Woodland Ways arises from a collaboration between the Extending Practice Groupⁱ and visual artist and deer manager Thomas Hawson. The Extending Practice Group is an informal gathering of practitioners coming from different art forms including dancers, visual artists, and musicians that meet on a monthly basis to share and extend our practices using dance improvisation techniques. People involved with this project were Jenna Agate, Helen Douglas, Kate Foster, Liz Hay and Nicky Toneri. Tom Hawson is a designer, maker and artist living at Hundalee on the outskirts of Jedburgh. Tom had spoken to me about his Deer Dance in the past and shown me the wooden carved mask and costume that he'd made. He was interested in how Deer Dance might evolve with a group.

I was interested in the possibility of working with a less anthropocentric starting point and in exploring how to develop a greater sense of 'herd' in the Extending Practice group. Collective decision making. Thinking as a more -than- one 'body', an extended body.

We were pretty practised in exploring our individual movement interests and indeed the group had started for this aim. Despite the emphasis on the session being for personal creative development I had also been trying to develop over time a collective compositional sensitivity where what was happening elsewhere in the studio was a factor to take into consideration, from which to take cues, share in and expand on. Sometimes this worked. Often it would take the form of some relational working – often duets – maybe a trio. It was always something that needed a gentle prompt. Having developed the sessions for personal practice in the company of others, this was a different starting point.

Extending Practice Sessions: Practice Diary

October 30th, 2017, Studio on the Green

In this first session Tom told us about roe deer behaviour and the vocabulary associated with it. The difference between browsing and grazing; roe deer browse, cattle graze. Browsing is what herbivores like deer do whose varied diet might include a variety of different shrubs, small leaves, shoots and berries. Grazing is the eating of low-level vegetation usually grass, a less varied menu. That roe deer are doe and buck rather than hind and stag. How they orientate through the ears which can operate independent of each other; how they follow the snow line; shake branches; how learning from their environment is transferred through the group. What stood out particularly for me was Tom's description of how he behaved when around deer – taking on a 'less human stance', not looking straight ahead but diverting the gaze and how this meant he could get closer to them. Also, how the combination of factors that make us chose a picnic spot might also

make it a deer's favoured spot too. A sunny, meadow environment with an open view perhaps close to water. With all of this information now in the room we began to move.

To commence a simple task shifting between moving and pausing with the cue for commencing moving or pausing being found as a group. No one individual would lead rather the group would sense what was taking place. How to have your attention in more than one activity at a time. How is this moment of deciding to pause 'noticed' and perceived? Visual cues are the easiest and more obvious mode of operating. Shifting the mode of seeing away from the central focus view of 'foveal' vision which gives greater acuity of vision and a sharper detailed to peripheral vision, which is a widening of our gaze to take in what is happening at the edges. We can easily sense this shift in focus from central to peripheral vision. It is an action of the eye and gives us a different sense of where the vision is coming from. The eyes in central vision are cast with precision onto an object or material. What surrounds it – the environs – is less precise. The object is foregrounded. In peripheral vision the eyes seem to drop back into the skull more and it is the environment that is foregrounded, and it is particularly sensitive to detecting movement in this peripheral region. I also notice that working with peripheral vision seems to activate a more listening quality. The gaze has a more listening quality in itself, but peripheral vision also seems to activate something in the area of the ears as well as a listening through the skin. It is a sensing, sensitising gaze. It opens us up to what is around us where central vision is more targeted, precise, and gives more information about a reduced visual field. A shift from central or 'foveal' vision to peripheral vision is a shift in our field of vision.

We continued with this listening approach and gave ourselves some other ideas to explore – couching and being attentive to taking a less upright forward focusing stance. We practiced finding other shapes, stances configurations of ourselves that did not prioritise the usual vertical bipedal arrangement of the skeletal frame. We found other arrangements of ourselves. I have clustered the vocabulary and notes made from Tom's information into phrases of information.

Deer Phrases

In all the following phrases pay attention to your stance and try to take on a less recognisably upright human stance. Become more landscape than humanscape.

Gangly Legs

A good preparatory practice at the start of a session. A way to bring yourself into moving. Explore looseness throughout the body – legs, arms, neck, jaw, ankles, spine, head, eyes etc.

Browsing Phrase

Individual activity

Browsing here is interpreted as gathering nourishment for movement material from what is around and about. Browse being understood as in 'browsing a bookshelf', noticing what takes your attention.

Browsing - Pausing - Continue browsing (in same place or move to another place). Repeat the sequence for any duration. Make your own choices about the duration of each of the activities.

Couching Phrase

Individual activity

Find the ideal perfect couching place in which to settle and observe what is happening whilst still remaining within the improvisation. Always return to the same place. It is not a shared space. Couching can take place at any time.

Alarm Phrase

Group activity

When any member of the group takes a vertical 'stance'. i.e., upright standing or walking position, everyone else responds by dispersing. Remain dispersed until another stance is taken.

Trotting

Group activity

At any time, anyone can begin to follow along a pathway. Everyone follows along behind. A group unison moment.

Following the Snow Line: Receding and Advancing

Group activity.

Continue with browsing, couching, trotting paying attention to the spatial arrangement of the group.

As a group decide whether you are advancing or receding (non- verbally).

Chase Phrase

For two performers

One performer begins to run/walk in a circle. At some point another performer joins.

The first performer changes their activity to long runs across the space.

The second performer does the same. This continues until one person stops.

Orientation through the ears.

Pay attention to the sounds that you are hearing in close, middle, and far distance. Make listening an activity in itself. Notice how being in a listening state changes the tone of your skin, and your level of awareness. Allow the act of listening to shape your activity.

Other gestural vocabulary

Shaking branches

November 27th, 2018, Haining Woodland and Studio on the Green.

Cold and damp.

The starting point for this session was learning from the environment. We met in the Haining woodland. A smallish wood with mixed deciduous trees. Being November there were a lot of leaves on the ground and the weather was quite cold and slightly damp. We spent half the session outside and the second half in the studio.

Un sighted Practice (in pairs)

We are going to explore the woodland unsighted. Find someone to work with. One of you will close your eyes and the other will be your eyes. Your partner is there to accompany and assist you in navigating the woodland safely. They can act as a guide when necessary to keep you safe but are not leading or directing the exploration. Guiding might be by lightly taking the elbow and forearm of the unsighted mover, which allows for some gentle steering, and/or by giving verbal directions to help navigate obstacles and changes of ground.

Continue exploring in this way for 15 minutes, then, find a place to pause. Before the unsighted partner opens their eyes, try to describe where you think you are in the woodland.

Exchange roles, saving any observations until both of you have had a chance to experience the practice. In sharing the experience, you might reflect on how being unsighted composes your moving differently? What new elements of the woodland reveal themselves to you? And from the experience of guiding, does accompanying an unsighted mover change your moving? How? What is revealed to you?

Note: In doing this practice outside with people working scattered at some distance I find ringing a small bell to indicate the start and finish of activities is a usual way to be heard.



Un sighted Practice, Haining Woods, Selkirk

Reflections on practice

Everyone responded to the richness of the experience and could have continued for much longer than 15 minutes. Unsurprisingly people noted how being unsighted allowed the other senses to be foregrounded, in particular the haptic experience was very rich. Participants noticed how distinct, fine, and varied the branches were, the silky texture of the silver birch bark, the dense sponginess and softness of mosses. The presence of the trees became amplified and variations in light/shade were more acutely noticed there being more light in the top boughs and shadier underneath the trees. The liveliness of the air was also amplified. People became more aware and attentive to sounds at different distances – cars in the distance, dog walkers closer by along the path and dogs moving in and out of the woods. The woodland became a richer, livelier place.

As we were an uneven number I observed and acted as timekeeper. From time to time I closed my eyes to gather something of the experience. In watching people, I noticed that although this was in many ways a less than usual activity to see people doing it did not present itself as not being of the woods. The dogwalkers didn't stop and watch as the activity didn't suggest that of a performance as such and the quiet voices of the guides kept it reassuring and safe.

On returning to the studio, we spent 10 minutes individually taking some physical notes (in the bodymind rather than on paper) as a way of reflecting on the experience. We then used the 'Following the Snow Line' phrase as the score for a final improvisation. Within it, people were free to include the other phrases: couching, browsing etc. We gave 15 minutes to the activity. For those people that had not attended the first session there

was a lot of information to take in and potentially work with. Others of us already had some experience of working with the phrases to draw on. It took some time for it to be clear where the snowline was emerging and in which direction (receding or advancing) we were heading in.

It was clear through this first attempt that the following the snow line could easily be a score for an entire work and that the progression could be given greater time to unfold. The score created a sense of territory – a mapping of a space. Tom remarked on the shift from the woodland to the studio and how much harder it was for him to ‘make sense’ of the phrases in the studio environment. We agreed to commence the next session in the woodland and to come prepared with enough outdoor wear to work there for most of the two hours.

January 8th, 2019, Haining Woodland

Bright, cold and dry morning.

Six of us met at The Haining woods. The session was about attuning and deepening our perception of the environment by exploring ways of seeing, listening, smelling that were less familiar. We avoided anything that was in the middle of our perceptual range and concentrated on deep, close, far, and peripheral sensing. The activities were inspired by the way deer dwell. The perception practices opened up the woodland to us in a different way.

Deer Trot* *A warm up in the open field*

A trot is something between a fast walk and a jog. Allow the arms to hang loosely so that the movement becomes looser and more ‘animal’ like. Work as a group a ‘herd’. Consider the group as an ‘extended body’. Set off and see where you end up.

*Inspired by ‘Wolf Trot’ a score by Kirstin Kussmaul in Ways to Wander (Clare Qualmann & Claire Hind, 2015 Triarchy Press).

Listening Practices: *individual practice*

You can do these two practices in whichever order you like:

Far listening (5 mins)

Only attend through your listening to sounds in the far distance.

Feel free to stay in one place or to move. If you decide to move be careful not to allow your vision to interfere with the far listening practice.

Close listening (5 mins)

Only attend to the sounds that are very close to you.

Feel free to stay in one place or to move. If you decide to move be careful not to allow your vision to interfere with the far listening practice.

Seeing Practices: *(individual practice)*

You can choose which order you want to do these in.

Peripheral vision (5 mins)

Stretch both your arms out to either side, level with your shoulders. Now wriggle the fingers of both hands. You should be able to register this movement in the corner of your eyes. This is peripheral vision, a widening of the gaze to take in what is happening at the edges. It is a practice shared by deer managers and dancers, to increase spatial awareness of what is happening around them. Explore the woodland now using only peripheral vision, maintaining an awareness of where others are. What do you notice?

Close looking (5 mins)

Roll up a piece of paper to create a tube and use this to look through, keeping one eye closed. Explore the woodland in close up. Remember the heights as well as the ground.

Smelling (5 mins)

Explore the woodland through smell. This could be close up smelling or on the air. Be aware of being up or down wind.

Tom's Guided Deer Tour

We explored the woodland looking for traces of where deer have been.



Deer have browsed on bramble leaves



And passed this way.

Reflections gathered from the group

The practices enriched our experience of the woodland and opened up the terrain in a different and less familiar way. It changed our ways of experiencing the woodland and of behaving within it. It encouraged a way of being that was more a part of woodland than apart from.

Some of us chose to start with far listening and others with close listening. Those of us with our ears tuned to the distance all heard children in the school playground. When sharing observations at the end it emerged that those who were doing the close listening at this point didn't hear the children at all.

Far listening was a 'spatial' experience. The activity took you out of yourself or rather you extended into the wider environment. For some this registered as a sort of disembodiment and others experienced it as becoming more connected to the woodland.

In the close listening the sounds of the body, the heart, breath, and the blood became audible almost to the point of overwhelming the other close sounds. The sound of any movement made became amplified – dry leaves, bracken, twigs. A visceral experience. The two listening states also registered in a change of body state. The far listening was accompanied by an opening up of the skin, a widening of the bony structure and muscles whereas attending to what was close by was accompanied by a more contained within the skin-ness experience. Tom gave us a handy tip. Pushing your ears forward with your hands amplifies the sound and helps you to hone- in on a sound more easily. Someone else used their hands in front of their body as a listening aid – an antenna. An extension of the practice could be to move between the two states rather than stay with one for the duration.

Close looking and peripheral vision filter information from the woodland in different ways. In close looking, the rolled- up newspaper acted as both a microscope or telescope. It restricted the range of sight and asked you to look deeply into what was there. When you moved with it, the experience of the habitat became filmic. Being unaware of what was happening beyond the small field of vision allowed for being surprised by what you suddenly came upon. A tree that you didn't know was there, another person. Nicky and Jenna found themselves face to face and remarked that it was almost not like seeing someone that you knew. It created a sense of estrangement or enchantment. The close viewing highlighted the presence of materials. For some it felt like a deepening of their experience, a going deeper into, like a scientist, visual artist view – a miniaturist world- for others it made them feel cut off, enclosed. Pointing the optic upwards towards the sky let you play with light down the tube. The light became a lively material.

Sustaining the focus with peripheral vision is hard. It is a different action of the eye which requires practising. Like the far listening working with peripheral vision feels like an

extension of the self out into the wider world. The structures of the environment – the vertical of the trees, the distant hills – becomes very evident and movement registers very clearly. Not being able to see anything straight in front of you makes navigating uneven ground trickier. I found myself lifting my feet high as this avoided me tripping over anything. It had a quality of lightness that was not toilsome. I realised that it was perhaps a bit deer-like and that my solution had emerged from contact with the environment in a specific way. It is a difficult gaze to maintain. Tom commented that when he is deer managing and wants to remain in cover, he goes into peripheral vision and wriggles his fingers at the very edges of his vision to keep him focused as the eye engages with the movement. It was a field of vision that naturalists and deer or other wildlife managers might practice before going into the 'field', entering the habitat, as it makes them behave in a way that appears less predatory which would trigger alarm. Tom also remarked that having worked first with peripheral vision and then went to close vision that he found that he was filling in the missing information gathered from what the peripheral exploration. The peripheral work encouraged a more listening quality in the body. I noticed that I didn't want to make a lot of movement, it removed the desire for excessive movement. Rather each movement was considered. Peripheral vision is something that dancers are trained to use, so that they can take cues from one another.

Working with smell was the hardest of them all. It was a dry day, so smell was not so easily detected. If it had been a damp morning it would have been easier to find or perceive aromas. Movement of air also makes it easier for smells to reach us. Some of us found ourselves sniffing as a way of moving the air. Tom had told us to orientate ourselves up wind and to do that turn to the direction where the air would be colder on the cheek bones, that there was an area under the eyes that were sensitive to the detection of this. Deer will face upward so that smells travel to them and from which they can detect and interpret exactly what is occurring even if they cannot see it. When they can smell it, they don't need to see it too. Downwind is their vulnerable zone hence they will pause and look behind them to protect their flank.

To finish the session Tom took us on a deer tour of the woodland. He showed us what to look for– nibbled bramble leaves a staple of their diet this time of year, eaten ash buds, sapling damage and what to smell for too – the sweet smell of roe deer on the tip of a branch. I'd like to say I could smell it, but I couldn't. We saw where they had been eating from a fallen branch and where they had rubbed the branch smooth. A sapling was something to have a mock battle with, shaking it vigorously and noisily. Once we began to know what to look for, we saw traces of deer everywhere. There was a pathway with hoof marks that would be the transit path from one part of the woodland to another. Right now, at this time of the morning they were probably up at the top end of the wood, resting in the sun.

