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Gatherings

Appendix II

by

Claire Pençak

Preface

This appendix documents a series of public orientated events at different stages of the PhD research process. These events brought people to the research as witnesses, participants and co-creators and were a context for performing, sharing and reflecting. The style of events ranged from performances to workshops and a cross-disciplinary symposium and taken together reveal something of the trajectory of the research as it unfolded.

The content in 'Gatherings' is to be taken as supplementary material to the written thesis and provides additional context in the form of descriptions of scores, practice notes, reflective observations, programmes and visual documentation. If the material gathered in Appendix I *Book of Ways* is closest to the written thesis, then Appendix II *Gatherings* is situated as the next layer out. The reader does not need to read this Appendix to understand the written these but is free to dip into this material as they wish, depending on where their interest lies.

'Gatherings' opens with a practice diary for the movement research project Entr'actes: *Between Emergence and Presence*. This introduces some foundational embodied practices and themes, like looking closely, that shaped the PhD research project as well as documentation of the Scratch performance which was subsequently revised as a performance for BATCH:1. After this comes documentation of the performance series BATCH, with more detailed documentation of In the Making performances and scores that were presented as part of BATCH 1 and 2. Next are notes and documentation of the cross-disciplinary symposium which takes the RSVP Cycles as a starting point followed by details of a one-day Deep Adaptations event in Hawick. Finally, you will find session plans, practice scores and reflective notes on the Extending Practice Group workshops that served as a practice context for the research.

Workshops or performances that specifically relate to the somatic encounters discussed in the thesis chapters *Stone Ways*, *Moss Ways* and *Woodland Ways*, are collected separately in Appendix I *Book of Ways*.

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Entr'actes : Between emergence and presence

Entr'actes is a collaboration with dancer and choreographer Merav Israel. We are not strangers to each other's practice having worked together since 2007 as dancers in each other's work and as members of In the Making. This movement research project began as a 5 -day residency and Scratch Night Performance at Summerhall, Edinburgh in February and March 2018 and then evolved as a performance for BATCH:1 in August 2018. The Summerhall Residency is described through practice diary notes and practice scores.

Summerhall Residency, February - March 2018

Summerhall was formerly the Royal Dick Veterinary College and the Anatomy Lecture Theatre, as the name suggests, was where students learned anatomy. The lecture theatre is retained in its original state with wooden benches and desks arranged in a semi- circle and quite steeply tiered. The wood is polished and worn from generations of veterinary students. The presence of the past is very palpable in the room. As we worked there it became evident that the design of the space created the conditions for close and detailed observation of what was happening in the front 'demonstration's space, allowing for a kind of looking that was as if 'under the microscope'. By the audience being able to look closely, we could work with small shifts of tone and attention in the dance material that would not have been possible in other spaces.

Practice Diary

February 19th, 2018

Our research questions.

Can we identify what is the material nature of presence? Where is it located? Is it located? How do we recognise it? How does it appear and disappear? Is the opposite of presence, absence?

Degrees of Relationality Score

Organise your moving in the following ways - being still whilst the other is moving, moving in relation to the other and moving regardless of the other. Move between these different directions in any order, giving as much time to the task as feels sufficient.

We are both present within the same room, but for right now we are pursuing our own interests, activity, and practice. We have given each other permission to follow whatever takes out attention at this time. We are carrying on regardless. An opportunity to sustain our own interests.

I shift into working in relation to you, with regard to your presence and your activity. I don't feel your lack of engagement, as it is enough for me that I am busy being relational. What you do gives me different resources to work with.

OK. Let me return to carrying on regardless. This is not so easy. How can I unknow what you are doing, unknow your presence? It takes a conscious effort to disengage and carry on regardless. It turns out that you are more able to make the shift but on reflection you said that once you had begun to work relationally then going back to moving, doing, being present regardless, felt like some sort of abandonment. Having worked relationally it is harder to return to the other state, we are in some way contaminated by the engagement (Tsing, 2015).

Processes for materialising presence and creating the conditions for being present with.

- i) *Change of state*: we worked with what was available - switching off the lights, opening a door to partially reveal another space
- ii) *Withholding*: to almost but not quite complete a movement or gesture, requires bring very present; inhibiting the habit of taking a movement to its conclusion. A suspension of momentum that catches us off guard and allows something else to begin. A strategy for maintaining and sustaining awareness.

From today's research we identified these as distinct processes for making choices.

- Emergence
- Drift/Browse
- Following (your interest) – not dissimilar to drift/browse

Emergence Practice Score (for two players)

Do a five- minute solo exploration, witnessed by another, working with emergence. The witness is the timekeeper.

After five minutes, stop and reflect on the experience together. Move with whatever emerges in the body. Trust to what comes up. Inhibit the desire to judge what arises. Endeavour to stay authentic to the stimulus, refrain from ornamenting or directing the movement beyond what is happening anyway. Allow time for the movement to appear and to disappear and for the next movement to occur. Give presence to the pauses.

The witness whilst giving their attention to the dancer can use strategies to keep themselves engaged and making choices. You can choose to view the dancer at different proximities, in different spatial positions from standing to lying, with a gaze that ranges from close up to very wide. Do whatever you need to keep your attention and interest enlivened. The witness takes responsibility for being the timekeeper. After 5 minutes exchange roles. At the end of this round reflect on the experience together. Speak first about your experiences as the dancer and then as the witness.

We explored emergence as a process for decision making that inhibits grabbing at an idea. The activity is in not seeking out but allowing for the unfound, the unknown to offer itself as a possibility. It is a form of paying attention. There is always some movement happening in the body that can be worked with. Emergence is an attitude towards time that is co-creative.

Drift or Browse We noticed that drift and browse were other, not dissimilar processes for decision making that we were using. Drift suggests being carried along by what is occurring and browsing, a process of gathering nourishment from what is around and about. Drift places decision making elsewhere. Browse implies more choiceful action.

Following your interest: Allow your choices to be guided by what takes your curiosity. Follow that until such time as you lose interest or something else arises that is of greater interest to you. This is choice making from a purely individual place. (Note: as the research progressed, I took up 'following' as a strategy but the following of more- than -human ways rather than following self-made ways.

Degrees of Presence Score

Do a five-minute solo exploration working with degrees of presence, witnessed by another. The witness is the timekeeper. After five minutes, stop and reflect on the experience together. The dancer speaks first about their experience and what they learnt from it, followed by the witness speaking about what they saw. Change roles.

Presence is a form of paying attention to and of being present with. It is not a fixed state. We identified degrees of presence, from lesser to greater intensity rather than the duality of presence and absence. Working with presence bring you into the present moment (now) and the place (here). It allows for 'authenticity' in performance. Merav described the effect of witnessing working with presence as like watching passing clouds. We noted that the first fresh findings are often the most satisfying.

Foregrounding – Backgrounding Practice Score

For two or more movers. Move between foregrounding and backgrounding other movers, the space. How do you experience this differently?

This practice explores increasing and decreasing presence through foregrounding and backgrounding. It is a dance of relationship with another (person, object, species, space). It describes a shift in intention and an act of kinaesthetic imagination. Being background to allow for the presence of another, need not mean doing little or being still or slow. We noticed that if one person moved a lot, with a less strong sense of presence, they soon became a background

presence, albeit a busy one. Being able shift from one state to another, to change our state, increases our range of possibilities.

Seeing – Being Seen Practice Score

In your moving, shift the attention between moving with the awareness of what you are seeing and moving with the awareness of being witnessed. How do you experience this differently?

This could be a score for a whole performance. Being seen is making yourself available to another's presence or gaze.

February 20th, 2018

We returned to practices from yesterday: Emergence, Presence, Foreground-Background, and Seeing and Being Seen.

In the *Emergence Practice Score* we witness the dance seemingly composing itself. Even if the movement material is of different types, emerges in different parts of the body and in different forms, and with different dynamics, there is a coherence, so long as the mover sustains their attention to the task. Working with emergence as a way of organising, demands a listening awareness, inhibiting the desire to be proactive, and suspending judgement about the movement material. It creates a rhythm of its own. Moments of pause allow for reflection, for valuation (Halprin, 1969).