Deer stalkers and managers hate taking people out with them that 'smell'. They themselves will wear old clothes and roll around in them on the ground to get as much of

the smell of the terrain on them as possible to better become part of the woodland. Hairspray, make up, perfumes, after shave, fresh washed and laundered clothes were hopeless cover.

We can use our perceptions to extend ourselves beyond the skin and into the environment. Extended body also conveys how we might behave collectively, as a herd. Tom remarked that deer also work with an 'extended body' as they use the birds, their calls and behaviour, to inform their going about. The birds act as an environmental indicator either to signal unusual or dangerous conditions or to communicate that all is well.

A question that came up for me. Is working in the woodland an extended studio practice or is it field work? Is the studio and field work division necessary? Are they not a continuum of practice? I recall Kenneth White's phrase the 'work field' which he uses to describe the territory of his work practice which includes poetry, travel (way books) and prose (essays).

January 29th, 2019, Studio on the Green *Dreich*

Nicky Toneri taught us the *Deer Frolic*, one of the five animal frolics of Qi Gong. Deer is the second animal, the others being tiger, bear, monkey, and crane. Deer relates to the element of water, the season of winter and to the kidneys and bladder.

I brought in a variety of materials including withes, sticks from apple tree pruning's, bamboo canes, paper, string, glue, tape. We made playful pieces that were a response to the perception practices we had worked on the session before. Nearly all the pieces were listening devices or antennae. Tom made deer ears attached to withes that he could animate individually in the way that deer are able to move each ear independent of the other, scanning sound from different directions. Helen made a listening piece that was a large piece of paper with two sticks on either end which could 'wrap' the head. The sound of the paper was amplified. Nicky made a more mask like piece. I made paper cones attached to withes, inspired by images of ear trumpets. We began to explore moving with the sculptures in the studio and all agreed that we needed to take the attuning devices back to the woodland as soon as the weather improved.

February 26th, 2019, Studio on the Green

We began with moving with what was emerging in the body before picking up the making activity from the previous session. We did not specifically relate this to deer or the perception practices as the next 'deer' session needed to be in woodland rather than the studio. We shifted between moving and making with a variety of materials to choose from including sticks, withes, bamboo, paper, string, large amounts of bubble wrap, quite heavy plastic sheeting, metal gauze. The making was a way to reflect on the moving that had taken place and the return to moving was influenced by the previous making

experience. One informed the other. Personally, I made a number of small structures and these were placed at the edge of the studio space. A series of pieces. Other people moved and interacted with their objects. I remember one dancer had remained very occupied with small movements, seemingly almost not involved in the workshop at all except that she covered her face with some sort of plastic sheeting. Very slowly she started to move into the space and her 'solo' at the end of the session was rather amazing as she opened up into larger movements wrapped in the sheeting and using the sound of the plastic.

April 30th, 2019, Bowhill Woodland *A beautiful spring morning.*

We resumed our deer-woodlands research after an Easter break. As the Haining woodlands were undergoing significant woodland management with much tree felling we shifted to the woodlands at Bowhill. This was serendipitous as it took us into a woodland that for most of us was less known than the Haining, so we were coming to a place without layers of previous experiences to draw on. I brought the paper sculptures that we had made in January plus more that I had made based on three of the designs – the 'ears', the funnels and the paper sounding sheets. Everyone decided to work with the funnel /trumpet designs and unlike last time, where we worked with two at the same time, everyone worked with just one.

Entering Woodland

Working through the withe and paper sculptures, enter the woodland and explore it as you wish. Allow yourself to be led by the sensing pieces. Hold the withes firmly but not tightly so that the quality of the movement of the withes can transfer through to the bod the one an extension of the other.



Responses gathered from the group

This was totally absorbing, and we worked with this for about an hour or so. The movement through the woodland was slow, exploratory. It was a working through materials as we did not hold the sculptures like objects but were led by. Following the paper sculpture into woodland I began with scanning the woodland floor. After some time, it was drawn to the aerial space in the treetops, the paper sculpture rising lightly upwards. They had a motion of their own that was mesmerising, simple, elegant. The sculptures were not of the woodland but somehow of it too. All the sculptural pieces ended up in a clearing.

Contact

Use contact to get closer to woodland. Contact can be haptic (skin to bark or earth) but can also be a quality of gaze. In this way we were drawn into the details of the habitat.

Contour

Explore the woodland through contouring in whatever way you understand that to be.

(Note: we worked more deeply with contact – contour in October 2019. See workshops notes)

Space as director

Allow the woodland to direct your going about.

Responses

Many of us followed pathways which drew us to other places in the woods that we had not visited. I found myself drawn into dells and close to rocks and moss, paying attention to surface. I was thinking about making my way by crawling through and I saw a ladybird doing that very thing, so I followed.

We found ourselves back in the clearing. Helen was holding a branched piece of wood crouching down – they were ‘antler’ like. Jenna was still working with the sculptures behind a tree seen and unseen, the other sculptures were gently moving bobbing in the wind.

The session had allowed for a drawing together of previous activities. The quality of attention to detail was very fine. There was a rejuvenating feeling amongst the group for having spent the morning in this way. We decided that we would take the cultures next time back to the studio to work in a similar way but not in the woodland setting. We had noticed throughout the session that people walking along the edge of the wood had paused to watch what was going on.



May 28th, 2019, Studio on the Green Rainy

We began with breath as a way to allow the movement to emerge from the body and to work with bodyscape rather than figuring.

Walking and Standing in Time (10 mins)

This score simply asks you to shift between walking and standing. You are doing your own dance of walking and standing, aware of what others are doing. The choices in the score are around the speed of your walking, the amount of time you choose to continue walking or standing which can alter each time. The directions you go in, your facing in the standing, how near to or far from a wall, a window, another person(s). In standing take the time to be aware of where you are in the space, how your standing changes the spaces, how the standing of others and with others changes the space. Continue with this practice for a at least 10 minutes, 20 minutes is even better to start to really dance with space and dwell in time. It is a practice to take outside as well as in the studio, with or without other people.

The only activities permitted are standing and walking in relation to the architecture. Standing is not a static activity there is much going on. Slight adjustments all the time of the spine, moving around the feet. A slight change of position is a shift in and of the space. The focus of the walking is a conversation with the space not the action of walking itself.

Flow of space

Allow the flow of space to shape your moving (as individual practice)

What are the flows, the energies of a space? Corners, windows, where the light falls? The wooden floorboards invited travelling along through sliding. The floor was also something to move away from. Helen noted that she found herself doing movements that were new for her, so she was moving differently, surprising herself. Is this evidence perhaps of how to know when space is being worked with?

Exploring Ma – flying white

Work with this as an individual practice

Work with this as a group practice working with group as extended body.

We discussed how negative space was an inaccurate description and started referring to in-between space. I started with exploring in-between space with the body; it starts as shaping but after some time it is possible to move into motion and to start to work directly with space. It happens to you rather than you making something happen. Another dancer noted that for her relationship with others was important, and this along with walking and stopping allowed for this.

Working with paper sculptures

Take all we have done today into working with the paper sculptures.

They allow you to work with the high, aerial spaces, lightness of the objects – no sense of muscular tension in working with them, you are lifted with them.

We discussed how the performance opportunity at Tom Hawson's studio opening in August might work. We decided not to go in advance to work in Tom's woodland so that the exploration has a freshness and integrity. I would however make a visit in advance to look at a location that would be workable and a pathway through for the audience that was safe. We will frame it as studio practice rather than performance. Duration: 20 mins.

June 1st, 2019, Burnlaw, Northumberland

A Woodlands Ways session with dancer Tim Rubidge. We worked inside and then moved with the paper and with the sculptures in a newly planted woodland. Below are some reflections on practice through writing.

(i)

Flying white with Tim in the Beautiful Room, Burnlaw.

I want you to see the flying white in the Beautiful Room.

Look how the space opens up between, pushing at the stone walls, concentrated in the corners hanging in the rafters,

I am asking you not to fix your gaze on the details of a gesture, the turn of a head, the shift of a foot, the figuring of an arm but be absorbed by the emergence of space.

(ii)

I am practicing extraction, a dematerialization, to enlarge your presence.

Pulling out of the room, removing myself. Where do I go?

I'm not gone but going, making room for space, a reconfiguration, opening up space.

'ma'

iii

1st day of June in new woodlands with paper and with the tuning sculptures

Tuning to moving air, bird chatter, tree talk, and a hatch of insects attracted to the white paper trumpet of our tuning instruments.

Our antennae, sensing apparatus, tasting the air waves, taking me into the tree-tops, rising, an experience of lightness, no strain at all in the muscles.

Bachelard will have something to say about this.

Slow moving we became absorbed, sensing through willow, the suppleness of place, listening in to insects, trees, plants, birds, air waves, drawn on by pathways.

Upright figures in a woodland – spine and tree trunk, spreading arms up and outward, absorbing us into this deer, bird, plant, tree, air, weather, insect place
a gathering together, a herd.

Deer pass through this way, Tim says.

Expressing the Earth Conference, Scottish Centre for Geopoetics
Wiston Lodge, June 15th 9.30 – 11.00

Woodland Ways Workshop

*I must enter this birch-world
and speak from within it*

Kenneth White From Valley of Birches, Book V, Mountain Meditations



This creative session is a foray into how extending the ways we engage the senses can lead us towards a heightened sensitivity, which unfolds and expands the experience of a place in multiple ways. Drawing on somatic movement practices to encourage a listening body in subtle contact with the world we will work with distance and proximity and 'more than human' ways within a woodland environment. This work draws on a current collaborative movement research project with visual artist and deer manager Tom Hawson and the Extending Practice Group artists.

There will be time at the end to reflect on your experience through writing, drawing, or moving. No previous movement experience is required.

[Expressing the Earth Geopoetics Conference
\(brownpapertickets.com\)](http://brownpapertickets.com)



Woodland Ways at Wiston Lodge

Participant Response

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 June 2019 06:50
To: claire.pencak
Subject: notes from perception practices workshop
my notes after the workshop friday!

so... walking around blind....

the sense of touch is increased. i notice light and dark. vulnerability is increased. the need to rely on my outer awareness... touch... the skin.

(don juhan, somatics practitioner: the skin is the outer layer of the brain/the brain is interior to the skin. clare: the depth of the skin as an organ if we think about it in anatomical terms. that it covers so much of our body. is what is exposed to the outside world.)

the way that moving up through the ferns i came into the light. a sense of reaching for the light. (this practice was mostly touching/feeling, but also invited feeling and moving as if).

and when i was down with the rotting log, amidst the dampness and the softness... it gave before me, the sense of the dark as homely. i imagined burrowing, and this being a safe place for beetles and grubs. imagining myself as part of the environments that i was moving through.

sense of curiosity. of slowness (you necessarily need to slow down). of wanting to spend time with.

the sense of smell. (also of sound).

walking around with peripheral vision.

this is a thing that deer do. the way that deer perceive their environment.

it could be useful as a skill for interacting with deer. as hunter, or as being with the deer.

this is a way that traditional skills of connection with the world often do get preserved.

where the persisting strands can be found. within the practical.

what i tended to notice was colours, and movement... particularly other humans.

i felt to be the centre, but extended out. not necessarily a self in the same way. because extended, relational. and i wasn't being perceived as a self by anyone else. nothing was reflecting me back onto myself as a self.

i could empathise (thinking about deer) with the feeling of being part of a herd... a one amongst many. not an individual as such. just the centre point of an extended awareness (from which my awareness was being cast outwards).

the way in which (we used no tools) this was just a matter of changing focus. literally.

choosing what it was you concentrated on. choosing how you made use of your sensory capacities. how your brain made use of the information available to it (control over sensory gating... how else might we do this?)

noticing sound more.

somebody said that there was a way in which your vision relaxed itself... that your eyes somehow settled into your skull.

walking around with close vision.

using a tool (a rolled-up piece of A4 white paper) to close off a large part of our vision.

we shut one other eye.

you could see only a very small part of the world.

depth perception changed! things that seemed not that far away were in fact quite far away! two things at very different distances from one another were hard to hold in the same vision... having to choose between what to focus on was far more acute.

drawn to small or particular objects. allowed (and invited/enticed) you to close in on detail. to notice small things. attracted towards particular prominent objects.

honing in.

and to move slowly!

it was a funny sense of self looking down at the ground to see where you were going (bent over like a detective)... checking out the path ahead, then looking back down at where you were walking and seeing your feet come into view. i felt a bit distanced from myself! my overall sense of myself as a cohesive thing was decreased (at least not available to me through sight). i felt lumbering and big. where looking at eye level(ish) only through the paper, i'd sort of felt myself a bit bodiless. more of an affinity with the air than the ground. perhaps like a flying thing. (what things have eyes on the fronts of their heads?)

it felt funny seeing other people suddenly come into view. i had to sometimes work not to bump into people! had to stop! big things were dangerous! and like i should avoid them... a sense of intrusion.

looking at both the ground and the sky was pleasant. and... i found a leaf with a hole in it, and looked through the hole in the leaf through the hole in the rolled up paper... at leaves afar... it was like kaleidoscope vision. very pleasing.

walking around with the funny things on sticks (willow).

they wanted to go where they wanted to go. were very sensitive to the wind. could pick up the breezes in a way that i couldn't. once, it seemed to be drawn to the sun.

sometimes it got tangled in the trees. it liked the sensory interest of the trees. sound was augmented. it was all rustly. it didn't like being on the ground so much. it much preferred the heights to the depths. ferns were ok.

it felt curious... the curiosity was taken out of my hands. also like a nose. it was nose-y. sometimes it wanted to eat things. probably because it was shaped like a cone.

it was very wavery and wobbly. there was definitely some information being conveyed down to me by touch.

i tried combining it with my peripheral vision. and closing off vision. just letting it do the exploring and the sensing. it wasn't very satisfactory as a sensory prosthesis. it got tangled up, and didn't move smoothly or freely across things.

i thought about how, existing without central brain-oriented ideas based processing (existing in the knowledge of our bodies) it makes sense to extend our capacities by growing extra sensory parts. perhaps this had new sensory capacities that i didn't have. could tell where to go... perceive different things. but it wasn't very satisfactory. sight is a much better way of getting information about the world. i wouldn't bother growing one. it wouldn't pass the evolution test.

the ways that perception has such a part to play in how we are in the world. how we understand it. how we move through it.
seeing people's movements change (the ways they used their bodies) in response to the sensory/perceptive capacities that they were engaging!

clare: how it influences how we construct space/place. how that influences us.
as temporally bounded practices/exercises, how to bridge those experiences to the rest of life... ways that it might influence how we are in the world.
(ways that these practices are consigned to being arts/movement/bodywork practices).
such specialised modes of perception preserved in use/usefulness (tied to objectives).
what are all their uses? how about when they are freed from that (e.g., just moving/dancing)? perhaps this is a human privilege? ... how are perceptive capacities shaped entirely by usefulness (evolution of body forms)? how might we translate/transcribe these experiences/perceptions in other forms/languages? ways in which body forms/gesture an expression of these perceptions?

PERFORMANCE: 木の間 **Among trees**

BATCH: 2 *Experiments in Making*

Sunday August 25th



木の間 **Among trees**

2pm

Hundalee Farm

An etude for bodies, woodland and sculptural objects accompanied by live drawing.

This is an improvised dance-art event that emerged from a series of workshops exploring the dwelling practices of roe deer. It is an investigation into sensing place that began with a more -than- human perspective as a way to move more deeply into woodland. The audience is invited to wander within the woods during the event which will last 20 minutes.

Hundalee Mill Farm, Jedburgh, TD8 6PA as part of an Open Studio Weekend hosted by Thomas Hawson and Jenny Ozwell

Performance Programme and Score

木の間 Among trees

An etude for bodies, woodland and sculptural objects accompanied by live drawing.

'I must enter this birch-world
and speak from within it

Kenneth White, from Valley of Birches, Book V, Mountain Meditations

This is an improvised dance-art event, an investigation into 'sensing place' and a way to move more deeply into woodland.

Below are some perception practices to guide your journey through the woodland.

Please be careful and stay on or close to the path as much as possible as there are some steep drops, and the ground is uneven in places.

Score for Audience

The event begins when you hear a chime.

Enter the woods and slow down your walking so that you can notice small things

Deer Ways

You might like to look out for signs of roe deer.

Here are some: hoof prints, droppings, nibbled leaves, frayed tree branches, scrapes under fraying bushes where they scrape the ground with their hooves. Maybe you will find a couching spot – a small circular area of flattened grass and leaf litter where deer have recently rested or notice a deer path – a narrow track worn down by the deer as they pass through the wood.

Listen Close, Listen Far

Find somewhere to pause, perhaps rest against a tree, close your eyes if you like and listen carefully. *What do you hear?*

Try listening only to the sounds that are close to you. After a while change to listen to the far away sounds. *What do you hear? Is it different?*

If you have closed your eyes take a moment to observe what other things you notice? Whenever you want to open your eyes and wander on.

Looking closely

Roll this piece of paper into a tube and explore where you are in close up as if through a microscope. Take time to explore the woodland like this. You might like to look closely at the ground, at the bark of a tree, up into the sky and treetops. *What do you notice?*

Peripheral Visions

Normally we look directly at another person or a tree or our mobile phones, targeting things with our eyes. Let's try something different.

Stretch both your arms out to either side, level with your shoulders. Now wriggle the fingers of both hands. Can you see this movement at the edge of your vision? This is peripheral vision, a widening of the gaze to take in what is happening at the edges. This is a way of seeing that is practiced by performers to increase their spatial awareness and by deer trackers as it gives them a less predatory appearance. Explore the woodland now using only peripheral vision, maintaining an awareness of where other people are.

What do you notice that is different when you use peripheral vision?

When you hear the chime a second time the performance has ended.

Performed by the Extending Practice Group – Jenna Agate, Helen Douglas, Tom Hawson, Merav Israel and Claire Pençak.



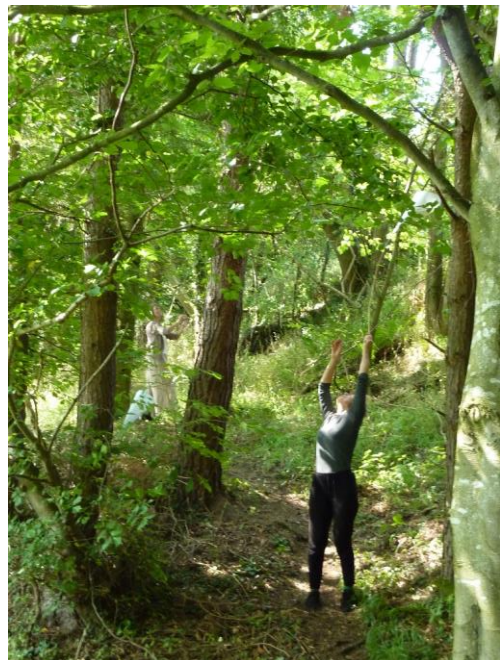
Practising Peripheral Vision in Tom's Studio with the audience before setting off.

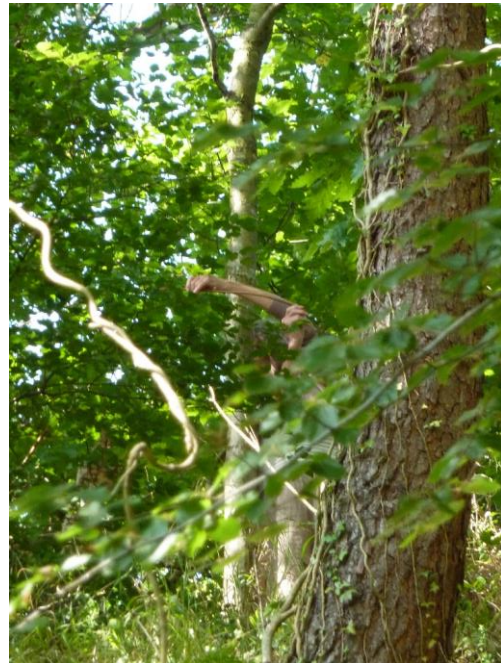


Following ways into the wood



Extendings





Extendings



Practising Peripheral Visions



Witnessing



Action Drawing

Photographs courtesy of Jenny Ozwell

Reflective conversation with Tom Hawson
Hundalee Mill, Jedburgh, Monday September 30th, 2019

- Claire: I just thought maybe we could start with what do you remember particularly, starting with the early sessions, anything really, what do you recall?
- Tom: Well, I was flattered that you entertained my interest in you helping me develop my deer dance. So that was like – oh my god! – and then the idea that you wanted to do it as a group was exciting and then for me well personally it was really exciting having an audience who were interested in deer, not in a formal way but in a broad way. Your approach in the studio was and your colleagues, they had a very open-minded interest, so I think the first session was almost like – blimey - were they just being polite, or did they indulge me there or were they genuinely interested. But I think there was a genuine interest, and it was great to say it all and get it all off my chest in a way. My kids are getting it all the time of course but it's a private interest in a way, and there is a sort of protracted peer group that you meet every now and again, and there's professional material and things, but nothing quite ... I mean I'm interested in deer as a sort of muse for my own art so to share that with other creatives was unique.
- Claire: So, what in particular is it about deer then that you find muse like?
- Tom: Well I'm obsessed with Joseph Beuys I suppose, regards my art career directly, and I mean I had a long conversation, a long debate at quite a turning moment in my whole creative thinking when I was about twenty two working as an assistant with Richard Harris in Petange, Luxembourg during the year of culture or something they were getting big funding and they were doing this massive project sort of rehabilitating a massive industrial area where their steel industry collapsed so it was a huge, huge, huge site and they were trying to humanise it again or you know it was more like a post war zone really that had just been bulldozed flat. I was in quite a remarkable situation because Richard was doing a huge land piece, land art sculpture, land sculpture and I was the only assistant among about a dozen or nine or ten land artists or ecologically minded artists and one of them Herman, I can't pronounce his second name very well, I can't remember it.¹⁰ Herman he took me under his wing in the hotel and counselled me basically. Because I had all these burning questions and I fancied a career in art and my then girlfriend was at sculpture college, but I was quite disappointed in the contact and the sort of learning potential

¹⁰Herman Prigann <https://hermanprigann.com/about/>

inside the institution at Nottingham. I was quite disappointed and frustrated on her behalf because she didn't have very much means and couldn't afford to go on the private courses and actually wanted to learn how to make and do things as well as the contextual side of it and the peer review stuff. And I was writing to all the friends and everything, most of my friends were at art school, undergraduates and stuff and I wanted an art career and I wanted to get into fine art, but I didn't want to go through a fine art degree because I basically couldn't afford it. I couldn't afford to come out the other end of it, in my own mind, unable to make a living for myself or not being able to visualise that. So, I was having this massive argument with Herman saying 'what the, I mean how am I going to make art independent of a market without any means whatsoever? Anyway, he gave me his great lifelong story and all this stuff and eventually we're on to that bit where 'how does an artist make work independent of their audience? Or a sort of maintenance of regular income or a perceiving of the value of their work and how do you justify just doing it for yourself and yourself first? And eventually he just sat me down, well we were just sitting down, and he said 'Tom, an artist makes art for themselves first and for themselves only. After that it doesn't matter.' And it all got very simple after that, you know, it was all really straight forward, and I like to take away that barrier at every project and it was a real... I mean your level of professionalism and experience and the groups was really, really appreciated because to reach out to peers inside the arts I suppose, who had that level of professional commitment with an open-ended view on the creative narrative was really exhilarating and really lovely. And I'm just starting to put my head above the parapet regarding my own art surfacing or sharing my art practice in a way, because it's been on the back burner for a very long time and I've only just got this sort of influence but interesting Herman's tutor was Joseph Beuys.¹¹ So you know deer for him, well we talked about the Shaman as a modern day artist and really when you boil it, when you consolidate it down, an artist communicates or mediates directly with nature back to their own community and I mean we're obviously, there's never a point at which it's more important in history, because we only have nature on planet earth and that is our only resource so, throughout time there has always been different reasons right back to the prehistoric times, you know there's always a need for food in any one particular point in time and deer, when I started practising deer management or you know, understanding and watching deer the more you empathise with them the closer you can get and the more intimate you understand them. So, and to understand them you really have to appreciate their ecology their habits, their relationship with the sun, the

¹¹ Correction. Tom checked this and discovered that his tutor was actually Bazon Brock.

wind, you know, and it tunes back into all that as well, so it was a profound journey to make in itself, but also to feed as a muse in itself. And then of course doing all that made me realise that actually the shamans are the best hunters, are the best empathisers and of course that's the natural role of an artist, so it made total sense to me and it really joined things up and to come and share it with other people was quite good and I suppose the deer project now and you've stretched it out a bit, you know it's broader than the original premise to me in my mind and it's really nice.

Claire: It kind of went on a whole journey I suppose. I remember we started with, I did make notes after every session actually – so I kind of remember everything, we started with deer because you explained, well we had a session where basically you ...

Tom: told the story

Claire: told the story.

Tom: about deer.

Claire: and there were loads of questions and everyone was genuinely interested.

Tom: and you realised very quickly that we needed to go to the woodland.

Claire: Yes.

Tom: to get the context of that.

Claire: Yes, we did a little bit of work in the studio, which was fine as a way of starting but it felt like, for me I have to say, I need to be in the place.

Tom: You need to immerse yourself in the environment, yes that's right.

Claire: So, based on what you told us about how they behave I suppose, and some of their actual behaviour in terms of you know, like 'couching', all those words that we had and the way they use their ears independently and I thought well what are we going to do, well try and find a way of kind of translating that into some sort of practice that we could do outside. It wasn't really dance, I wouldn't say it was dance, in the end I call them Perception Practises. And some of them I'd maybe done before in a similar way, but I think the deer thing gave it a particular context.

Tom: Yes, it was a focus wasn't it to draw you deep into that way of sensing the environment, the woodland.

Claire: And I think everyone found it really fascinating, I mean the one's I really clearly remember were peripheral vision, just because there is a relationship there with performance anyway, how the environment is just registered quite differently because you're not looking straight ahead. When you were saying, explaining how that deer manager or stalker, when they go into the field, if you like they practice that before, and that because you're not targeting with your eyes you can become a little bit more ...

Tom: Well, you're actually far less predatory than people expect you to be and someone that doesn't know anything about it won't get near deer because they are going out with the wrong attitude, they're not empathetic to the animals or the environment and it's a balancing act you know.

Claire: The other thing was taking the less human figure or at least not an upright, looking around, but busying yourself with something somewhere else.

Tom: Well yes you can sort of shape shift yourself absolutely.

Claire: And I know that people like Jenna have been practicing that, to get closer to deer.

Tom: Well yes, that's a subject in its own right isn't it, the art of that sort of thing.

Claire: And I suppose dance-wise or movement-wise that's interesting to me because on the whole I would say a lot of contemporary dance is about being a human, or a human figure - we might roll a lot on the floor (*laughter*) but and I know ... that I'm a figure.

Tom: Yes, you're very self-aware of all your movements and I would say that it's not, if you actually go out as a professional responsible amateur deer managing then it is a total performance, from the point that you park the car, where you park the car, how you park the car to getting back in it and clearing off. You know every single movement and noise has to be choreographed in your mind before you arrive on the scene. I mean it's ridiculous if you think about it, and it made me start thinking a bit more about it but the people who are any good at it teach you all about that as well and so it's quite an odd, it's so premeditated, it's total conscious movement. I mean it's the same as herdsman, stockman, you can get all kind of interesting material by YouTube know, the cattle whisperers and that sort of thing and there's great things going on in wilding and

minimum stress herd management and stuff like that and a good stockman can move animals without the animals realising they are going into the direction someone else wants them to go. And that's a premediated dance in the landscape in symbiotic relationship with the herd. And that's, you've made me see. I've kind of thought about it in the past but you know it's quite plain now it's the same world, it's the same thinking, the same kind of physical intelligence.

Claire: I did a workshop as part of a Geopoetics conference this year and someone from the workshop sent me some notes and one of the things she wrote was 'the traditional skills of connecting with the world are often preserved', so that's right she was basically saying that she thought that some of these traditional skills of being able to connect to the world really old ones are being preserved in some of these very practical activities like deer managing, stock moving.

Tom: Yes, so why I got into deer specifically as well, emotionally and sort of socially, was my dad was a stockman and I was born on a dairy farm and I was taken out on his shoulders, in a papoose or whatever, and as soon as I could sit up, I was on his shoulders apparently going out at whatever age that is, one, or one and half, bringing the stock in, at five in the morning and five in the afternoon. Twice a day I did that with him, and I'd sit somewhere while he moved ... and I was part of, and I apparently held the stick, so I sat on his back and I held the stick which we never needed to use but it was all about getting them in. So, I've kind of, not resented the fact that my dad encouraged me not to put up any fences and not to have stock because it's a total tie, and not have that vehicle to learn those things from him. But he's, but I've learnt how to approach stock kind of indirectly through farming friends and then he taught me to look at deer effectively as well. So that's an unbroken heritage and a skill you can't really learn without practising it with someone else whose inherited the practise through practising it with someone else sort of thing, that's the best way to do it ... I mean I've found people who are experienced who then turn up to rescue someone whose got themselves in too deep you know they've got a guy , a woofer from the island off Spain there's loads of folk now who's grand parents have died and with the recession they're moving back out to the hills to kind of semi- subsist and they've forget, there's no one alive in their family and they know they've inherited this farm up in the hills which is now derelict, it was a holiday place and now they're living there and trying to subsist and get managing their goats and sheep and stuff, and this guy was turning out to rescue them when the shit had hit the fan. They're probably fetching the beasts back on to their hills and they just didn't know what they were doing, and they couldn't learn there wasn't

the way they could learn online, in books, you know, there wasn't a school they could go to. They had to have a stock man on site who could physically demonstrate.

Claire: So, it's really passed from body to body, person to person.

Tom: Yes, and that's total tacit mimicking and mimetics and all that carry on and that's dance as well.

Claire: Good dance teaching.

Tom: That must be part of a dancer's practice being able to do all those things.

Claire: Yes, it really is passed on body to body which means that you are always carrying the legacy of everyone you have worked with or been taught by.

Tom: And that almost nearly always has to happen in the context of animals and the ground.

Claire: Yes. So, how does that go into your practice now.