February 21st, 2018

The question arose as to whether we should frame the performance as a lecture demonstration in presence? We are working with absence in that the audience is currently not present. What happens when they bring their multiple presence to the room? We discussed whether it would be useful to offer some simple prompts to help the audience be more present, especially as we were placed near the end of the Scratch night performance and the other work is more spoken word. Drawing on our experience of change of state as a way to become more present we identified three possible lighting states which we have control over:

- State 1: Room lights on. As this illuminates the whole space it makes both ourselves and the audience visible.
- State 2: Room lights off. This foregrounds the Fire Exit light that casts a pool near the door, in which the person that has switched the light off is lit. The audience is in a more darkened state.

State 3: The light in the adjoining room becomes visible when the door is opened.

These are practices for opening up other possibilities, increasing our range as performers, not getting stuck by choice or lack of awareness in a particular mode of being.

February 26th, 2018

A change of space as today we were in the Old Lab and are returning to the work after a break of 4 days. We worked on developing a performance score. The overall time frame is twenty minutes, the length of the slot we have been allocated. We decided to work with four processes. No time frame is given for each section.

Performance Score

Degrees of Presence

Seeing and Being Seen

Emergence Practice

Foregrounding- Backgrounding

The initial exploration was to shift from one to the other in succession in our own time which means that Merav and I might be at different places in the score at different times. Identifying where the other is, can be tricky!

February 27th, 2018

Listening exercise to start the day followed by a twenty - minute version of the 'score' as developed so far.

We returned to individual elements and single states, namely the *Degrees of Presence* practice score and the *Degrees of Relationality Score* as a way to re-find something authentic, as we were losing the 'dwelling' in the states that we had initially achieved. Repeating the score was problematic and resulted in it being diluted in some way. Our experience of performing the score was no longer satisfying as it felt like we were presenting the practice rather than dwelling in the dance. So, we decided to foreground the idea of dwelling and to allow the practice scores to inform the real - time composing, rather than lead it. So, degrees of presence, seeing/being seen, foregrounding/backgrounding and emergence became resources for us to draw on, but we did

not need to perform then in any specific order. Shifting between was a way of keeping the interest alive and could be described as a way of organising/making.

Note: Shifting between led to the idea and title entr'acte developed at a later stage for BATCH:1

A question arose. How does the body plan? It can be through the eyes but what happens if we work with the eyes differently, wide/close focus, unsighted? Does working differently with the eyes allow us to organise movement differently?

Scratch Performance

March 8th, 2018

'Dancers Merav Israel and Claire Pençak are interested in the small scale, the poetic and the art of paying attention. They will explore ideas of emergence and presence through the body, within the space and between themselves.'

We began working with *Degrees of Presence* from our seats in the audience.



The Anatomy Lecture Theatre. Dancers Merav Israel and Claire Pençak

Practice Session | Photographs courtesy of Giuseppe de Biasio



The Anatomy Lecture Theatre. Dancers Merav Israel and Claire Pençak
Practice Session | Photographs courtesy of Giuseppe de Biasio

Batch: A Performance Series (2018 – 2020)

BATCH began as a programme of informal studio performances that made use of The Bakery Studio. It was a way to research through real-time performances and to place these alongside the work of other performance makers working with similar processes or whose work had a connection to the research themes. Space was made for reflecting on the work through post-performance conversations over tea and biscuits.

The Bakery Studio allowed for a flexible arrangement of the space, informality in tone and for witnessing work close up. BATCH:1 drew together work that was already happening. Funding from Creative Scotland for BATCH:2 allowed me to invite artists to present work. BATCH:3 was scheduled for 2020 but was disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Included here is the proposed programme and application to Creative Scotland which shows how it would have widened the reach of the event around Jedburgh and included residencies and workshops.

Programmes of Work

BATCH: 1 *A season of experimental dance and music performances*
Every Sunday in August at 4pm

The Bakery Studio
Rear of 9A Exchange
Street, Jedburgh
Down alley next to the Jed
Chippy

Aug 5th Entr'actes Merav Israel & Claire Pencak
Dancing between emergence & presence, this duet composes itself in real time

Aug 12th In the Making: (iii)
Ten dancers navigate compositional scores
Live music: Peter Nelson & friends

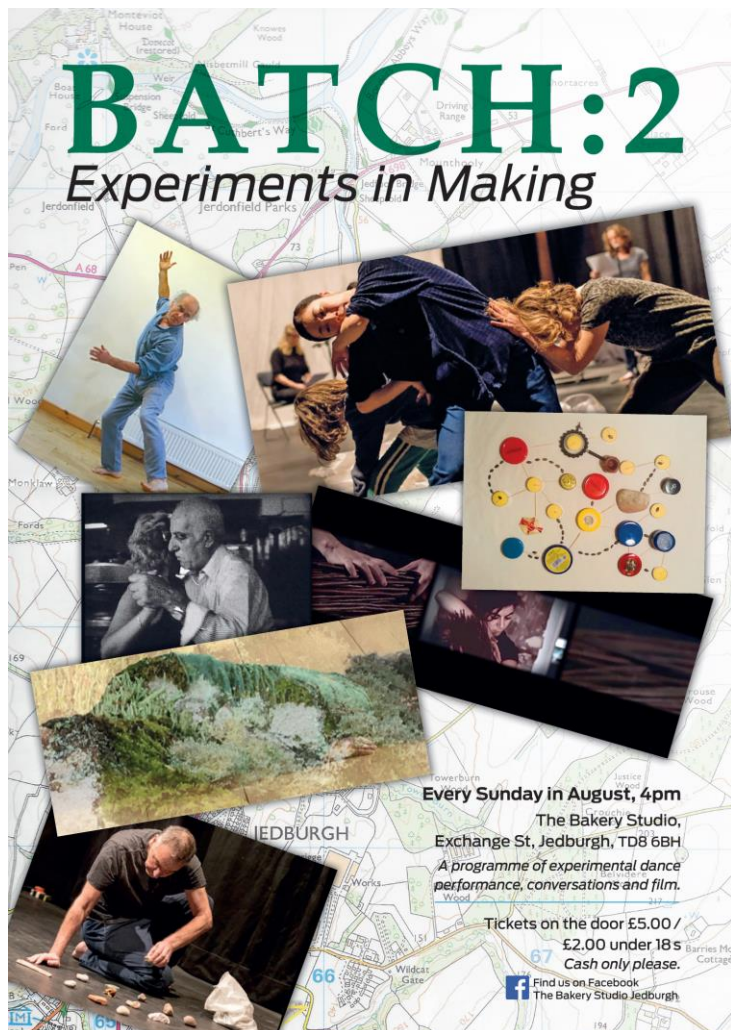
Aug 19th Fields (extract) | Breathing Space
Fields (extract) Merav Israel
A shifting arrangement of stones
Breathing Space James Wyness
A listening to 'new work' built around sound, space & performance

Aug 26th Ripstock Dudendance
New solo work performed by Paul Roux

All welcome
Free entry

Apologies the studio is on the 2nd floor & only
accessible via stairs

Drawing Brian Hartley



Felicity Bristow
experimental
the physical
environmental
truths' about the

The Bakery



BATCH:2 *Experiments in Making*

BATCH:2 is the second annual season of Sunday afternoon performances throughout August at The Bakery Studio, Jedburgh. This year the programme has expanded to include experimental studio performances, dance screenings and dance installations and brings together many of Scotland's most innovative and distinguished dance makers to perform works that push at the edges of contemporary dance. The thread running through the programme is an exploration of different ways of making, performing and presenting including movement scores, collaborative working and improvisational structures. Several of the performances include live music and audiences are invited to stay for post- performance conversations over tea and coffee, which opens the work up for discussion. Artists include Tim Rubidge, Audicia Lynne Morley, In the Making, air field collective, Merav Israel and Dudendance.

Alongside the performance series, throughout the month of August, visual artist will be developing an installation of her paper and pigment 'Unconformities' exploring structure of the studio space and its own unique conditions, revealing ephemeral and 'alternative site.

Studio - Posts | Facebook



BATCH:2 PROGRAMME:

Sunday August 4th @ 4pm

Pioneers and Legacies

Double Bill with Tim Rubidge & Audicia Lynne Morley

Introducing the work & legacy of dancers Sigurd Leeder (Germany/Switzerland) & Anna Halprin (USA).