Tom: Well, I suppose that empathy and mimicking gives me a vehicle, I think it helps when you learn craftsmanship, and that's what my research was about. Well boiling it down it was about the relationship between the apprenticeship and the master craftsman if you like and that experience and what's going on there and what information is it carrying beyond the obvious. So, there's a massive range of stuff and in craftsmanship there's an awful lot going on in context to the landscape as well and the immediate materials available so there's a whole load of information that's going on and going in under the conscious radar I suppose. And that takes total absorption in the space, in the context of the landscape in the community and the cultural context of the artist, where he positions himself, the craftsman and what his audience, markets are and his relationship with his work and you learn that through mimicking, in a space and so, physically practising how to do a physical thing, it comes back down to that as well, you know, to do a certain type of work you need a certain type of lifestyle you need a certain type of environment to do it in, you need to have a certain type of frame of mind or some practice part of your character that brings you to the work with the right approach and then there's physical technique. But there's all that other stuff going on as well which is equally relevant and fascinating, so it's just picking that apart I suppose.

Claire: So, picking up on what you said earlier about how everything is, that you are consciously doing things even before you enter into ... is it possible to articulate in any way what that is, how you are different?

Tom: As a unique individual?

Claire: Ok let's for example say like peripheral vision or even if you're doing quite far listening, for something like that or me, personally, you have a sense that you are like an extended body.

Tom: Absolutely, yes.

Claire: And I think we spoke about that a bit probably when we were in the woods, and obviously deer work as herd, so they are ... because of the way they are, they are individual, but they're group.

Tom: Yes, but as much as that they are also directly immersed in their environment which is giving them feedback all the time.

Claire: Yes, I remember you saying about the birds and that they can pick up on what's going on because of what they hear.

Tom: Yes.

Claire: So for me when I started thinking like that, that's why I think the work changed from deer as in characteristics and all that, then it became perception.

Tom: Yes, because it's all about context.

Claire: And I was interested in the herd ... we didn't go that far with herd really, I think some of the group are quite interested in personal material rather than ...because it was never a performance group to start with, but for me there is extended self so that is herd. But finally, actually why it ended up as 'Among Trees' was because it became a thing around place which is what is place? That's not really the question I'm asking in the research but it's in there and it's about this relation.

Tom: How you respond. How does one person physically and uniquely respond to a place.

Claire: I don't know if it's respond, why does something suddenly, well not suddenly, but what makes something place and for me I'm starting to think

about that immersion thing and for me that relationship is you, oneself, whatever one is, in relationship to everything else, meshed in together becomes place.

Tom: Yes, I suppose that's interesting isn't it. Place is a demarcation of one particular interest, I suppose that is all you could say as, I mean I'm thinking as well from perception or as I might imagine the perception of a deer or the landscape or that the deer lives within or basically the human, well not the human, the biosphere, there's no, apart from where we meet the water's edge, there's not really specific places. I mean you go through margins don't they and those margins in different places are much wider than others. Now often the margins are the place where there's most biodiversity or its awkward to manage, so the shoreline and things like that, the verge and stuff. These are places more akin to natural environment where in modern terms, we mow the grass up to an edge and then it's not mown or whatever happens. But everything ... there is a kerb and then immediately there is a clean piece of pavement, there's not even any weeds anymore so you know, we've demarked it when in a way it's a sliding scale of complex facets and so one region of the country or the world will be a different place right down to the point at the water's edge.

Claire: Well, you're definitely going into another zone there.

Tom: Yes, definitely, and so then you've got the water or that other place, you've got two different places, or the air and the earth. But what makes it in our head is something you can describe to someone else. You can tell them there is something over there which is the place. Or you suddenly find yourself in a place which gives you a specific emotional response. I think those places get me quite excited and they're mostly natural environments and its mostly to do with finding food and I never forget them. And often I find – it took me years to work out why I find myself on the beach back home in Lincolnshire, which is a very inconvenient place to visit, for different reasons, but I'd often find myself back there once a year and it was the best time of year to pick samphire which was something I'd learned to do with my parents, same time of year every year. I wasn't consciously deciding that I need to go there to pick samphire, I'd be making up other excuses in the back you know consciously but after about half a dozen years of that I realised I was doing this because I was coming to pick samphire so why am I not being honest with myself? So, that's samphire place on one level but it's the beach on another. But I don't know what those places, that I find myself taken to unconsciously, I found that the most profound and powerful places.

Claire: Connected to food.

Tom: Yes, connecting to collecting things to eat. We're making the tiles in the kitchen all about that with the family experience because I'm effectively teaching my kids that thing and the seasons and everything. Yeah, we check it out in books and we're quite interested, and you know you confirm and grow your recipes, your palette of choices and meet other people and share experience doing similar things which is quite nice. Now it's called forage isn't it? It's very fashionable. Its suddenly on people's radar I think because we've, some people are in dire straits because their parents didn't teach them to do it and so their disconnected and now, we realise what a value it gives people, in understanding and perceiving the value of natural environment and it couldn't be more acutely important to resurrect all of these useful tools for finding reasons to appreciate verges before they're turned into some other place. *(Laughter)*

Claire: Although there's a little bit more isn't there some places do a bit more wildflower verges not the Borders necessarily yet, but ...

Tom: Hamburg's amazing. Fergus and I were just gob smacked. They must have banned Round Up and any municipal interest in disposing or tidying up weeds' years ago. The place is like the seventies, its odd, you kind of walk around feeling slightly over relaxed. There's mud and crap up against the kerbs and underneath bus shelters and telegraph poles and weeds growing out of it. So, there's weeds everywhere, it really softens the urban landscape, and it feels far more kind of relaxing and not such hard edges everywhere which is really interesting.

Claire: Yes, because I always find, I'm not in cities very often but Edinburgh or Newcastle maybe, they are so tiring on the feet and everything because it's so concrete and I always wonder why do my legs ache because I'm fairly fit and I realise it's because I'm wondering around just on stone all day whereas otherwise you cut across the grass or it's just a whole different ...

Tom: So, I would say they're not places. The urban environment is a 'not- place' and the verge is a place.

Claire: That's interesting.

Tom: Yeah, from the daft farm lad that I am.

Claire: What about the ... when you were doing the action drawing? How did that go for you because I never really got to speak to you about that?

Tom: Yeah, I mean I loved it. I mean I did a bit in Edinburgh actually when I was doing civil engineering it was quite odd. I'd never seen it before. I did life class. Because you can do. I did my second subject but you could also enrol in evening classes for free so I went along to the art school to do life drawing and the tutor came and was encouraging us to do what we wanted and he kicked off or he came round to encourage us to get started and then he decided he was going to do a sort of action drawing in response to the figure and I had to stop doing what I was doing and just watch him. And I started asking him questions and I was sort of fascinated and it lifted the lid of it, and it blew my head away really. I think I was about seventeen or eighteen at the time and I thought yeah why not, this is great I love it.

Claire: So, can you explain exactly what you were doing?

Tom: Well, so this guy was just saying, well his explanation, and I'd say the same thing, you just make a physical reaction to something you're witnessing, whatever that is, emotional presence. So, I suppose I'd previsualised what it was I could think of, up there, so I just thought I'd go in as if I was sitting tight as a deer in the sort of deer management hat on, but with the deep empathy for the environment and for the deer. Obviously, I wasn't going to see any deer but there were going to be people creeping about and making noises. But also, there's nothing in the environment that's not off bounds to sort of thinking about and empathy and understanding the environment. So, I just went through a list in my head. And a lot of that immediate effect was the noise of the road, you know and the motorbikes coming in opposite directions. So, I had both of my arms going and the volume of the engine, I changed the pressure with the volume and then there were people creeping about. Cracking sticks could be a little like a sort of ...

Claire: Accent?

Tom: Like a twitch , you know because I'm thinking oh what's that? and I'd twitch so my arm would twitch so midway through a motorbike moving I might twitch but also I might just go off onto the big square to a corner where I think that noise is coming from and make a twitch And then there was birds and so I was imagining I was sort of writing a score for the bird tweets, the number of tweets in a little alarm call or whatever, and then there was the river moving, sometimes you can kind of hear the kind of hiss of it and then there's the, so that's mostly audible. But then there's the feeling of the direction of the river I know where the river is in relation to the valley so I'm drawing the major contours of the spaces, and the changing height and the direction of the flow of the water. And then I'm

thinking about why the hills are rounded the way they are, some bits undercut, there's a cliff by the river, some of it the tops of it are shaped by the glaciers, so I'm starting to think about the prevailing ice flow and then I'm back to bird tweets (*laughter*), so you know.

Claire: So, there's a kind of journey through place, land.

Tom: I'm trying to capture all that at once with both hands moving around the page. And then how I feel, I suppose, in making a kind of, about the different sounds were changing and the shapes and the distance in time, thinking about the heaviness of glacial ice, or, you know, and thinking about the paper and wanting to rip it up actually! Going I want to scratch great holes in this because I'm thinking of that rock underneath that ice, so yes just anything going through my mind about that sense of place in the landscape and its relationship to now, I think could I imagine how it was going to be in the future, that would be the next thing.

Claire: Pretty hard (*laughter*)

Tom: (*laughter*) Pretty hard yes! The trees would be taller, there might be more wind, it might feel a bit hotter (*laughter*)

Claire: Yes, hotter and wetter (*laughter*).

Tom: I'd say there'd be more frogs.

Claire: Was there anything else you wanted to chat about?

Tom: Oh yeah, also that was making a stand as well. So when I look at deer's markings on the landscape I kind of think of them as drawing in the way that, because I was also acutely aware that you were all female and I was male and not wanting to jump into stereotypical kind of, trying to be open minded but it was difficult for me to ignore that actually ,because I kind of, yeah I'm a man and I can't dissociate my association with bucks I suppose, and I thought well making a stand, well a deer kind of draws on the trees and then does a little performance to show off to everyone in the area both with his scent, the number of marks he's made and then line of sight showing off by rattling the tree, so the drawing was all of those things as well, in a way, and much to my amusement I really felt conscious of being a deer drawing on a bush but I was going to, the bush was the square piece of paper which I was going to be carrying out afterwards.

Claire: Have you kept the drawing?

Tom: Yes. *(laughter)* It's downstairs.

Claire: Good *(laughter)*.

Tom: So that's very relevant.

Claire: And what kind of responses did you get to the whole scenario?

Tom: Well, it was brilliant because we had everybody there.

Claire: Yes, there was a lot of people.

Tom: And we also had every kind of demographic, you know. We had almost aristocratic kind of aloof folk who were just like totally loving the Avant Garde nature of it so they could probably boast to their friends. I don't think they cared whether they understood it or not they just knew that it was totally off the wall. And then we had people like Madrilla's husband who was a fireman, no less open minded, but was actually genuinely, he had a lot of trepidation and fear about the whole thing, but he kind of, he forced his open mind in a way, or had enough patience on the day to give himself enough open mind and he was quite tickled by it. He thought, you know he felt inspired and then we had full on tree huggers really get into the spirit of the whole thing.

Claire: Yes, I couldn't really see because I was involved in it to be honest. I can tell from the photos, like I did see someone doing, practising peripheral vision because I could see their fingers were wagging or whatever, which, I was like – oh -like I wasn't really aware of anyone had taken in any of that or would do any of it. It was like a proposition, but it was nice to see.

Tom: Well, that level of, all sort of invitation by yourself as they are participants or co-researchers into this journey, also was really good. I really loved that. I really like that kind of event as well where you cohort the audience not to be an audience but to be co-collaborators in a journey and I think it really worked. I think they felt really inspired and I wonder, you know we'll probably be getting feedback if we scratched the surface, years from now, hopefully. Which is super heart-warming and really nice, I think.

Claire: There was lots of young people which was nice.

Tom: There was loads of kids, yes.

Claire: I mean for them they just like being in the woods.

Tom: Yeah, but you can't underestimate what they take in at that age. I think that's all stuff that goes in under the conscious radar as well.

Claire: Do you think, well this is a stupid question actually really because obviously your kids are getting the benefit of all your experience and

Tom: carrying on.

Claire: carrying on, but I mean, no but thinking about where we are now, in terms of ...

Tom: Yes I've lost lots from my father, lots from my grandfather that can't hand on to my kids you know. I know nothing about livery and equine stuff.

Claire: Yes but there are people that do. I suppose I was thinking you know it's, even schools, it would be great if there was more, because actually a place like the Borders does have a lot of people with a lot of that experience of either whether it's with livestock or fish, think about fishermen and the way they – having spoken on other projects to fishermen the way they talk about what they can read from the river, and sense this that and the other – it's fascinating, because I wouldn't see that if I was looking at something. I mean that's an eye of experience.

Tom: But finding methods of opening up that knowledge and access to those experiences is something, I guess I'm passionate about in facilitating it. Well personally I encourage people who do, not to be shy, as an old lady in Iceland pointed out, it's not the locals that need more access to it, it's the people that live in cities that need more access to it basically or a completely different region because that diversity of knowledge is so powerful and makes you realise the knowledge you have yourself as well. It reaffirms your own unique identity and part to play when you share that level of contrasting outlook and knowledge.

Claire: Intuition plays quite a big role. There is a lot of actual knowledge and there's body knowledge that we maybe aren't conscious of.

Tom: Yes and I think a lot of people probably do these things naturally but they're not aware, they're not allowing those instincts to give them, to make those decisions, or they don't think they can, they don't think they can justify making those decisions to themselves because they feel like it's unheard of maybe or they're frightened or they're stopped with

knowledge but actually the more you unpeel the onion you realise how little there is to be scared of and you can just jump in you know. It's just like – WOW. Its great fun going into schools and demonstrating stuff to kids.

Claire: So, do you do that?

Tom: Yeah, I've been a Viking in the local schools, but I've used that to introduce them to the fact that Vikings were traders, and they were also amazing travellers because of their boat building skills and mediation with nature and trees, not trees, but their woodman-ship was amazing, but also their sea navigation and everything, that was paramount to what they did. And they shared all that, you know they were brilliant at sharing all that and trading before anything else really and they brought all sorts of different farming and land management husbandry things over here and all-over Northern Europe. They obviously took some back. So, I showed them how to – they were great wool workers and stuff, so wool traders and weavers, so I made a drop weight loom, I used to bring the whole fleece into the class and discuss the different areas of the fleece and how to sort it and get them to do it and get all the lanolin all over their hands, and stinking and show them how to make a drop weight, how to drop weight spin the yarn and how to tease it out. And which trees and why you might chop certain trees down and what you might use them for and then the things you can make with them and the fact that they made a lot of their bowls and utensils out of natural found objects like horns and bits of wood and then how to shape the wood as efficiently as possible with splitting devices, and wedges and knives and axes, I used to do that in the classroom. And I've been up at my sons' school recently, doing a sort of carving project in the woods for three or four weeks I think it was. Made a sculpture out of an old tree that had come down in the cricket ground. So, they were looking for parents who can make art out of it or things out of it to promote a fund or raise money for a fund, so I did that.

Claire: And did the children help with that?