Hope Etudes Dancer Tim Rubidge reflects on the influence of his teacher Sigurd Leeder, one of the pioneers of modern expressive dance. The 'Hope Etudes' are a series of four linked pieces created by Tim in recent years.

Hope Etudes | Tim Rubidge.

Moss: In Appreciation

'The rocks are beyond slow, beyond strong, and yet yielding to a soft green breath as powerful as a glacier. The mosses wearing away their surfaces grain by grain bringing them slowly back to sand.' Robin Wall Kimmerer

New work by Audicia Lynne Morley with dancer Claire Pençak which uses creative processes developed by the dancer Anna Halprin, including the RSVP Cycles and the Tamalpa Life/Art Methodology.

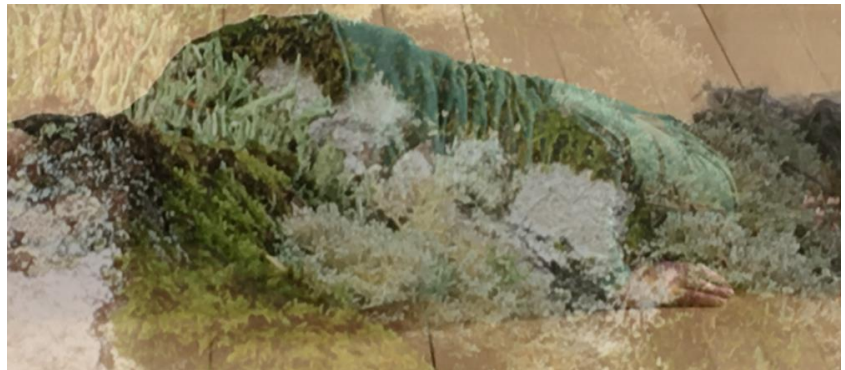


Image: Audicia Lynne Morley & Alan Watson Featherston

Returning Home

film screening

5pm start

A dance documentary **Returning Home** (2003) in which 80 – something Anna Halprin, uses movement as a means of connecting the individual to nature, and art to real life. In collaboration with performance artist Eeo Stubblefield, Halprin moves along thresholds of earth, wind, water and fire, discovering lessons in loss and liberation. Whether surveying the charred remains of her home, or her scars from cancer and aging, Halprin finds beauty and meaning even in the destructive forces of nature. (45 min)



Sunday August 11th @ 4pm

In the Making (iv)

performance & informal post-show conversation

In the Making is a shifting assemblage of dancers from emerging artists to seasoned international influencers with a diverse and rich range of dance and performance histories. Underpinned by scores-for-movement and sound, the work

you will experience is realised as a composition in real time. In this their fourth performance adventure, each performer will write and perform their own score...unknown to anyone else...what happens is the sum of their personal plans and intentions in a complex interactivity. *'A fascinating experience'* (The Skinny)

In the Making Performers include – Nicholas Bone, Ian Cameron, Matthew Hawkins, Merav Israel, Amy Longmuir, Sheila Macdougall, Alex McCabe, Brigid McCarthy, Rosalind Masson, Tony Mills, Peter Nelson, Claire Pençak, Amy Robertson

You are invited to stay for a post-show conversation over tea or coffee, which will consider scores as a process of making. What is a score for performance? How do they work? What do they allow?

Image courtesy of Matthew Hawkins

Sunday August 18th @ 4pm

Radio Play air field collective

performance & post show conversation



Radio Play is our air field version; an alternate experience of radio, immersing sound and text within a visual moving theatre where the audience can imagine and assemble the stories in their minds and observe the physical actions.

Radio Play's attends to connections, pathways, valleys, channels. The flows created by repeated activities, movements, words and journeys: of humans or animals or minerals, microbes or sand,

air, water or ice, stone... or time. These movements of fluids, nutrients, heat, history, minerals, information: feed, inform, re-fresh and re-balance our world. As do human stories that reach back thousands of years, that have branched out, divided, re-connected like the roots of a tree or the delta of a river.

Radio Play | air field collective. | Dancer Ian Spink | Photograph courtesy of Brian Hartley

Inspired by the writings of Robert McFarlane, (Holloway), Nan Shepherd, (The Living Mountain) and Peter Wohlleben (The Hidden Life of Trees) have discovered intriguing potential for new sound and physical landscapes. The words present exciting rhythmic possibilities, revealing a wellspring of primal and intellectual inspiration and allowing us new connections with landscape and the natural world.

'dancers are uniquely well placed to communicate the... reality of the human body, and the proposition that climate change and ecological crisis are (also) happening inside your (own) body, right now.' Michael Paul Henry, director of UNFIX.

Performers: Selina Boyack, Skye Reynolds, Nichola Scrutton, Ian Spink.



Sunday August 25th

Prelude | Off-site event

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. Performers from the Extending Practice Group – Jenna Agate, Helen Douglas, Tom Hawson, Merav Israel, Claire Pençak



Double Bill: *Dance on Screen* @ 4pm

Aluma Merav Israel

'Aluma' is the vision of dancer, choreographer and director Merav Israel, working with film artist Ruth Barrie, and musician and composer Nik Paget-Tomlinson. This 30-minute video installation is a choreographic composition

between three screens which brings a sense of body, object, and space experience to the audience. With its gentle sequence of events, it evokes a sense of storytelling, journey and memory.

Image *Aluma* | Merav Israel

Dudendance *Film screening and conversation with the artist*

'Like the tango, this film is timeless song. I could enjoy it again and again'. Eye for Film Review.

Artistic Directors, Clea Wallis and Paul Roux, present an archive program of their early experimental film installation works shot in Argentina and Brazil including the short *Bohemios* (1999, B/W, 8mm). Musa Galante, an old Tango maestro from Buenos Aires tells of his obsession with death and his bizarre experiments with dying. The film follows him around the Tango bars of La Boca as he dances with his partner. Inspired by the dance marathons of the 1920s, the film deals with exhaustion, youth and age.



Image *Bohemios* | Dudendance

BATCH:3 Ecological Bodies August 2021

Cancelled due to Covid-19 Pandemic.

Below is the performance series as envisaged. The text is taken from a project funding submission to Creative Scotland early 2020 which was pulled April 2020 due to the pandemic.

BATCH:3 *Ecological Bodies* supports a dancer-led approach to curating work and trials in a small-scale way, an expanded 'curatorial team' allowing for more than one vision to shape the programme of live performances, dance residencies and cultural and environmental conversations in and around Jedburgh. The performance series creates the context for an exploration through embodied and performative practices by Scottish artists around the themes of Deep Adaptation, a framework for considering the possibilities for dwelling in Climate Catastrophe and Ecological Derangement. It asks what might embodied practices contribute to Deep Adaptation? What capacities do these practices offer and what other vocabularies might they suggest? How might these serve our times? The performance series hopes to throw a spotlight on how dance and movement practices in particular have a role to play in equipping us for the possibilities of change and transformation.

Compared to previous versions of BATCH in 2018 and 2019, BATCH:3 will trial a different curatorial approach, develop new partnerships, introduce a residency programme, take place across venues, encourage a greater diversity of audiences, and create a digital artists' book. The format of a performance every Sunday in August will be replaced with scheduling that allows for greater exchange between presenting artists and for audiences coming from beyond Jedburgh to participate in more than one event.

Curation Process:

Some aspects of the programme are in place but the full programme and the curation of these will be through a co-curation process involving Rosanna Irvine, Kate Foster, Felicity Bristow, and myself. This brings a more- than- one vision to BATCH and assists in the final scoring of the programme to allow for extended artist dialogue, clarity around the publication and the gathering of material for it within the events. The process will draw out sub-themes that helps link events, clarify artistic aims, and assist with marketing and publicity. Part of this curation period will be contacting local groups and venues about how they might participate or provide a space e.g., Jed Forest Instrumental Band to lead the For Peats Sake procession; Jedburgh Horticultural Society: Mary Queen of Scots House, Spread Eagle Inn, Jedburgh Jail.