Tom: Yeah, in the woodland. So, I was trying to introduce them to, manage woodland as a resource and how you can manage it with different levels of sustainability I suppose and how the mindset, the approach of what that means, and thinking ahead and thinking of species specific to a region, what size do you crop it, and how often do you thin it, and what's its value and how do you process it on site as efficiently as possible into commodifiable items or whatever, what some of the historical context is of that. So, that's a great classroom, you know to teach that. There were three

of them out of fourteen, fifteen or sixteen teenagers that effortlessly got that and they were chopping down trees and making tree chopping selections for me – just thinning stuff. But for them to have done that without having had no experience of having done that and making that selection, just that, just doing that one thing will open up loads for them and put things into context. I had a great talk once, I had a whole afternoon with the Glasgow School of Art Design Course, Second Years talking about the potential life cycle of a beech tree that I took in and put on a plinth in the middle of the room and they all sat around in a circle and talked about it. That was fascinating actually. The lack of product life cycle thinking they'd done was clearly very small and that was the second year into their degree and we're talking about the potential life cycle of this tiny little two-year-old beech tree. I mean it's perfect. I mean obviously some of them would suddenly have so much sentiment for this thing, that it was some sort of sentient being – and it is in a way and now I've robbed it of its – I've just lifted it in a clod of earth and put it in a bag. I mean it's quite transportable really. I mean I will have damaged some of its longest tendrils or thinnest little roots and possible some of the tiny micro rhizome relationships in the soil, but as far as I'm concerned, its worthless. I've got a plethora of them all under my feet and I'm constantly walking over them but as soon as you put it on a plinth in the middle of a room suddenly there is all this recognition, you talk about it for a few minutes and after about 3 hours they were properly – confused. (*laugh*) No, they weren't confused but it was a fabulous vehicle to understand, to empathise with nature, and recognise that it's a resource as it is, and it has to be managed thoughtfully and that's relevant to anything we have. It has a life cycle it came from somewhere even if it's a battery, a piece of silicon, sand or whatever, it's going to be something and then it's not going to be something else. How do you make that as efficient and ecologically friendly and seemingly biomechanically connected as possible?

Claire: I've just finished reading the 'Hidden Life of Trees'.¹²

Tom: Oh yeah that's all that underground stuff – bonkers isn't it.

Claire: Fascinating.

Tom: Yeah, it is, and we've still got so much to learn haven't we. That understanding is growing faster and faster.

Claire: Yeah. Great. Do you think you're do your deer dance again?

¹² Peter Wohlleben, *The Hidden Life of Trees. What they feel, how they communicate: Discoveries from a secret world.* 2017, William Collins

Tom: I don't know which is my deer dance?

Claire: The one with your shamanic mask?

Tom: Well, that was just out of ... well I'll never do the one I did before, but I might do another version of it. It was quite good fun to do because it was basically me just pretending to be a deer as much as I could in such a strange environment. Because obviously a deer wouldn't cope at all it would probably kill itself up against the wall or break its neck or run through a door, it would be frightened senseless. I was frightened senseless, and it makes you realise how unfriendly a place and people we are (*laugh*) and how challenging people are, the way they approach and stuff and suddenly you meet someone who gets it during the performance and approaches you in a totally empathetic way and that is quite interesting and reassuring you know.

Claire: And that was something you recognised as a visual thing or something?

Tom: Well visual in the effect that they changed their movements in response to me.

Claire: OK.

Tom: And so, they'd go into animal husbandry mode and recognise some fearful animal. And then I recognise I'm doing my job well; I'm obviously looking really scared (*laugh*) and moving around. Yeah, but I think if I was going to do it again it would be in a different way I think. Probably exploring some other avenue of deeriness!

Claire: That's interesting isn't it, so that being 'other', something 'other', a deer in this case, in a way in order for people to know more about themselves, as you say it reflects back.

Tom: I guess being part of your thing and when we mutated into something less obvious made me realise how powerful ambiguity is and if I was going to do another deer dance as much as anything else it would be to just premeditate all sorts of, any kind of movement but to put yourself in a public sphere especially when its unexpected and then have a premediated way of behaving that's a performance and the responses are fascinating and sometimes I guess the more ambiguous that is sometimes it's more powerful, its less easy to discern so it has quite an effect on the viewer or the audience or co- collaborator.

Claire: Sometimes they can totally turn off – I'm not watching! *(laughter)*

Tom: Yeah, but they can't forget it, you know what I mean, they can't forget it! Sometimes that's interesting especially if a mixed audience has different reactions like that then I know that something's a success because even if someone objects and can't watch or whatever, they've seen it and they've perceived it, so that's job done! They don't need to see it anymore, but it's done the job.

Claire: Because it's made a response or?

Tom: Yes, I suppose, I have, I've not gone after people and challenged them about that, what, in those situations I've done, is just show my profound interest into what it is they have understood and that is interesting, that is really interesting. I guess sometimes it's not always their explanation, which might be clouded by their fear or something that they don't want to talk about it's usually something like that. But that's got to be cathartic or something, I can't see it being not good for them *(laugh)* I'm not going to feel guilty about it I'm going to feel positive about it. That's the idea it's to flip switches and change perceptions about some small detail of life for a moment just to broaden your, train your open mindedness or something. That's the fun isn't it in doing it. It's a bit, because you can't really be too focused on what the intended reaction will be that's almost immoral *(laugh)* because you're premeditating.

Claire: Because your manipulating?

Tom: Yes, it's manipulating, it's propaganda. If you put something on, if you expose something, express something and then you sit back and enjoy the sharing because they're going to tell you, that's a deep privilege to hear their interpretation of it, it might be completely, somewhere else completely, but it's amazing, isn't it? It's amazing it's a privilege to hear that. And there's nothing, there can't be any naive reaction there's no such thing. It's like sometimes if people are the most honest you can't call that naive in my mind, it's kind of less than naive, sometimes it takes a lot of brevity and humility to be that open and if you get people to do that especially if there not the bravest it's a real privilege to hear that or witness their reaction ... as they spit in your face! *(laughter)*

Claire: Well great, I don't think there's anything else.

Tom: It's great not being your side of the table, not being aware of the agenda too much.

Claire: *(laughter)* The agenda is still emerging; I think it's more or less emerged now. I might turn this off I don't need to hear my musings or ramblings.
(laughter)

Exit

River Ways

A Cultural Placemaking Proposal

River Ways is a live project that has been developing during the course of this doctoral research and which brings some of the learning from Stone Ways, Moss Ways and Woodland Ways together into a 'score' for a cultural placemaking project – *Connecting Threads* - shaped by the River Tweed. Like the other encounters this has developed out of a collaboration. The collaborators being environmental organisations - Southern Uplands Partnership (SUP), Tweed Forum and cultural organisation Creative Arts Business Network (CABN) along with cultural and heritage organisations and individuals from source to mouth of the Tweed. My role as CABN Advocate for Placemaking and Collaboration allowed me to be involved in the shaping of this project and to bring learning from the doctoral research. Due to severe illness and then Covid-19 which resulted in the CABN Creative Director being away from post for significant periods of time I led on the overall design of the project with support from SUP.

What follows shows some of the process of shaping the project through a workshop, proposal as part of a large Heritage Lottery Fund application by Tweed Forum, a Vision Statement, Job Descriptions, and reporting. I see the proposed programme of activities and the vision as a 'score' for the new post holders to work with. In the spirit of 'The RSVP Cycles' it is a score that can be revised as it goes by those taking on the project now and in the future. The proposal suggests an ethos for the project, some opening themes and approaches and offers a way to begin. What emerges in its 'performance' is yet to be known.

Context

'The cultural potential of the Scottish Borders is still far from being fully realised. This Strategy should be the means of giving to those who are active in, and support, cultural activities the means and ability to shape the future of culture in the region, for the greater benefit of all' Scottish Borders Cultural Strategy (2014)

My response brings the ethos of this research to the question: **How might following, going with, drifting with rivers recompose place and refigure us a river dweller?**

Connecting Threads is a live cultural placemaking project that frames the region through the river ways. It began just prior to this research in January 2017 and at the time of submission of this thesis was a live project with two part time project staff having commenced in November 2020 initially for a one- year research and development. It is the cultural strand of a larger project *Destination Tweed*. The rivers enforce an ecological shaping and ethos for the region as activity in one place has implications for everywhere else within the catchments and beyond.

'The *salmon* that support the fishery in the *lower reaches* are reliant on the *headwaters* at the top for spawning; the water quality in the lower reaches and estuarine bathing waters is *linked to* livestock farming upstream; flooding of major towns is linked to the status of habitats in the headwaters; invasive species are spread downstream in high water and colonise new areas, thus impacting biodiversity; habitat connectivity is reliant on the river as one of the main arteries for wildlife (gaps in connectivity can limit the functioning of the ecosystem). Everything is connected and needs to be managed in a cohesive and integrated way to bring about the large- scale improvements that are required. Likewise, the history of the area is bound by this *common thread* of the river. The history of mills thriving reliant on harnessing power from its flowing waters, *crossing points for the movement of people, armies and ideas, literary inspiration, fishing for sustenance or pleasure, and settlements which have both shaped, and been shaped by, its course.*' From Tweed Forum Heritage Lottery Funding bid. (Italics are mine)

'The *river provides the focal point* within the landscape for biodiversity, with the greatest concentration and diversity of flora and fauna to be found in, and around, its banks, including designated species such as *otter, lamprey, salmon and water crowfoot*. Likewise, through time, the social, cultural, and built heritage has naturally gravitated towards, and developed along, its banks [...] Whilst the river *forms the border* in the lower reaches, it also binds local communities together. It is a hugely popular resource whether people are walking by it, canoeing down it, fishing on it or wild swimming in it. ' From Tweed Forum Heritage Lottery Funding bid. (Italics are mine)

Recent placemaking projects in the Scottish Borders has clearly demonstrated that there is a role for creative practitioners as connectors. They can be a conduit between environmental organisations and the public to engage people in issues that are hard to communicate for example the Land Use Strategy, science around the river, flooding and to connect to other sectors for example, universities and research, and to other places, near and far.

Project Timeline

January 2017 Scottish Borders Council and Scottish Enterprise hosted a meeting to promote the idea of a source to sea Tweed Trail to raise the profile of the area. There was unanimous support for this from the assembled audience. I was present as this meeting in my role as CABN Advocate for Placemaking and Collaboration.

March 2017 Tweed Forum and Jura Consultants held a workshop to develop a vision for the Connecting the Tweed Landscape Partnership Project. From this the need for a dedicated cultural strand to bring added value and coherence emerged. It builds on

previous cultural river projects specifically Tweed Rivers Interpretation Project 2005 and Working the Tweed (2013 – 2014)

June 2017: First application to HLF Submitted by Tweed Forum. Unsuccessful. Invited to resubmit at a later stage.

September 24th, 2019: Shaping the Vision: Workshop, Old Gala House, Galashiels

November 2019: Resubmission to HLF: Successful.

March 2020: HLF Stage 1 Approval

September 21st and 2nd 2020: Interview days for two posts

November 2020: Post holders commence at SUP

Consultation Event for Shaping the Vision

Connecting Threads: *An ambitious cultural heritage vision for the River Tweed*

Tuesday 24th September 2019 | 10.00am – 12.30pm | Old Gala House, Scott Crescent,
Galashiels, TD1 3JS Tea and coffee available from 9.30am onwards.

AGENDA

10.00	Welcome and introductions
10.30	Background to the project, timeline and description
11.00	Workshop session in two groups.
11.45	Shaping a draft vision together
12.30	Finish

Workshop Session: Shaping the Vision.

The following questions are to help frame the discussion in your group.

1. *What is already happening?*

Are there any projects, or plans underway, that you are doing or that you know of, that could connect to either the Development phase of Connecting Threads (2020-2022) or the 5 Year Plan (2022 – 2027).

2. *What would you like to pilot in the 18 - month development phase 2020 – 2022? What is needed to do this? Where might this take place?*

The development phase is an opportunity to pilot new ideas, to develop collaborations, to share learning and to create a 5 Year vision.

The following ideas came from the previous bid in 2017 or through recent conversations and suggest ways to pilot and/or develop ideas that could be rolled out over 5 years. These are starting points for conversation and not set- in stone:

- **Cultural Audit:** This is a community cultural mapping project to find out what is valued culturally locally and where? This includes tangible and intangible cultural assets, practices, etc. It can help identify what is not available and might be required and could be useful as a place making and organizing tool for coordinating events along the Tweed. So, what is already present, what was present and is no longer and could be restored and what is not present? Any thoughts or responses to this idea? In all three zones or piloted in one only?

- Pilot Project: Tweed Sundays. Fishermen do not fish the river on a Sunday which makes it a perfect day to get more people out and about on and in the river. Possible locations? Possible activities? How many?
- A shared learning, skills share programme to support cultural leadership locally and the delivery of the 5- year plan. Example topics: Things to consider when planning and hosting artist residencies; Developing outreach activities and international partnerships. Would this be of interest to you? What would you like to learn more about? What experiences/knowledge could you share?
- Young place-makers project: supporting young people to shape cultural activity - with access to a small budget.
- Pilot Artist Residency or Residencies in any art form: In one zone only or one in each zone? How long for? Any themes you are interested in? Are there any art forms in particular, you are interested in?
- Pilot project: Tweed zine or newspaper for distribution up and down the Tweed, for local people and visitors - 3 per year? Digital and print format. This could be delivered as an artist project and /or a school project with different zones taking responsibility for it each time? All suggestions welcome.
- Development of a Local Currency – the Tweed Pound – to keep money circulating locally and connecting the different organisations and businesses involved in the project. Would you/your organization consider supporting this in principle?
- Any other ideas?

3. Delivery of the above: Cultural Placemakers

Who is required to make this vision happen? Here is a proposal to start from:

3 x part -time posts – to be placed one each in upper, middle and lower Tweed zones.

1 x part – time Tweed Cultural Co-Ordinator that oversees and coordinates between the three zones based in Southern Uplands Partnership office

For both posts:

How many days per week? Potential locations for them to work from in each area?

Any ideas for post titles that reflects the cultural heritage and place making activities.

- 4. Any specific long -term interests/plans that could feed into the 5 -year project (2022 – 2027) or that you'd like to see?*
- 5. Is there anything that you are not interested in or which is already being delivered or is well resourced.*

Responses

Group One

What is already happening?

New Maltings Arts Centre, Berwick (Borderlands project); placemaking plan – Berwick including literature, food, and film festivals.

Abbotsford: Recently completed a 10 -year plan, one strand being new outreach activity to take Scott out and about.

April 2020 – March 2022: Themed Year of Coasts and Water

2021: 250th Anniversary birth of Walter Scott

April 2022 – March 2024 Themed Year of Scotland's Stories

Crook Inn development; photographer in Selkirk is documenting the Tweed over a year; Trimontium project looking at the spread of iron age populations across the borders and developing *a trail of early peoples (Old Ways to connect?)* Savourna Stevenson : Tweed Journey – could this be revisited? Katrina Porteous: Tweed poem; Textiles Heritage – Walkerburn ,Innerleithen, - Great Tapestry of Scotland

Tweed Run, established in 2009, happens elsewhere but NOT in the Borders. It's a cycle event but could be expanded to include biking, canoeing, walking etc. <http://www.tweedrun.com/> There is someone in the Borders making with recycled Tweed – connection here.

The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC) has a data base of wildlife maps e.g., badgers, otters etc. Resources here for a 'a more than human ' mapping of the Tweed and exhibition. (more than human shaping)

Flooding – something to work with?(**shaping**) National Theatre of Scotland have recently made their first tour of the Borders through their Engine Room programme. They have expressed some interest in returning. Museums and Galleries: 5 -Year plan is titled. People and Places. Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre Refurbishment; Treefest Partnership Projects they want to *first build and then sail a wooden boat* down the Tweed (**Restoring old ways**) Project with local wood, young people and Men's Shed (*cross- generational skill sharing, trees and people*); There was a project when an artwork was made by an artist with litter from river which hung in the local swimming pool. Tweedale Museum: v. close to the river and are able to link to other external projects more easily than some of the other galleries.