BATCH:3 Residency Programme:

The residency programme supports the practice of performance artists and fills a gap left by the demise of the Dreamtime Residency – an annual one -week residency funded by Live Borders and Dance Base. The Work Room trials a partnership that could be developed, as regeneration

work on the Port House, Jedburgh begins April 2020 creating access to a new studio/performance space from April 2021. Proposed residencies for BATCH:3:

- 1 x one - week Work Room supported residency to develop new work around BATCH:3 themes hosted at The Bakery Studio with a studio showing
- 2 x micro residencies (Bakery Studio and Hundalee Farm) with studio showings

BATCH:3 Performance Programme

The project engages with practising Scottish Borders or Scottish based artists and performers. BATCH offers a sympathetic platform for work that is less suited to many mainstream theatre/art centre programmes; work that is not easily defined and crosses art forms and disciplinary borders, 'bordering' being appropriate to the geographic positioning of Jedburgh.

Performances so far include:

- **Rosanna Irvine + Kian McEvoy** *Empathic Bodies*
- **Kate Foster** *For Peats Sake*
- **Annie Lord** *Graft*
- **In the Making** (v)

Other events include:

- A Green Tease supported by Creative Carbon Scotland, encouraging dialogue with other sectors and audiences. A picnic in the park is a possible format making it more visible publicly and inviting curiosity.
- *Movements for Change*. A conversation between Kedzie Penfield (Dance Movement Therapist), Ken Bartlett (formerly Director of People Dancing) & Claire Pencak.
- Participatory performance of 'The Melting of the Individual' based on a score by choreographer Boris Charmatz.

Previous iterations of BATCH's (2018 and 2019) have been centred on The Bakery Studio. This proposal includes performances/residencies in the Bakery but also reaches out to other venues within the town to make the programme more visible and accessible and to encourage a greater diversity of audiences. It also taps into audiences created through other avenues for example the Hundalee Mill Open Studio weekend, which in 2018 brought our largest and most diverse audience. The overarching environmental theme is timely as public awareness of climate change and ecological degradation increases. A number of new groups focused on environmental and climate change have emerged in the Borders in the past year including Films for Change (Hawick); Extinction Rebellion groups in Galashiels, Peebles, Melrose, and Hawick/ Jedburgh; & The Green Gathering. These create a Borders wide community of interest to drawn on and reach.

A recent Deep Adaptation workshop in Hawick attracted people from around the Borders and from Glasgow and Edinburgh. The Green Tease, *Graft* workshop and the *For Peats Sake* performance will bring people together around relevant environmental themes namely deep adaptation, growing practises and peatland restoration.

In the Making Performance Documentation and Scores

In the Making (iii) performed in BATCH:1 (2018)



In the Making are Nicholas Bone, Ian Cameron, Matthew Hawkins, Merav Israel, Amy Longmuir, Sheila Macdougall, Rosalind Masson, Alex McCabe, Brigid McCarthy, Tony Mills, Claire Pençak, Amy Robertson and Peter Nelson (Composer).

<https://www.facebook.com/In-the-Making-Collective-1721915011358020/>

Performance Scores for In the Making (iii)

(in no particular order)

Near Far Infinite Space

For 3-5 players.

Begin with all players in the ideal/perfect place/setting in (very) near space to each other. With focus always on space/spatial awareness move in and out of near, far, infinite space with a clarity of which one you are in at every moment.

Inner Director Score

A group of people begin. One emerges as the inner director. In this role they can shape the group activity by calling any of the following instructions, whilst still paying attention to being part of the activity. Instructions are called from within the dancing, not removed from the action.

Instructions: Stop, Start, Continue, End, New beginning, Re-arrange, Re-set, Exit (plus the name of the person/s to exit), Enter (plus the name of the person/s to enter), New director.

Options: the instructions: *New beginning, Rearrange, Reset, Enter/Exit* are only possible after 'Stop' and followed by 'Continue' or 'Start' - making it necessary for the group to hold a tableau in between these changes.

Rearrange = new configuration. Reset = dissolving and recreating same configuration

5 - minute solo

Anyone at any time announces '5' to which one person would begin a 5-minute solo. The soloist is responsible for keeping an eye on time. This score can overlap with other scores or not.

Audio Description (i – iii)

i

Classic version (For 3 players)

One person dances. A second person audio describes what they see. A third dancer, who cannot see the person dancing, dances what they hear from the audio describer.

ii

Augmented version (For 5 players)

As above except that 3 people audio describe the solo

iii

Landscape version (For 3 players)

One person dances. A second person is the listener/dancer, the third person is the audio describer.

The audio describer whispers to the third dancer what they see.

When the solo dancer stops, the listener/dancer gets up and dances the dance they heard.

In the Making (iv) performed in BATCH:2 (2019)



Stills from In the Making (iv) video documentation

Group Score for Performance

From group email correspondence April 1st, 2019

Each person prepares their own score and performs this during the hour of the show. Unlike our previous performances, each performer needs to know only one score: the one they will perform. Scores devised by individuals are not learned or enacted by co-performers. The group score (composed of the occurring overlay of individual scores and running for an hour) invokes questions about how we participate, observe, and pause to wonder, amid a layered interaction. Individuals come with their own agenda (intention, interest, concepts, hearts, minds, bodies). The performance's compass, its sparsity and density (moment to moment), arises directly from the sum and nature of individual tasks. Immediacy and variation can ensue when we leave behind specific aesthetic aims or judgments, but we stay open to what occurs and embed in our practice some modes of reflections that may inform us onwards.

Below are some observations and thoughts based on our scoring practice so far which can be drawn on (or not).

- You might choose to adapt/build on an existing score.
- Scores may comprise elements of contact with and response to others (dancers, musician, audience)
- Observing is also 'performing' and can be scored in.
- Scores might articulate entrances and exits
- Scores might indicate duration (or not).
- The timespan of individual scores in performance can be long or short. So, a score might stretch the full length of the hour performance; a shorter score could be repeated within a performance, or a score might stretch over more than one performance etc.

My hour performance score for In the Making (iv) was:

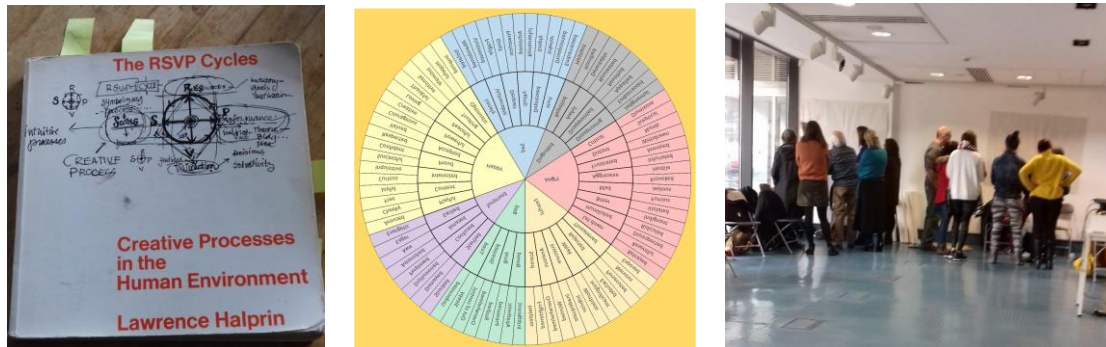
Peripheral visions

Pay attention to the edges. Fold the edges into the space.

Re-Reading the RSVP Cycles: Scores in a Climate Emergency

Reflections on a Cross Disciplinary Symposium

November 6th, 2019, Gallery North



We are facing a period ahead when the very essence of our lives together will rest on how we deal with change in a positive and creative way. That is why we need new ways of looking at change: neither as good nor bad, not judged as whether to allow or not allow, but ecologically, which means existentially. Change is going to be. Now how do we work with it? Lawrence Halprin, 1969

‘Re-reading the RSVP Cycles: Scores in a Climate Emergency’ is a cross -disciplinary symposium to bring together professional practitioners, academics and students from performing arts, visual arts, planning, architecture and landscape architecture; sustainability and climate change and more broadly the humanities, political and social sciences.

The starting point for the event is *The RSVP Cycles: Creative Processes in the Human Environment* by Lawrence Halprin, published 50 years ago, seven years after Rachel Carson’s ‘Silent Spring’. ‘RSVP’ is an acronym for Resources, Scores, Valu-action and Performance. The book brings together Lawrence Halprin’s landscape architecture practice with the choreographic scoring practice of dancer Anna Halprin and describes how open scores operate, how they can be a process for collective creativity and civil participation, rooted in a concern for environmental issues and social justice.

50 years on the need for scores for change are even more urgent today and the symposium in revisiting the RSVP Cycles, considers their relevance to the context of living in a time of Climate Emergency by bringing them into contact with the Deep Adaptation Agenda of resilience, relinquishment, restoration and reconciliation. The paper ‘Deep Adaptation: a map for navigating climate tragedy’ by Jem Bendell (Professor of Sustainability Leadership, University of Cumbria) was published on July 27th, 2018 and has been

downloaded more than half a million times. Deep Adaptation starts from the premise that near-term societal collapse due to climate change is inevitable, and most likely already happening. The Deep Adaptation paper can be found here. <http://www.lifeworth.com/deepadaptation.pdf>

Through a programme of presentations, experiential and reflective activities, a group workshop and dialogue interspersed with live readings from the RSVP Cycles we will be considering themes around change and planning for uncertain futures that will open up more questions than answers.

Contributors and collaborators for this event are: **Audicia Lynne Morley**, Co - Director and a Senior Practitioner for Tamalpa UK branch; **Alex Lockwood**, Senior Lecturer in Journalism and a member of the Centre for Research in Media and Cultural Studies at the University of Sunderland. **Elinor Scarth** a landscape architect and lecturer at Edinburgh College of Art, **Leonie Mhairi** a poet, researcher, and landscape designer; **Sarah Rubidge**, Professor Emerita (Dance) at the University of Chichester, and an artistic and academic consultant.

Overview

The following link to the Eventbrite page describes the orientations and aspirations of the symposium, information on the guest speakers and supporting material about the arrangements. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/re-reading-the-rsvp-cycles-scores-in-a-climate-emergency-tickets-75590769025>.

Attendance

The 34 participants included post-graduate students, academics and freelance practitioners from visual arts, theatre, dance, landscape architecture, social science and planning. 83% were from the North East, 16% from Scotland and 1% from elsewhere. The ambition for the event to enable connections across departments within the university, across different universities, and to attract professional practitioners beyond the University was achieved.

Programme

'In practice and in theory', the subtitle of Sarah Rubidge's talk, describes the overall symposium programme which included presentations, readings, discussion, workshop activities and embodied practice. It created an opportunity to introduce and re-evaluate the RSVP Cycles creative process by bringing it alongside contemporary practices in landscape architecture and choreography and by using the language of the creative process to explore the four themes of Deep Adaptation – resilience, relinquishment, restoration and reconciliation. The activities of the day generated responses, reflection, participation, co-creation, exchange and learning and created a rich resource for this PhD research, in particular, how the practices and vocabulary of somatic movement and choreography might contribute to Deep Adaptation.

Event Programme

Re-reading the RSVP Cycles: Scores in a Climate Emergency

A cross- disciplinary symposium

9.30	Arrival and Refreshments
10.00	Welcome & Introduction <i>Claire Pençak</i> <i>Readings from The RSVP Cycle</i> Tim Rubidge & Claire Pençak
10.15	<i>The RSVP Cycles in Community Engagement</i> Audicia Lynne Morley
11.00	<i>Melting of the Individual: Score by Boris Charmatz</i> Facilitator Claire Pençak
11.20	MORNING BREAK (15 mins)
11.35	<i>Deep Adaptation: Openings</i> Alex Lockwood
12.20	<i>Readings from The RSVP Cycles</i> Tim Rubidge & Claire Pençak
12.30	<i>Landscapes, bodies that matter</i> Leonie Mhairi & Elinor Scarth
13.00	LUNCH (45 mins)
13.45	<i>Dwelling Choreographically: in Practice and in Theory</i> Sarah Rubidge
14.45	<i>Scores in a Climate Emergency (Part 1)</i> Facilitators Audicia Lynne Morley & Claire Pençak
15.25	TEA BREAK (15 mins)
15.40	<i>Scores in a Climate Emergency (Part 2)</i> Facilitators Audicia Lynne Morley & Claire Pençak
16.20	<i>Un- Panel Session</i> All
16.50	<i>Uneven Endings</i> Claire Pençak

The Melting of the Individual Score by Boris Charmatz

People were invited to either perform the score or to participate as witnesses.

I read the score as originally written by Boris Charmatz as there were dance and movement practitioners at the event and then presented it in my own words.

'Let us test an apparently simplistic proposition. It is a melting from the vertical posture to the heaviest flabbiness. From standing to lying down, as usual, but this time without habitus, and for an exceptionally long duration. The idea is to let oneself melt little by little while allowing unexpected circulations and insisting on the most subtle flows: one must not deny the potential losses of balance, the difficulties, the fragility of he who, with his eyes closed, doesn't know any more at what moment his knee will touch the ground. The coming down isn't necessarily regular, and one quickly comes across successive tensions needing to be studied thoroughly in order to feel what will or should let go afterwards or slacken. A chance to think the body in terms of mass. Let us look for this "de-glaciation" in sometimes remote body areas, inside the organs as well as the articulations, giving one's whole mind to the glands or to the weight of the brain. One would avoid (could avoid) all conformism, symmetry, stages of leaning that look too clear, paths too well constructed. The time of action is given by music or sound lasting approximately ten minutes. The arduous ideal seems to me Pression pour violoncelle seul by Helmut Lachermann. One can prefer something else, but in any case, the music chosen should not be a syrupy one. The preliminary time for observation can be long, and if you reach the ground before the gong (the end of the music), continue to bury yourself mentally, to make your stomach, sex, arms, weigh even more... The feeling of submersion would allow to forget the self-control brought by the gaze upon oneself or upon the others (an implicit control on what one's own image would be).' Boris Charmatz Published in Revue Véhicule n°1, May 2010 <http://www.borischarmatz.org/?la-fonte-de-l-individu>

The Melting of the Individual (my version)

Take 8 minutes to very slowly melt, collapse. You might like to start by melting from somewhere inside, the lungs, heart, brain for example. Maybe melting won't register very visibly from the outside for some time. There is no right or wrong way to melt. Once you are on the floor, then think about melting even further into the ground.



At the end of the score, exchange experiences with whoever is nearest to you.

Write a short response on a post-it note that we can bring together on a wall.



Deep Adaptations, Hawick, Feb 29th, 2020

Schedule

10 .00 – 10.20

Welcome, introductions and housekeeping

10.20 – 11.15 Claire Pençak: Moving into Deep Adaptation

11.15 – 11.30 Break

11.30 – 12.45 Jim Griffins: Meditation and Deep Adaptation

12.45.- 1.45 Shared lunch

1.45 – 3.15 Tim Rubidge:
Open Space process:

3.15 – 3.30 Break

3.30 – 4.00 Closing of session

The aim of the day is to begin to have a conversation about Deep Adaptation and to reflect on what that might mean for us individually and for our communities in the Scottish Borders.

To create the conditions for what is a difficult topic, we are experimenting with a process and different elements might be more or less comfortable for each person. This is an invitation and there are ways to participate differently to suit each person.

The day will have four parts:

Part One: I'll be introducing some simple physical practices that help us to be present with some of the ideas around Deep Adaptation, to step into it with all of ourselves and what that might mean.

Part Two: Jim will work through meditation practices and texts to reflect on Deep Adaptation

Part Three: Shared lunch. A chance to gather and discuss.

Part Four: Exploration in groups of themes /topics/questions that are resonant to you through an open space process that aims to arrive at some actions. This is led by Tim Rubidge.
We see this as the beginning of a conversation that can continue beyond today and perhaps by the end of the day, we'll have some ideas around that.

Introducing Deep Adaptation: A Somatic Approach

Notes: This first part involves quite a lot of listening and information. It's ok to come in and out of attention. We don't need to remember it all. There are reminders around the room

Breathing into Deep Adaptation

Clear chairs, blankets on floor

Sit back -to- back with someone else. Bring as much of your back into contact with the other person's as is possible and comfortable. Rest your weight equally into each other. You can close your eyes if you like. Be aware of your own breath, extend that to your partners breath. Continue being in contact with your partner whilst I read some extracts from a piece by Jem Bendell and Katie Carr which explains the approach to Deep Adaptation. Readings from Approaches to Deep Adaptation: The Love in Deep Adaptation
Help each other up.