Group Two

What's already happening?

A hell of a lot:

Mouth of the Tweed Salmon Queen – Food Festival; Berwick Film, Literary, Beer and Heritage Festivals, Paxton Music Festival, Borders Union Showground Events; Oktober

Fest Beer Festival; Borders Art Fair, Kelso; Borders Book Festival, Melrose; Selkirk vintage car rally; Tweed Love; Innerleithen Transcend Festival and Border Games; Traquair Fair; Beyond Borders; Peebles Show; Peebles Outdoor Film Festival; Creative Peebles Festival; Peebles Art Fest; Highland Games; Outdoor Film Festival; Borders Forest Festival; Moffat Walking festival; Borders Walking Festival; Borders Heritage Festival; Open Gardens; Open Doors; Common Ridings. 2020 – proposal by Vision Mechanics going to CS. For a giant puppet called STORM– theme coast and waters – looking for 9 places across Scotland to take it to.

Emerging Themes

I have highlighted and annotated in blue where there are synergies with what has emerged from the somatic encounters Stone Ways, Moss Ways and Woodland Ways. Mapping (cultural audit); Access/ownership/adoption; *Journeying (movement through); cultivating a culture of care – custodianship; Experiential activities that heighten our experience of being In, On, Alongside, Over the river (Somatics and Orientation).* Digital element: *mapping, interpreting (Re-composing);* Printed element: Tweed I Spy styled book

A **Tweed River Festival** offered an opportunity to celebrate the wide range of culture linked to the river. Themes and ideas:

A moving programme, up and downstream. (Pathways through). Crossing points (bridges and fords real and imagined). (Ways to Connect). Rafting, boating, drifting (A way to 'land' in the Terrestrial Zone? A following river currents/ways) Difficult histories (slavery links?), Reiving, Romans, and Droving stories; Mythologies (tales, paranormal, ghosts, etc). A communities grant to support local celebrations? Links to existing events. A river brand would be vital to make this work Possible Fire or Light festival? The Tweed Raid – learn from others like the Nith Raid.

Tweed Sundays: A month of Tweed Sundays – a big Sunday and some/lots of wee ones. Other people felt this is pandering to the 'anglers' having more rights to the river than local or other people. So, a more radical approach was supported to encourage great '*community ownership*' of Tweed. This could be rolled out as an '*Open Tweed*' project (including Sundays)(*A geopoetic project?*). Linked to this a project to encourage communities/schools or organisations to adopt a stretch of Tweed, to become *cultural custodians* of bits of the river (**Ethics of Care**)

To support projects that brought people to and into the Tweed e.g., Wild swimming – partly a mapping exercise – sharing where the good places to swim are – knowledge sharing – between generations etc – encouraging people to do this and to do it safely (**Being in the river - another way to land in the terrestrial zone?) – River Ways (?)** possible umbrella title??

Audit of all this and other key elements of local river culture was needed. Mapping as one of the connecting 'threads' through the project . An Audit should link to 'MBTAG App –

Scotland Starts Here'. Structure of database would be available to extend across whole of Scottish Borders (and beyond?). Aim would be to record (and map?) all elements of what makes the local - "place" - to include where to swim, archives, writers, painters, inventors, stories, venues, etc, etc.; *to identify, restore, open up* specific places on the river for people to go; *Mapping to open up new narratives or to turn over hidden ones*; **(Re-composing place)** Mapping stories – part of storytelling themed year; Finding and highlighting local vocabulary around the river; *Use of scots language and local vocabulary* on any interpretation material down the Tweed trail (**to add to a glossolalia?**); Wildlife maps/trails included using TWIC resources;

Clean Tweed project: Litter picking relay from source to sea – could be artist- led – working with communities on making things from litter collected in each area?? An accumulating exhibition?? – budget for more litter picking equipment!

Theme around *stewardship, caring for, custodians, guardianship* – **caring relationship** to river habitats

Brand/metaphor for the Tweed trail – *salmon* was suggested which offers themes of *transformation (biological), migration, international, moving through, regeneration etc.* Other thought this was an overused metaphor, and it was time for something else. *Suggestion that other 'characters' in the form of e.g., Lamprey, certain trees, stone fly etc could be brought into the 'story' as 'supporting characters.* **(More than Human Ways/Shapings)**

River/Tweed Crossings/Bridging the Tweed: *interest in restoring other ways of crossing the river* - by foot when water is low, row boats (Abbotsford used to have one), ferries etc – even if only for one day a year or on a Sunday etc. **(Restoring Old Ways to Connect)**– Could also link to an artist project (boat/ raft building??? – Treefest interested in boat building) etc. could involve local river gillies? Take a Punt on the Tweed. *Bridges also can be celebrated and included here – new bridges ?* **(Ways to Connect)**

Hospitality: encouraging visitors through hospitality 'posts' e.g., for campervans, signpost services for showers/toilets; more Electric Charging Points ' *Tweed Currents*'. Example of another project: John Muir Trust in Dunbar has permanent BBQ facilities

Artist residencies These were seen as potentially exciting but would need to be well-placed and with clear targets so that some form of legacy resulted (e.g., filmed, recorded, or digitised). Perhaps one per stage and 2 per year? Shorter terms more likely to be popular – but must not favour parachuting culture-thieves. International opportunities? Links to schools and/or workshops for local people? Need exciting placements and supportive hosts: Borders Forest Trust and Forestry Commission Scotland identified as possible collaborators/hosts.

Public Art trail along the Tweed– people felt this would be a draw and something for local people too Range of cultural products based on some of the above for sale

Junior & Senior River Guides (**Guides/different form of leadership**) skills training in delivering, storytelling etc. Passing on of and adding to stories (a similar project was piloted by Borders Book fair – they could share their experience here)

Posts: For development phase & full 5-year project

Agreed that geography required 3 people to cover meaningfully but could be part-time positions. 3 x part time posts - one each hosted in Upper, Middle and Lower Tweed (more local/place specific remit)

1 x f/t co-ordinator to make the connections across the 3 zones and between other project partners – to foster collaborations (big picture remit). This position charged with defining the delivery format, recruiting, planning festival etc.

Post titles: Not 'Placemaking' in the title. Other suggestions : *River Guardians, River Guides, custodians ? rangers? River wrights?*

Local Currency: Some in the group v. interested others less so or not at all!

Working up the Proposal

Excerpts from the Cultural Strand element of the *Heritage Lottery Fund Application*

<p>Please provide a brief description of your project?</p>	<p>Title: Connecting Threads</p> <p>The Connecting the Tweed Partnership bid is a fantastic opportunity to develop an ambitious cultural heritage programme along the source to sea trail to enable a vibrant contemporary identity for the Scottish Borders by harnessing the distinctive river heritage. Shaped by the river habitat itself and in partnership with local communities, conservation and environmental organisations, the programme will bring different knowledges and creative practices together in innovative and experiential ways to support a culture of stewardship and collaboration. The cultural events, art works and activities situated in, on and alongside the river will invite communities and visitors to make deeper connections to the Tweed, stimulate new relationships, strengthen cultural leadership- and contribute to a sustainable locally driven economy.</p> <p>River Culture is the over - arching and cross - threading theme which aspires to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• make visible, enrich, interpret, interrogate and celebrate the varied cultural landscapes of the Tweed River through a multi- stranded public programme of cultural activity including an annual river festival that promotes strong partnership working between communities and cultural organisations, and across cultural and environmental organisations.• highlight the Tweed river corridor as a place of exchange, learning, and collaborative practice across and through time by offering an ongoing cultural heritage learning programme including an annual 'Gathering of Waters' cultural heritage conference.• support high quality traditional and contemporary cultural practices through a programme of artist residencies and commissions.• Use the artist residency programme as a vehicle to engage local communities and visitors of all ages in a meaningful way with the cultural landscapes of the Tweed trail, retelling old stories in innovative ways and narrating new tales of the river for the future.• use cultural heritage activity to connect rural communities and small towns with a focus on issues of resilience and community cohesion in a period of changing demography, land use practices and climate change.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support and encourage sustainable cultural practice, cultural and community leadership and ambition and social entrepreneurship. • enhance the capacity of the Tweed trail for economic development and cultural tourism by providing distinct, high quality resources, products and experiences. • be the connecting thread through the scope of the overall Landscape Partnership project creating opportunities to bring cultural and environmental communities together to develop stronger links between people and landscape. <p>Journeying, mapping and storytelling are some of the themes that are emerging and can be used to identify what is valued culturally - what is being lost and could be restored, what is already happening and can be built on, what else is needed in these times. “Weel kent” figures such as Buchan, Scott and Hogg will take to the river/road to help us discover the stories and voices that we need to hear today to address species loss and social justice at a time of Climate Emergency.</p> <p>The project addresses resilience through building the people capacity of the cultural heritage sector itself; empowering communities through cultural activities that create a forum for different voices to be heard and different conversations to take place; employing a range of art forms and media; developing a River Guides scheme for cross -generational learning and working that strengthens community ties; using river culture as a way to create meaningful, immersive experiences and sustainable ways of living on and around the river; trialing new ways of marketing the region to visitors through its river culture.</p>
What is the identified need for the project to take place / risk if it doesn't ? (Note	<p>Culture is frequently absent from local policy and plans and significantly there is no real equivalent in the cultural sector in the Scottish Borders to, for example, SNH or other environmental associations, who would be able to take this project on. Since the last application to HLF in 2017 there has been a further erosion of cultural sector posts with those still remaining often having to take on additional work as positions that become vacant through staff leaving are not being filled. It is unlikely that this situation is going to change for the better and highly likely that there will be a further reduction in capacity. In addition, most of the existing cultural posts are within organisations with a defined area of interest and activity and/or are attached to a specific cultural heritage asset. What is missing are the connections and</p>

project start date not before April 2022)	<p>partnerships across, up and down the river. The path proposal is an ideal opportunity to start to address this. Historically the cultural narrative that dominates the Scottish Borders is that of rivalry – whether that be reivers, rugby or common ridings. ‘Connecting Threads’ offers an opportunity to reconsider the region through the river ways and to find and tell other cultural narratives to support a more connected and sustainable region and to encourage greater collaboration within and between communities. To do this there needs to be a cultural ‘organisation’ that embodies this so, building capacity within the cultural sector is the key need and is therefore the focus of the development phase and would require financial investment at the next stage of the HLF process.</p> <p>To achieve the volunteering element and for the overall success of the 5- year project local people need to be able to shape the vision which requires creating a community around the project, increasing cultural leadership skills, and exchanging learning. So, capacity building is also necessary for developing the public engagement aspect.</p> <p>In tandem to the ‘people power’ required, our cultural heritage landscapes of the Tweed are undergoing change as practices in agriculture, forestry and fishing alter riparian habitats and ways of living. For example, the decline of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • salmon netting - resulting in the loss of a specific vocabulary, community activity, river knowledge and way of living that was shaped by the river. • traditional river skills like boat building • upland sheep farming and shepherding practices resulting in a loss of vocabularies e.g., names of hefts. • traditional woodland practices which brought people and trees together • populations in the rural uplands and a changing demography <p>Connecting Threads proposes uses a creative cultural mapping approach and artist residencies to make visible some of these issues.</p> <p>The Scottish Borders Cultural Strategy consultation identified a clear need: <i>‘to make visible the tremendous amount of creative and cultural activity going on in the Scottish Borders, in such a way that its wider impact can be both understood and focused, as crucial to the wellbeing and prosperity of the region.’</i> https://sbculturalstrategy.wordpress.com/</p> <p>This includes attracting national arts funding to the extent that other regions have achieved.</p>
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<p>Does the project contribute to any wider strategic objectives / agendas?</p>	<p>It is widely understood that regeneration is as much a cultural and environmental project as an economic concern; that cultural activity can invigorate community resilience and bring disparate groups together and as such contributes to health and well-being, placemaking, education, environmental and local economy strategies and visions.</p> <p>This project can contribute to, deliver and integrate a number of wider regional and national strategic objectives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Borders Cultural Strategy https://sbculturalstrategy.wordpress.com/ • Place Partnership Plan- a strategic partnership project between Creative Scotland and Scottish Borders Council, delivered by Live Borders. • Scottish Government Place Making Policy http://www.creatingplacescotland.org/ which cites the role of creating cultural connections <i>'The development of creative places and culture-led regeneration should be encouraged as an effective approach to delivering sustainable, high quality environments.'</i> • Scottish Government National Performance Framework which has recently added culture as one of its strands. • Scottish Government draft Cultural Strategy (2018) which states that culture should be a 'central consideration across all policy areas' and positions culture as "central to progress in health and wellbeing, economy, education, reducing inequality and realising a greener and more innovative future". • Scottish Government Land Use Strategy http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Environment/Countryside/Landusestrategy • Scottish Government Climate Change Act (2009) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/12/2009-08-05 • Creative Scotland 10 Year Plan http://www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan/ambitions-and-priorities • Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan file:///C:/Users/Claire%20Pencak/Downloads/Scottish_Borders_Local_Development_Plan_Volume_1.pdf which cites under Economic Development (ED7) Business Tourism and Leisure Development see pages 49 – 51 specifically. • Destination Scottish Borders Tourism Action Plan
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<p>How developed is the project idea? (Initial thoughts, wider consultation, fully developed and ready to go?)</p>	<p>This project is at an early stage and the process of working it up needs to exemplify the way the project would be delivered which is through building capacity, fostering partnerships and collaborative working, engaging communities and drawing on the expertise of deep local knowledge.</p> <p>This proposal offers a strategy for taking the project forward that addresses this situation and would require financial investment at the next stage of the HLF process (outlined in the next question).</p> <p>Consultation undertaken so far includes individual conversations and a group meeting/workshop to ascertain what is already happening and could be built upon and to discover what is of interest. This has demonstrated a genuine enthusiasm amongst the cultural sector along the river corridor for a project of this breadth and ambition and a real desire to work more closely together so that there is greater access to and mobility of cultural products and activities along the Tweed trail. For example, an exhibition /performance of work developed during an artist residency in Berwick/Lower Tweed could travel up stream to the Middle and Upper Tweed. This increases access to culture, in particular to the more rural upland communities and enriches the visitor offering.</p> <p>Organisations and individuals that have helped shaped this project so far, all of whom have expressed an interest in being involved in the future are:</p> <p><i>Upper Tweed:</i> Crook Inn; Eastgate Theatre and Arts; Treefest; Tweeddale Museum; Tweeddale Tourism Partnership</p> <p><i>Middle Tweed:</i> Abbotsford; Trimontium; Borders Art Festival; Borders Book Festival</p> <p><i>Lower Tweed:</i> Berwick Visual Arts; Berwick Film and Media Festival</p> <p>Independents: Julie Nock (formerly Borders Heritage Festival & SUP); Jules Horne, CABN Advocate for Literature; Lara Greene, CABN Advocate for Public Art; Claire Pencak, CABN Advocate for Placemaking and Collaboration.</p>
<p>Details of any</p>	<p>Development Activities: 22 Months</p>