Stepping into Deep Adaptation

When I ring the bell take a step, I will read to you. The texts have been written by the Deep Adaptation Forum and I have also added to these. This is repeated 5 times.

The 5 steps are:

- It's Bad
- It's Over
- It's Now
- It's Open
- It's OK

Bell

IT'S BAD

- Greenland & permafrost melts are both 70 years ahead of predictions of worst-case scenario
- IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was cautious and unfortunately misleading, The IPCC 1.5C degree report from October 2018 was the first time the organisation sounded the alarm of imminent danger, stating we needed to half carbon emissions by 2030 and how dangerous 1.5C degrees of warming is to our ecosystems (tropical rainforests, coral reefs, fisheries etc.

- it might be too late to have a big impact on climate, as the reinforcing feedbacks could be underway, with Earth heating itself, with exponential sea-level rise being a key indicator.
- These changes risk all our lives, from the rural poor to the urban middle classes, which can be described as the risk of societal collapse.
- Sooner than food-shortage induced societal collapse, could be finance-induced collapse. Our current means of transaction are based on a monetary system and payment network that relies on confidence in the global banking system that requires economic expansion. That is now in question more than before

Bell

IT'S OVER

- it's over for the call to stop climate change before it disrupts the way of life of people who thought they were immune
Figures from Plymouth University, cited by the Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership, found that coastal erosion is occurring along 17% of the UK coastline - comprising 30% of England's coastline; 23% in Wales; 20% in Northern Ireland and 12% of the Scottish coastline.' (Yahoo News, January 10th, 2020)
- this has happened despite over 30 years of effort to change within the system; emissions are rising exponentially.
- Fisheries experts have called for salmon conservation to be made a national priority amid claims the species is approaching "crisis point". They say environmental change and the impact of humans across the northern hemisphere is putting the fish at risk.' (BBC News January 7th, 2020)
- it's over for us to be avoiding this conversation about impending disaster and for all the excuses for that avoidance
- it's over for our story of control and therefore of human dominion and centrality

Bell

IT'S NOW

- millions are suffering already, and societal breakdown is happening already in some places but unevenly distributed
- 'The birds were gone. Canberra, and the wildlife that lives in the national parks that encircle it, was suffocating. Climate collapse wasn't a slow-moving force my child and I might gradually see impact our lives. It was here, now. Upon us and immediate.' The Guardian January 10th, 2020
- there are the signs of the rise of the hard right, as people don't believe in their future and get angry, and some justify fascism on environmental grounds
- that means we can no longer delay what to learn, discuss, and make choices about
- that involves making some changes now, by letting go of old certainties, hopes and plans and living today according to the most important ideas or beliefs we have about what's important in life

Bell

IT'S OPEN

- we don't know how bad it will get and for whom; humans are not necessarily going to die in billions or go extinct this century
- we do not know when the society around us will break down
- we can choose how we respond and try to influence what happens
- there aren't simple answers to this predicament; instead, Deep Adaptation offers a framework for open and generative dialogue (5 Rs) Resilience Relinquishment, Restoration Reconciliation & Resources

Bell

IT'S OKAY

- as climate chaos wasn't just an accident but the result of our way of being in the world, it offers a severe mirror on our individual and collective psyche
- for those of us with the privilege of time to consider collapse before it occurs, it offers us an uncompromising invitation to delve into existential questions about the meaning of our lives
- despite our sadness at suffering and destruction, life and the potential for life will go on for millions of years yet
- after despair, we can find meaning in new ways, with one way being that there is meaning beyond our ability to understand it in a rational way.

Turn to someone who is nearby and share one response each.

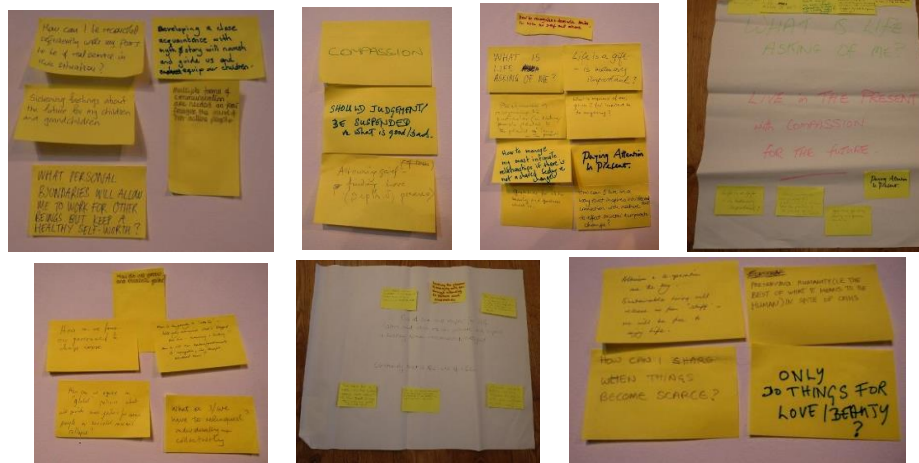
The Melting of the Individual Score with Coda

Deep Adaptation starts from belief that societal collapse is possible, likely and possibly unfolding now in some places. It talks about inevitable near-term social collapse. What might collapse feel like? This is a score called The Melting of the Individual originally created by French choreographer Boris Charmatz which I have adapted, and Tim has suggested a coda. You can participate by doing the score or by witnessing.

Take 8 minutes to very slowly melt, collapse. You might like to start by melting from somewhere inside, the lungs, heart, brain for example. Maybe melting won't register very visibly from the outside for some time. There is no right or wrong way to melt. Once you are on the floor, then think about melting even further into the ground. I will ring a bell every minute and ring it twice at the end.

Then take a further 4 minutes to restore yourself in whatever way you wish. As before I will ring the bell every minute and twice at the end.

Take another 5 minutes to share your experience of the score with whoever is nearest to you in the room. Finish by writing some thoughts on the post it notes to put on the wall.



Responses to the framing question organised into affiliated groups

My Reflections and Questions:

On moving practice into (very) near proximity to Deep Adaptation

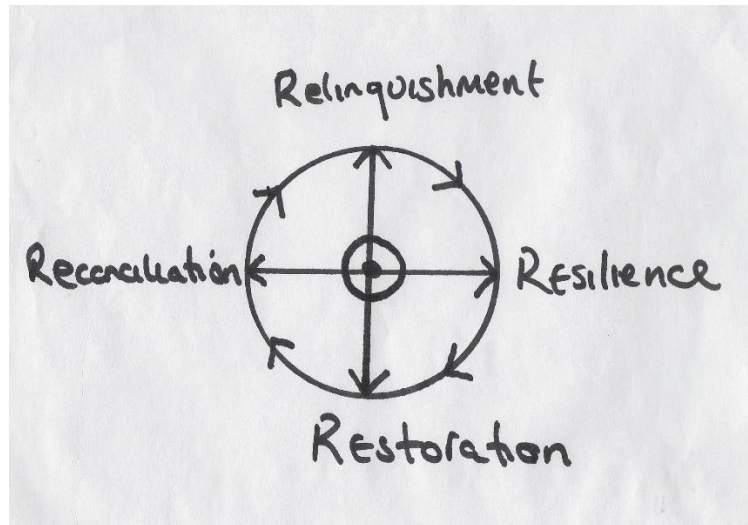
Questions Arising

Why Deep Adaptation and not Deep Adaptations? The latter is an invitation for more than one response.

Could Deep Adaptations be framed as a score for living in Climate Catastrophe and Ecological Breakdown with the different Rs suggesting different actions, intents, and qualities to work with?

Resilience	How do we wish to live?
Relinquishment	What can we give up?
Restoration	What can be brought back?
Reconciliation	How do we integrate this?

As a score the above suggests a list to be got through. I suggest a more dynamic version borrowing Halprin's design for the RSVP Cycles which brings them all into relationship and suggests movement around and between.



How might or can somatic movement practices and dancemaking contribute to the Deep Adaptation agenda or allow us to take it on?