<p>development work required (by November 2019 at your own cost or between the two round HLF process April 2020 to November 2021)?</p>	<p>As outlined earlier the focus of the development period is to build capacity in terms of people and learning/exchange in order to collaboratively design the 5 -year cultural programme, including early collaboration with the other landscape partnership partners as this has not been possible so far.</p> <p>To achieve this there will be an early recruitment process to employ two part time cultural heritage /arts professionals and a process to embed them within communities and develop a working relationship with the sector. This could take the form of :</p> <p><u>2 x part time 'River Culture' posts, working half the length of the Tweed each</u></p> <p>Or</p> <p><u>1 x part time 'River Culture' post and 1 x part time Cultural Heritage Coordinator.</u></p> <p>In the development stage both will be based at SUP with the Cultural Heritage Coordinator moving to Tweed Forum for the 5-year project .</p> <p>The Cultural Coordinator post will be responsible for making the wider over-arching connections between the three river zones and between the other Connecting the Tweed partners and co-ordinate the bi- annual river festival.</p> <p>Placing the post within SUP – a rural development organization representing local people, government bodies, agencies and councils, increases the possibilities for knowledge exchange and partnership working and maximises resources by using existing structures.</p> <p>There will be a series of pilot projects to test different ideas. These being:</p> <p>1 Pathfinder Artist Residency –to contribute to the cultural audit/mapping element by beginning to identify, uncover and explore the cultural heritage of the Tweed relevant to a specific place, providing source material and potential starting points for future artist residencies and activities. We will use this period to trial a residency in the Upper Tweed. The residency will engage in particular with deep local knowledges embodied in individual people, local history societies, archives, or environmental/cultural organisations.</p> <p>A shared learning and exchange programme in the form of a series of away – days in each of the river zones to develop cultural leadership skills, good</p>
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	<p>practice and share learning and experiences. For example, both Berwick Visual Arts and Berwick Film and Media Festival have a lot of experience running annual Artist Residency programmes that will be useful to other organisations thinking about hosting residencies during the programme. Eastgate Theatre and Arts is experienced at delivering outreach activities and Borders Book Festival at organising and running a festival and outdoor event. This sharing of expertise and experience will support the success of future activities.</p> <p>A series of creative conversations and public events to bring people together in, on and alongside the Tweed to develop a broad picture of the river communities and collaborate on developing a 5- year cultural heritage programme for the trail. These could take place over a series of Sundays when there is no clash with fishing interests. The process will create 3 cultural steering groups that will be key to delivering the 5 -year plan in each zone and identify host venues for future artist residencies.</p> <p>The Year of Coasts and Waters offers a timely theme to frame this activity.</p>
Length of project and timetable for delivery (maximum five years from April 2022)?	<p>Project length : 5 years April 2022 to March 2027</p> <p>Timetable for delivery: The project begins in 2022 the Year of Scotland's Stories which is an appropriate frame for the first year which will then unfold over the next 4 years through a series of activities including:</p> <p><u>18 Artists Residencies</u></p> <p>3 artist residencies per year for varying periods of time, 1 each in Upper, Middle and Lower Tweed. These will be in different art forms, hosted in different communities and organisations. Some of these residencies will be engaging more specifically with local people and others will take the form of artist commissions to create work that might be temporary/one off – e.g., a music performance - permanent for example a sculptural artwork, virtual/digital in presentation or an artist multiple for example a publication/artist book.</p> <p><u>Tweed Ways Trail (working title)</u></p> <p>As part of the residency programme artists will contribute to a 'River Ways' an experiential trail that encourages a very in the present moment connection to place drawing on our different perceptual systems. The propositions – one in each of the 10 river zones - will invite people to pause</p>

	<p>in different ways at particular places and immerse themselves in the river habitat through the performance of a simple action, anything from washing their hands in the river, to taking 5 minutes to sit or stand with their eyes closed and listen to what is close by. This series of small personal performances or rituals that will be designed to be accessible to everyone, will bring attention to both human and more than human ways, drawing attention as much to other species as to how we connect to place through the senses. These will be signposted on site and through a digital app.</p> <p><u>Bi-Annual River Festival</u>: A family friendly celebration of River Tweed Culture for visitors and local communities Total 3</p> <p>It is envisaged that there will be a different overarching theme for each festival bringing attention to different aspects of the river through both a human and more than human lens e.g., Homecoming of the Salmon; River Crossings; Tweed Tales; River Craft(s). The themes can also reflect any of the Scottish National Themes like Year of Scottish Stories or explore the themes of the Tweed Catchment Management Plan. Details of when and where the festivals will take place, whether it moves from place to place each year, extends across the trail as a curation of activities, takes place over a contained or extended period of time will emerge through the development phase. It will create a celebratory public programme of activities and events and offers a framework for all the organisations involved in Connecting the Tweed to contribute to and participate in. For visitors it showcases the richness of the Tweed river heritage and for local communities in strengthens connections to a sense of place by highlighting the connections between people and nature that creates place.</p> <p><u>Cultural Leadership/Knowledge Exchange/Collaboration Programme</u>: To allow for learning, exchange, and reflection around cultural heritage practice for the 21st century. This takes several forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A biannual 'Gathering of Waters Conference' (working title) - a Tweed assembly to showcase the work that is being achieved through the Connecting the Tweed project; to disseminate new research, knowledge, and good practice; to make links through inviting guest speakers from other national and international river cultures; to engage with the academic community e.g., Heriot Watt University, Dept of Languages and Intercultural Studies <p>Total 2</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - River Guides Scheme (working title): A new initiative to encourage local people, particularly young people, to talk about their place to visitors and within their communities and to encourage cross - generational learning and exchange. The scheme aims to bring generations together to share information and stories in and about a particular stretch of the river and to support this through offering training in 'performance' and public speaking skills and creating a framework for the river guides to operate within. - Series of 20 half/full day learning sessions for the cultural heritage sector based on identified needs
How will the benefits of your project be maintained after completion of the project?	<p>The development phase will identify the kind of cultural heritage resources that are needed to strengthen the bid in terms of providing legacy, but the aim is to create a lasting legacy of a well-integrated partnership of cultural and heritage organisations and businesses to support a flourishing future for residents and a distinctive visitor experience. This could take as diverse forms as new organisational structures to continue the work, to a publication (book or website) that presents the Tweed in a unique and interesting way and will be a resource for attracting visitors and making the past and living river culture of the Tweed more visible within the region and beyond.</p> <p>As well as the benefits and impacts of the proposed programme of work – enhancing the landscape and communities through cultural activity and improving engagement and valuing of the rich heritage of the Tweed Rivers by both locals and visitors - a momentum and cohesion will have been enabled.</p> <p>There will be a focus through the project on supporting cultural and community leadership, sustainable practice and co-operative and partnership working. This model of practice will support the development of more empowered, resilient and connected group of individuals, communities and organisations to sustain and take forward further work building on the interventions and outcomes from the initial LPS Project Phase. Key to the project is the delivery of artist or culturally led experiences for local people as well as visitors around the river to encourage a deeper and closer relationship to the Tweed. These activities create access to the river by different communities of people to those already present and aim to encourage a greater sense of care and custodianship within communities</p>

	<p>which can continue beyond the project. The cultural mapping project will create a resource that can be used beyond the life of the project by communities and organisations and there will be a legacy element built into the artist residencies programme.</p> <p>It will offer through the delivery of a programme of diverse cultural activity the chance to trial a range of different examples of how to develop programming and activities which will increase learning for the future.</p> <p>A sustainable exit strategy will be developed in a timely manner, linking to any current and appropriate strategic support and funding, or to any potential income streams developed through the LPS Project Phase. Funding would be sought to continue the posts in some form extending the reach of activities beyond the Tweed main river to develop wider connections throughout the catchment.</p>

Vision Statement

Connecting Threads - A River Culture Vision for the Tweed

[Home](#) | [News](#) | Destination Tweed project given Lottery funding boost

Destination Tweed project given Lottery funding boost

March 20, 2020

The Destination Tweed project, which will cost an estimated £20 million, is being developed by Tweed Forum, Scottish Borders Council and other partners. Destination Tweed aims to create a 100-mile shared use trail from the source of the Tweed near Moffat, to Berwick upon Tweed where the river meets the sea. The Tweed trail will become a jewel in the region's tourism crown and deliver multiple economic, environmental and community benefits at a time when many of the area's traditional industries such as agriculture, salmon fishing and textiles are in decline.



©Keith Robeson

With a development grant of £299,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we can now take our plans to the next stage and prepare to deliver one of the region's most significant cultural and environmental projects. £11 million has already been committed to the project from [The Borderlands Partnership](#) and Scottish Borders Council is expected to decide later this week on a further £175,000 towards the project total.

We are very excited about this ambitious new project for the Tweed catchment and so are our partners: Scottish Borders Council, SEPA, Scottish Natural Heritage, Buglife, Borders Forest Trust, Northumberland County Council, Sustrans, Scottish Forestry and Southern Uplands Partnership.

[News](#)

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Address



Tweed Forum,
Old Melrose Dairy Steading,
Melrose, TD6 9DF

Contact

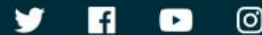
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Spanning traditional and contemporary cultural practices, Connecting Threads is a 5-year programme of cultural activities to celebrate the intangible heritage of the Tweed along a new source to sea trail.

Connecting Threads harnesses the distinctive river heritage and cultural landscape of the Tweed to promote a vibrant contemporary identity for the Scottish Borders. Shaped by the river habitat itself and in partnership with local communities, conservation and environmental organisations, the proposed cultural programme will bring different knowledges and creative practices together in innovative and experiential ways to support a culture of stewardship and collaboration. The cultural events, art works and activities situated in, on and alongside the river will invite communities and visitors to make deeper connections to the Tweed, strengthen cultural leadership and contribute to a sustainable locally driven economy. *Connecting Threads* is the cultural strand of a larger landscape partnership project **Destination Tweed** led by Tweed Forum.

River Culture is the over - arching and cross - threading theme of *Connecting Threads* which aspires to:

- make visible, enrich, interpret, interrogate, and celebrate the varied cultural landscapes of the Tweed River through a multi- stranded public programme of cultural activity.
- highlight the Tweed river corridor as a place of exchange, learning, and collaborative practice through a cultural heritage learning programme
- support high quality traditional and contemporary cultural practices through a programme of artist residencies and commissions.
- engage local communities and visitors of all ages in a meaningful way with the cultural landscapes of the Tweed trail, re-invigorating old stories and narrating new tales of the river for the future.

- use cultural activity to connect rural communities and small towns with a focus on issues of resilience and community cohesion in a period of changing demography, land use practices and climate change.
- support and encourage sustainable cultural practice, cultural and community leadership and ambition and social entrepreneurship.
- enhance the capacity of the Tweed trail for economic development and cultural tourism by providing distinct, high quality resources, products, and experiences.

Historically the cultural narrative that dominates the Scottish Borders is that of rivalry – whether that be reivers, rugby or common ridings. *Connecting Threads* is an opportunity to reconsider the region through the river ways and to find and tell other cultural narratives which can encourage and support a more connected, sustainable region and to facilitate greater collaboration within and between communities up and downstream. Journeying, mapping, and storytelling are some of the themes emerging to identify what is valued culturally, what is being lost and could be restored, what is already happening and can be built on and to discover the stories and voices that we need to hear today to address species loss and social justice at a time of Climate Emergency.

Key to the project is the delivery of artist or culturally led experiences for local people as well as visitors around the river to encourage a deeper and closer connection to the Tweed. Activities that create access to the river and aim to encourage a greater sense of care and custodianship within communities which can continue beyond the project.

The project has two parts - a development phase (2020 – 2021) followed by a 5-year programme (2022 – 2027) if funding is successful.



Development Phase (12 month) 2020- 2021

The focus of the development period is to:

- to build capacity in terms of people and learning to collaboratively design a 5 - year cultural programme, including early collaboration with other *Destination Tweed* project partners.
- to trial a range of pilot projects to develop future programming and activities which will increase learning for the future. There will be a focus on supporting cultural and community leadership, sustainable practice and co-operative and partnership working.
- Securing additional funding for the 5-year programme.

To enable this development phase two new posts (0.6) are being created, a River Tweed Cultural Curator and a River Culture Animateur.

- **River Tweed Cultural Curator** (0.6) responsible for making the wider over-arching connections between the Upper, Middle and Lower Tweed activity project zones and between the other *Destination Tweed* partners. A focus of this role will be the curation of a River Festival, collaborating on the delivery of the cultural leadership and learning exchange programme and finding additional funding for the 5-year programme.
- **River Culture Animateur** (0.6) responsible for developing cultural activity and building partnerships in one of the three designated activity project zones (Upper, Middle or Lower Tweed.) The activity programme will include a community cultural audit to contribute to a digital mapping of the Tweed, collaborating on the delivery of the cultural leadership and learning exchange programme and piloting a river guide scheme. For the development phase the focus of activity will be on the Middle Tweed zone from Innerleithen to Kelso.

In the development stage both posts will be based at Southern Uplands Partnership with the River Tweed Cultural Curator moving to Tweed Forum at Old Melrose for the 5 -year project. Both posts will be for 12 months. If funding for the 5 -year programme is successful both posts will continue for the duration of the 5-year project (2022 – 2027) and two additional River Culture Animateur posts (0.6) working in the Upper and Lower Tweed zones will be created.

In addition, there will be a **Pathfinder Artist Residency** in the Upper Tweed Valley in the Development Phases which will engage with deep local knowledges embodied in individual people, local history societies, archives and environmental and cultural organisations.



The 5 -year cultural programme begins in the Year of Scotland's Stories. It is envisaged that the programme will include a wide range of cultural activity including:

15 Artists Residencies

3 Artist Residencies per year will be hosted in different communities and organisations in the Upper, Middle and Lower Tweed. Artists will be invited to respond to annual call outs and will be selected by interview. Some of these residencies will be engaging more specifically with local people and others will take the form of artist commissions to create work for the Tweed trail that might be temporary or permanent. There is scope for adventurous and wide -ranging artist proposals in any art form.

As part of the residency programme artists will contribute to *River Ways* an experiential trail that encourages connection to place drawing on our different perceptual systems. The propositions will invite people to pause in different ways at particular places along the trail drawing attention to other species and to how we connect to place through the senses.

Bi-annual River Festival (2022, 2024, 2026) A family friendly celebration of River Tweed culture for visitors and local communities. It is envisaged that there will be a different overarching theme for each festival bringing attention to different aspects of the river e.g., Homecoming of the Salmon; River Crossings; Tweed Tales; River Craft(s). The River Festival will create a celebratory public programme of activities and events and offers a framework for all the organisations involved in *Destination Tweed* to contribute to and participate in.

Cultural Leadership, Knowledge Exchange, and Collaboration Programme to allow for learning exchange, and reflection around cultural heritage practice for the 21st century. This takes several forms:

Bi-annual Gathering of Waters Conference (2023 and 2025) A Tweed assembly to showcase and share the work that is being achieved through the *Destination Tweed* project; to disseminate new research, knowledge, and good practice; to make new links by inviting guest speakers from other national and international river cultures.

River Guides Scheme - an initiative to encourage local people, particularly young people, to talk about their place to visitors and within their communities and to encourage cross-generational learning and exchange. The scheme aims to bring generations together to share information and stories in and about a particular stretch of the river and to support this through offering training in 'performance' and public speaking skills and creating a framework for the river guides to operate within.

River Learning: Series of up to 20 learning exchange sessions per year for the cultural heritage sector based on identified needs.



JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Job descriptions for the River Tweed Cultural Curator and River Culture Animateur as posted on SUP website.