Relinquishment: What can I give up in /through/because of dance? It is a practice that vanishes as it is created – its residue is in the body and in the witness, but it always has to be remade. Somatic practices for unfixing, unlearning, release into gravity; dwelling in impermanence.

Restoration: What can I bring back to /in movement? It restores equilibrium, integration, balance, tone, contact as a way of shaping, body to body transmission of legacies; moving as a way to under_stand, to restore and bring us into more ethical relationship to earth. perception and listening practices to generate awareness and attunement; practices for becoming present,

Resilience: How do I wish to dance and under what conditions? Scoring as a way of making collectively that invites participation and joining in; recomposing; emergence.

Reconciliation: How can I be reconciled in/through/with dance? The practices contribute bodymind integration practices like moving through connective tissue and BMC techniques enables integration at a body/cellular level

The workshop was aimed at a wide community but Tim, Jim and I were able to bring our movement practices to the event as a way to come closer to and respond to the Deep Adaptation agenda differently. It offered another approach for entering into Deep Adaptation that deepened the terminology and languaging that other workshops have tended to rely on. The movement and reflective meditation practices brought us to the discursive element differently to other Deep Adaptation events I have experienced namely: Lancaster Community Dialogue for Deep Adaptation, 14th July 2019; Deep Adaptation, Deep Solidarity: A conversation between Jem Bendell and Gehan Macleod chaired by Layla-Roxanne Hill, Glasgow 21st September 2019 Deep Adaptation, Deep Solidarity * Enough!; Deep Adaptation: Openings by Alex Lockwood as part of the Re-reading the RSVP Cycles Symposium, November 6th 2019.

Extending Practice Group 2017 – 2020

The Extending Practice Group started in January 2015 and is an informal, friendly gathering of professional creative practitioners from different art forms that meet to share and extend practice. We always start with moving and then work with practice scores, which can be taken up and adapted to suit individual art forms. The group has included movement and theatre practitioners, visual artists, musicians and gardeners and any session might include moving, drawing, writing, music and discussion. The group meets in The Bakery Studio in the warmer months and shifts to Studio on the Green, Selkirk for other months. Below are session plans and reflections for meetings between 2017 – 2020 that are relevant to my research. The sessions where we collaborated with Tom Hawson are gathered together separately in Appendix I *Book of Ways* and can be found in the section titled *Woodland Ways*. The Extending Practice Group offered an invaluable practice context that allowed me to explore, refine and reflect on research themes in the company of others.

November 30th 2017, Studio on the Green

Orientation: Scoring Practice

Near, Far, Infinite Space For 3-5 players.

This score derives from Mary Overlie (2016, p.150) who was in turn inspired by Lisa Nelson. The version presented here was developed by In the Making.

Begin with all performers in the ideal/perfect place/setting in (very) near space to each other. With focus always on space/spatial awareness move in and out of near, far, infinite space with a clarity of which one you are in at every moment.

Alongside In 2's or 3's

Decide where to start. Staying alongside, allow the journey to make itself. Work with co-existence, reciprocity and responsiveness.

World Making Everyone

Do whatever interests you to begin with. Allow time for something to develop as an individual, and as a group. You can exit what you are doing at any time and find a new beginning

May 30th, 2018, The Bakery Studio

Orientation: Emergence, Choicefulness, Foregrounding, Backgrounding and working with reflection through drawing.

Dancing Through Different Anatomical Structures

Dancing through different anatomical structures drawing on Experiential Anatomy techniques. Direct the dancers to move through Skin and after about 5 mins shift to Lungs, then to Blood and finally to Bone.

This is an exploration, so do not judge what comes up, just go with it.

Reflect through drawing on moving through the different structures and lay them out in the space. Collectively visit all the drawings and share any observations

Emergence, Choicefulness and Foregrounding - Backgrounding

1) *Work with emergence. Follow what surfaces for the amount of time it takes. Do not make value judgements about what emerges. Going with what emerges is the intention and if this intention is held to then every action has value. Give about 10 mins for this.*

Take 5 minutes to reflect on this through drawing and lay them out in the space

2) *Emergence with choicefulness.*

Continue with emergence, but you can now exercise choicefulness and decide to follow something that emerges further. Be alive to which one you are doing.

3) *Emergence, choicefulness and foregrounding/backgrounding (in 2's)*

Work with emergence and choicefulness but this time in relation to another, choosing to be more or less present with your material and/or to foreground/background your own dance in relation to the other dancer(s), the space etc.

4) *Go back to your drawings, use them as a score to direct your dance. Then try using other people's drawings in the same way. Give 5- 10 minutes for each score (depending on the number and time available)*

Emergence through different anatomical structures

Return to your Part One emergence drawing and use it as a score but this time perform the score through the 'mind' of a specific anatomical structure e.g., Skin, Lung, Blood, Bone. Either chose one and stick with it or move between different ones

Notes: As there were just three of us for this session, we did emergence and emergence with choicefulness as solo material but did emergence with choicefulness and foreground/background as a trio – which worked very well. We didn't get to work with the drawings as scores.

June 26th, 2018, The Bakery Studio

Orientation: Experiments in Making

Walking

Commence with walking as a way to collect information about yourself, about the space about the others in the room.

Bring your attention to the feet. Let the feet organise your movement

Then take your attention to the crown of the head. What is the dance of the crown of the head and how does this organise your movement?

As you move bring your feet and the crown of your head into relationship – far away, close together. Think of it as a dialogue, conversation between the feet and crown of the head.

Go with what is already happening

Go with what is already happening in the body, in the room, outside of the room.

Movement is already structuring itself. Complement what else is happening by doing the same or doing the opposite.

Shift. Exit what you are currently doing. Enter into something else.

Wait until something else emerges

Foregrounding and Backgrounding

In 2's work with foregrounding and backgrounding each other and the space.

Foregrounding, Backgrounding and Witnessing (Whole Group)

As the witness make choices about how you watch, what you are watching, where you are watching from. Play with witnessing from different proximities, close up, further away, from standing, sitting or lying. In witnessing we are also composing.

July 24th, 2018, The Bakery Studio

Orientation: A medley of scores

Camera/Lens.

In the Making Score

A dancer (A) finds the perfect/ideal place to start. He/she begins to create a solo. Another dancer (B) moves in to respond to the solo using a specific part of his/her body as a camera/lens 'filming' the solo. Dancer B may shift camera/lens to another body part. Filming can include close-up's, long shots, pans, still frames.

Possible score developments:

- another dancer takes the place of the soloist
- another dancer takes the place of the camera/lens
- additional dancers enter and respond as cameras/lenses thus 'filming' the solo from different perspectives/angles
- additional dancers enter and begin their own solos with one camera/lens filming more than one solo
- several solos+camera/lens performances happen simultaneously

Beginning ... End

In the Making Score

Begin with all dancers outside the designated performance space. One or more dancers enter the space and dance until an outside witness calls 'end.' A moment of stillness. The performers exit. Begin again - new sequence, new configuration of dancers.

Audio Description (For 3+ players)

In the Making Score

A moves; B audio describes what A is dancing; C (who is not able to see A) dances what they are hearing described. More than one person can take on the role of C but it's also good to have some observers too.

Change around roles.

Imaginary Audio Description

In the Making Score

Someone takes on the role of describer, the others dance/observe.

The describer audio describes an imaginary dance. The others dance this.

Stone Ways

Choose a stone – go with what are you drawn to –pick it up. Think of it as a meeting of stone and skin/bone, a conversation, not as you holding stone.

Fit into the stone, see how it changes the body, shape yourself around it, let it support you.

Place the stone against another material – wall – table etc.

Sound the stone. Pay attention to the sound and how it is made.

Two stones coming together – 1 stone coming to the other

To finish - place the stone in the space. Then place yourself in the space.

Unseen Beautiful Acts

Sit or stand in a large circle. Decide on someone to start.

Everyone else closes their eyes. The first person enters the circle to perform their Unseen Act. This can be anything – a way of finishing off the session. Take the time it requires, bearing in mind the time available in total). On saying finish, the dancer returns to their place and the next person gets up. Continue until everyone has had a go.