[River Tweed Cultural Curator - Job Opportunity \[Closed\] - The Southern Uplands Partnership \(sup.org.uk\)](http://sup.org.uk)

And

[River Culture Animateur - Job Opportunity \[Closed\] - The Southern Uplands Partnership \(sup.org.uk\)](http://sup.org.uk)



CONNECTING THREADS

AN AMBITIOUS RIVER CULTURE VISION FOR THE RIVER TWEED.

RIVER TWEED CULTURAL CURATOR (P/T 0.6) – DEVELOPMENT PHASE

We are looking for an experienced individual with a background in culture and the arts, to develop an innovative 5 -year cultural programme for a River Tweed trail from source to sea. The project is at an early stage and there is an opportunity for the successful applicant to bring their own expertise and interests to shape the 5- year vision in collaboration with local communities and environmental, arts and cultural heritage organisations in the Scottish Borders.

Introduction

Connecting Threads is the cultural strand of *Destination Tweed* a major project in development that aims to conserve, celebrate, and promote the River Tweed. It supports the role of culture to create positive change and more resilient communities and aims to develop a vibrant contemporary identity by harnessing the distinctive cultural heritage of both sides of the River Tweed.

The long- term aim is to create a lasting legacy of a well-integrated partnership of cultural and environmental organisations and businesses to support a flourishing sustainable future for residents and a distinctive visitor experience. It is a fantastic opportunity to

develop an ambitious cultural heritage and creative place-making programme along the source to sea trail that harnesses the distinctive river heritage and cultural landscapes of the Tweed. Shaped by the river habitat itself and in partnership with local communities, conservation and environmental organisations, the programme will bring different knowledges and creative practices together in innovative and experiential ways to support a culture of stewardship and collaboration. The cultural events, art works and activities situated in, on and alongside the river will invite communities and visitors to make deeper connections to the Tweed, strengthen cultural leadership and contribute to a sustainable locally driven economy.

The Southern Uplands Partnership (SUP) is a rural development charity, with 20 years of experience of developing and delivering projects across South Scotland. The partnership represents everyone with an interest in the sustainable development of the region.

The focus of the **development phase** is to engage with communities of interest (cultural, heritage, environmental and educational organisations) and communities of place, to shape a 5 - year multi-stranded cultural programme along the length of the Tweed Trail within the Scottish Borders, North Northumberland and Dumfries and Galloway. The River Tweed Cultural Curator (p/t 0.6) will work alongside and in collaboration with a River Culture Animateur and will be expected in the development phase to contribute to working up a vision for the second-round bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and secure additional funding from other sources.

The duration of the post will initially be 12 months (October 2020 to September 2021). If funding is secured in March 2022, the post holder may be appointed for the 5- year programme of projects. This will be determined by appropriate completion of duties during the development phase, the agreement of the partners and a review process.

The post during this development phase will be based at the Southern Uplands Partnership office at Lindean Mill, Galashiels.

Reporting

The post holder will report directly to the Partnership Manager of the Southern Uplands Partnership. Additional support and sector advice will be available from the Creative Director of CABN and the CABN Arts Advocates. Regular liaison and close collaboration will be required between the River Tweed Cultural Curator, the River Culture Animateur and Destination Tweed project partners and representatives of Tweed Forum, in particular the Destination Tweed project management team.

Responsibilities

The River Tweed Cultural Curator in the Development Phase will be responsible for:

- Developing a detailed programme of annual events and activities that are ready for the start of the delivery phase (who, what, when, how, cost, funding etc)

- Contributing to the development of the NLHF Activity Plan, led by the Destination Tweed Project Management Team. The Activity Plan is the key engagement document within the funding proposal due for submission in November 2021
- Management of project budget and reporting to the Destination Tweed project management team
- Making the wider over-arching connections between the three river zones (Upper, Middle and Lower Tweed) and between the other *Destination Tweed* partners
- Developing a vision for the 5- year programme in collaboration with the River Culture Animateur, other project partners, local communities and arts and cultural organisations.
- Curating a River Festival for the first year of the 5 -Year programme
- Securing additional funding for the 5 - year programme
- Assisting with supporting the Pathfinder artist residency in the Upper Tweed
- Contributing to the delivery of a series of shared learning and cultural leadership events
- Contributing to the cultural audit and digital mapping project
- Monitoring, reporting and documentation of development phase activities.
- Management of project budget

Skills and Experience

ESSENTIAL

- A minimum of 4 years professional experience of working in the cultural, arts or heritage sector
- Strong, imaginative curatorial, programming and/or cultural placemaking skills
- Excellent inter-personal and written communication skills
- Proven record of successful fundraising for cultural and arts activities
- Experience of managing budgets
- Ability to work on own initiative and operate as part of a team
- Experience of partnership working and collaboration
- Experience of organising and delivering public events, activities, festivals and/or conferences
- Excellent administrative and organisational skills
- Marketing, publicity, and social media skills
- Flexible working approach
- Driving License and access to transport

DESIRABLE

- Experience of NLHF funded projects and activity planning
- Knowledge of the communities and landscapes of the Tweed

- Knowledge of arts and cultural sector in the Scottish Borders
- Interest in environmental practices and outdoor activities

Hours:

The post is part time (0.6FTE) and hours of work will be arranged by agreement and can be flexible.

Full-time employees are entitled to three days leave per full month worked, so 36 working days holiday which includes local public holidays but excludes Christmas and New Year public holidays when offices are closed (i.e., four days). The entitlement for part-time employees is pro-rata

The post will require travel throughout the project area the full length of the Tweed from source to sea. You may be required to work evenings or weekends from time to time.

For further information about the Destination Tweed project please see the Connecting Threads Vision document at www.sup.org.uk.

Salary:

The annual salary is up to £27k pro rata.

There is an appropriate expenses and travel allowance included within the postholder budget

If you are interested in applying, please complete the job application form available at www.sup.org.uk and submit to piptabor@sup.org.uk by 5pm on Monday Aug 17th. Interviews will take place on Sept 1st and 2nd.

More details of Southern Uplands Partnership can be found at www.sup.org.uk
More details of the Destination Tweed project can be found at www.tweedforum.org

Informal enquiries about the post can be made to piptabor@sup.org.uk





CONNECTING THREADS

AN AMBITIOUS RIVER CULTURE VISION FOR THE RIVER TWEED. **RIVER CULTURE ANIMATEUR (MIDDLE TWEED) (12 MONTHS 0.6) – DEVELOPMENT PHASE**

We are looking for an experienced and enthusiastic individual with a background in cultural place-making and/or participatory arts to develop this new post. As this is a new initiative there is an opportunity for the successful applicant to bring their own expertise and interests to shape the role. The location of the activity is the Middle Tweed from Innerleithen to Kelso as a pilot for what will become a whole river project in the delivery phase. The post is initially for 12 months.

Introduction

Connecting Threads is the cultural strand of *Destination Tweed*, a major project in development that aims to conserve, celebrate, and promote the River Tweed. It supports the role of culture to create positive change and more resilient communities and aims to develop a vibrant contemporary identity by harnessing the distinctive cultural heritage of both sides of the river. The long-term aim is to create a lasting legacy of a well-integrated partnership of cultural and environmental organisations and businesses to support a flourishing sustainable future for residents and a distinctive visitor experience. It is a fantastic opportunity to develop an ambitious cultural heritage and creative place-making programme along the source to sea trail that harnesses the distinctive river heritage and cultural landscapes of the Tweed. Shaped by the river habitat itself and in partnership with local communities, conservation and environmental organisations, the programme will bring different knowledges and creative practices together in innovative and experiential ways to support a culture of stewardship and collaboration. The cultural events, art works and activities situated in, on and alongside the river will invite communities and visitors to make deeper connections to the Tweed, strengthen cultural leadership and contribute to a sustainable locally driven economy.

Southern Uplands Partnership (SUP) is a rural development charity, with 20 years of experience of developing and delivering projects across South Scotland. The partnership represents everyone with an interest in the sustainable development of the region.

The focus of the **development phase** is to engage with local communities, and cultural, heritage, environmental and educational organisations located along the river between Innerleithen and Kelso to help shape a 5 -year multi-stranded cultural programme from source to sea. The River Culture Animateur (p/t 0.6) will work alongside and in collaboration with the River Tweed Cultural Curator to work up a vision for the second-round bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and to secure additional match funding from other sources.

The duration of the post will initially be 12 months (October 2020 – September 2021). If funding is secured in March 2022, the post holder may be appointed for the 5- year programme of projects. This will be determined by appropriate completion of duties during the development phase, the agreement of the partners and a review process. The post will be based at the Southern Uplands Partnership office at Lindean Mill, Galashiels.

Reporting

The post holder will report directly to the Partnership Manager of Southern Uplands Partnership. Additional support and sector advice will be available from the Creative Director of CABN and the CABN Arts Advocates. Regular liaison and close collaboration will be required between the River Culture Animateur, the River Tweed Cultural Curator, *Destination Tweed* project partners and representatives of Tweed Forum, in particular the *Destination Tweed* project management team.

Responsibilities

The River Culture Animateur in the Development Phase will be responsible for:

- Making connections and developing partnerships with local communities, art, cultural, heritage and environmental organisations along the river from Innerleithen to Kelso
- Developing a 5- year cultural place-making programme for the Middle Tweed in collaboration with the River Tweed Cultural Curator and other project partners, local communities and arts and cultural organisations
- Developing activity principles for the Upper and Lower Tweed
- Delivering a pilot programme of activities along the river for local people and visitors
- Assisting with supporting the planned Pathfinder Artist Residency in Upper Tweed (funding tbc)
- Contributing to the delivery of a series of shared learning and cultural leadership events
- Contributing to a cultural audit and digital mapping project
- Contributing to the development of the NLHF Activity Plan, led by the Destination Tweed Project Management Team. The Activity Plan is the key

engagement document within the funding proposal due for submission in November 2021

- Monitoring, reporting and documentation of development phase activities.
- Management of activities budget

Skills and Experience

ESSENTIAL

- Minimum of 4 years professional experience of working in the cultural, arts or environmental sector
- Excellent inter-personal and written communication skills
- Ability to work on own initiative and operate as part of a team
- Experience of managing a budget
- Experience of partnership working and collaboration
- Experience of initiating, organising, and delivering public activities and events
- Excellent administrative and organisational skills
- Marketing, publicity, and social media skills
- Flexible working approach
- Driving License and access to transport
- PVG Disclosure Scotland Certificate

DESIRABLE

- Knowledge of the communities and landscapes of the River Tweed
- Knowledge of arts, cultural and/or environmental sector in the Scottish Borders
- Experience of fundraising
- Experience of NLHF funded projects and activity planning
- Understanding of creative place-making practices

Hours:

The post is part time (0.6FTE) and hours of work will be arranged by agreement and can be flexible.

Full-time employees are entitled to three days leave per full month worked, so 36 working days holiday which includes local public holidays but excludes Christmas and New Year public holidays when offices are closed (i.e., four days). The entitlement for part-time employees is pro-rata

The post will require travel around the Middle Tweed area but occasionally further afield. Weekend or evening working may be required

For further information about the Destination Tweed project please see the Connecting Threads Vision document at www.sup.org.uk.

Salary:

The annual salary is up to £27k pro rata.

There is an appropriate expenses and travel allowance included within the postholder budget

If you are interested in applying, please complete the job application form available at www.sup.org.uk and submit to piptabor@sup.org.uk by 5pm on Monday Aug 17th.

Interviews will take place on Sept 1st and 2nd.



Recruitment Process for Connecting Threads Posts, 2020
For HLF Reporting Purposes

Having agreed the job descriptions and person specifications for the two posts with project partners, a job advert was agreed and circulated as follows:

- Creative Scotland Opportunities Board (very wide readership)
- Creative Carbon Scotland (broad readership)
- Scottish Rural Network Newsletter/Job opportunity (broad circulation)
- Facebook pages of
 - SUP
 - Biosphere Project
 - Tweed Forum
 - CABN
 - Working the Tweed
 - The Stove Network

It was also emailed to:

- All SUP members
- All people who attended (or submitted apologies) to the Connecting Threads Development Workshop asking them to promote/share on their networks.
- A range of other creative sector contacts.
- CABN Advocates to share/promote

We received applications from 23 individuals by the deadline of 17th August. 5 of these applicants applied for both positions. The applications were scored against the published person specifications and this resulted in the selection of 6 candidates for the Animateur position and 5 for the Curator post. The 1st and 2nd September had already been published as interview dates. In the event, one of the applicants for the Animateur post also applied to Tweed Forum for the Assistant Project Manager position and was appointed to that position on the 31st of Aug so they withdrew from our interview.

Claire Pencak (CABN); Pip Tabor (SUP) and Luke Fisher (Tweed Forum) were the interview panel.

Interviews lasted 45 minutes and consisted of a 10 -minute presentation that candidates were asked to prepare :

Please come prepared to give a 10-minute maximum presentation that responds to at least two of the following questions with a community audience in mind.

1. *How would you describe cultural placemaking, what and who might it include?*
2. *What does a “cultural audit” mean to you, what might it include, who might it involve, how might it be presented?*

3. How would you define 'river culture'?

This was followed by 6 questions (2 from each interviewer).

Candidates were scored using a scale of 0 to 4. 4 being for an excellent response; 3 for a satisfactory answer, 2 for a poor or less than satisfactory response; 1 for a very poor answer and 0 for no response. Max score was therefore 28.

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Cultural posts join Destination Tweed team

November 12, 2020

The Destination Tweed team welcomed Rachel Hunter and Emily Croston last week as they took up their respective posts of "Cultural Curator" and "Heritage Officer" within the "Cultural Throughfare" and of the ambitious initiative to celebrate the Tweed's rich cultural heritage.

Both these roles are a key part of the development phase of Destination Tweed, with Emily working on the middle Tweed to develop a local culture programme and Rachel working across the whole of the Tweed catchment to develop the initiative and ambition for an innovative 5-year cultural programme.

Emily and Rachel are joined with partner organisations Southern Uplands Partnership and are looking forward to developing an ambitious cultural heritage and creative place-making programme that harnesses the distinctive river heritage and cultural landscapes of the Tweed.



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Destination Tweed aims to create a 100-mile shared use trail from the source of the Tweed near Strathclyde, to the sea at the mouth of the river, the sea. The Tweed Trail will become a green infrastructure project in the region's coastal zone and deliver multiple economic, environmental and community benefits.

Latest News

- We're hiring!
- World Soil Day 2020
- Win for Tweed Forum at Nature of Scotland Awards
- Cultural posts join Destination Tweed team
- 2020 Tweed Forum River Champions announced
- RSPB Nature of Scotland Awards Finalists
- Border schools project a winner at the 2020 Harington Hooper Awards
- Little Tarnock no longer undergirds gill underway
- Collaborative projects reach final in Harington Hooper Awards 2020
- Wildbird cover crops in bloom

Address

TWEED FORUM
Tweed Forum
201 Millers Road
Kelso, TD5 7JL

Contact

T 01336 843722
C 01336 843722
info@tweedforum.org.uk

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As the aim was to create a strong team, no decision was made at the end of the first day (although we had 2 leading candidates). It was only after the second day of interviews that we agreed on the preferred team. This came down to a combination of complementary strengths including local knowledge. We also agreed who our second choices would be in the event that one of our first choices declined the position. We were delighted with the quality of the applications we received, and the decision was not easy.

It is hoped that some of the unsuccessful candidates will reapply when the other two posts are created in 18 months' time, or for the proposed artists residencies. It is also possible that some have skills that Tweed Forum may have need for in other parts of the overall project (e.g., digital development and event management).