Go with the flow of the space (Group practice)

Interpret the instruction to go with the flow of the space as you wish. Let the space direct your choices of movement.

The Zen Garden (Group Practice)

From Overlie, 2016 p. 151

The movement vocabulary is walking and stopping, standing, sitting and lying down. Using this practice, landscapes appear and dissolve through the alternation of simple shapes and their spatial relationships.

(For sessions October 2018 – 2019 see Woodland Ways, in Book of Ways)

October 22nd, 2019, Studio on the Green

Orientation: Delving deeper into Contact - Contour.

We start with Breath and Porousness leading into an exploration of moving from and through skin, exploring the different shaping qualities of ventral and dorsal skin surfaces, towards an exploration of Contact-Contour.

Breath and Porousness

We started lying on blankets on the floor. I led a 20- minute session that asked people to pay attention to the breath, not to change anything but just to come into noticing and bringing ourselves into the present.

Breath is how we renew and sustain ourselves at a very basic level. Notice which parts of your body aren't in contact with the floor. On the out breath, allow the body to soften into the floor, to seep and spread. On the in breath to absorb the floor, breathe it in.

A gradual opening of the skin/self as porous, a membrane for exchange and making contact with ground or world, material for the central nervous system to digest, material to shape the brain.

Use this exploration to begin to move. Allow yourself to be shaped by skin (rather than bones or muscle). Skin, the largest organ of the body.

Identify the ventral and dorsal surfaces of skin. How do these figure you differently? How do you perceive through them differently?

Take time, pause, return to where we started. Return to porousness, go further into the spreading.

Coming to standing and working like this I opened my eyes more often and noticed how the vision could take me away from skin, so I had an image of the skin having many, many eyes, so that the eyes on our face became part of a crowd, the skin took on the looking, eyes not only in the back of your head but in all directions – all seeing. I recalled an image by Hildegard Von Bingen, a figure, perhaps a woman with eyes all over her. <https://healthyhildegard.com/scivias-illustrations/>

Into Contact

In 2's, start back-to-back. Take a few moments to breath into and through the back of your partner. This can be done sitting or standing back- to -back. Continue to work with the skin, make yourself available to your partner. Don't attempt to shape anything to prefigure anything. Allow the skin exploration to shape the moving in contact with another. We did this for about 20 – 30 minutes.

At the end people commented on the intimacy of it, of moving into and through the other person, but the person was not personal but material – skin, bone, muscle. One pair found that laughing, which makes you relaxed and open, was a nice way of being together to start with.

This work asks you to be very present to and present with another. The sense of becoming is very tangible. You can't prefigure where the moving is going, and to maintain the sensitivity and awareness requires being in a state of constant present-ness.

Contour

The task was to find out what 'contour' might be. In explaining the task, I used the word outline. Helen thought outline was something quite different. For her it was more to do with silhouette, the line around something whereas contour was more graded, it offered a more three - dimensional description.

I looked this up after the workshop. The Cambridge dictionary definition 'the shape of a mass of land or other object, especially its surface or the shape formed by its outer edge' <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/contour>. So, both seem to be relevant, but we went mainly with the first definition of mass. Someone suggested that the rucked blankets that were still in the space from the start of class had some great contours.

We explored contour individually or with another. Fascinating! Very rich material. It opened up very fine, qualitative shifts in the body – folds, hollows extensions. Inhabiting environment in a very rich way.

We used the studio and what was beyond the studio, as a resource for material to contour. We also found we used ourselves. There was a point where the attempt to contour, to know something in this way moved into an imaginative realm. I found fold was a configuration that I was exploring a lot. This took me not only to Hutton's Unconformity but to Manning's folds (2013). One dancer mentioned that she found herself contouring internal organs – heart, lungs, liver. Another dancer mentioned that in the embryonic state, the gut, the colon is outside the body as is the heart and as the foetus develops these are taken inside. Folding and convolutions echo something about the gut. Contouring opens up an immense world of movement possibilities. We thought it would be great to do this outside.

November 26th, 2019

Orientation: *What is it to be a Witness? What is it to be witnessed?*

Opening thought: 'But before we go any further, just as a reminder, being worthy of the present is not intended in a passive and acquiescent manner, but rather in an active mode, as a way of coming to terms with the present, in order to intervene in it and transform it. Being of the here and now is a prerequisite to account for the conditions of our existence, of our limitations, of our constraint' (Braidotti, 2016 p.2-3 Volume 13 Issue 4 of the Deleuze and Guattari Studies)

Internal Shaping

Two roles: Mover and Witness

- i) *The mover explores moving from the heart or lungs.
The witness can choose to witness from one position for 5 mins or change positions, change level, be close up or far away. Duration 5 minutes

Before commencing acknowledge each other by exchanging eye contact. When the 5 minutes is up, close the activity by again exchanging eye contact.*
- ii) *The 'witness' for (i) reflects back through movement or drawing (but not verbally) something about what they have witnessed. The mover becoming the witness here.

Remember to exchange eye contact at the opening and close.*
- iii) *The original mover revisits their moving with the witness resuming their first role.
Remember to exchange eye contact at the opening and close. (Duration 3 mins)*
- iv) *Have a 3 - minute conversation. Let the mover respond first and then the witness.*
- v) *Change roles and repeat 1 – 4 above.*
- vi) *Share responses as a group.*

External Shaping

Feel free to change partners if you wish.

Use exactly the same structure as 1 – 4 above, change over roles repeat 1 – 4 above and then all do 6 together.

This time allow what is around you to shape your moving. This could be the room, what is in the room, light and shade, temperature, what is outside the window etc.

Notes from the session:

I was reminded by one of the dancers that in Authentic Movement the witness and mover always make eye contact at the beginning and at the end, to acknowledge each other's presence. Whilst I am not doing 'Authentic Movement' this is a formality or action that seems very important to add. It establishes the relationship between the mover and the witness.

Another dancer felt that the structure allowed for 'transformation' because of the reflective element by the witness and the chance for the mover to revisit their material in the third part of the score, which allowed for them to go somewhere else with the material.

General responses about the role of the witness: That it is complicated. It takes work to bring yourself to that role as it demands a real attention to the other person and what they are making. There are many choices or decision that can be made which can take you away from the attending or divert your attention e.g., deciding to change your positioning or focus. Sometimes there is a desire to figure out what the mover is doing. Whilst my inclination is to shift positions, levels and distances when watching the mover, when we did External Shaping I decided to stay more or less where I was, to allow the dancer to be the one that moved around the space. This let me be more focused.

It was as the witness that it occurred to me that what I was witnessing was something in the process of being made, and also how extraordinary the work was that was being made and how much passes us by because we are not able to attend to it.

Another spoke about the witnessing role as about being in relationship. That the quality of the relationship between the mover and the witness was what was being created. I certainly felt the relational element more by the time I was working on the second part of the workshop. Sometimes I wanted to go with her, accompany her more closely but not only with the gaze but in movement, to be allowed to go with what she was doing. This will be next week's session.

Other responses from the group included:

What we notice when we are witnessing. Some people felt drawn/distracted by what else was going on in the room. Others like myself hardly noticed what else was going on nor was particularly curious! I was aware of a figure passing through the space but none of the detail of what was occurring.

It was not about 'making up' stuff but an unfolding without any requirement for story.

The witness accepts whatever the mover does. The role does not require any judgement or critique. They are there to witness and to be able to relate something of what they saw back to the mover.

The witness is not a passive role. It is an active and quite complex role.

December 3rd, 2019, Studio on the Green

Orientation: Continuation of witnessing

Breath

Breath exercise: This can be done as a group, but it is not necessary to syn the breathing.

Move for the duration of the out breath. Pause for the in breath or a little longer, then move again on the out breath. Repeat and keep going with it.

Sense the stillness and movement of the others in the group without needing to relate to it. Let each new configuration be sensed in stillness before another change.

Reverse the task so that you move only on the in breath. How is this different?

Internal Shaping

Two roles: Mover and Witness. Duration 5 minutes.

- i) *If the mover has attended the previous session, they can choose to move from any place in the body. The most important thing being that you locate a place and are clear about it. If the mover is doing this practice score for the first time, then begin by working with the heart.*

The witness can choose to witness from one position for 5 mins or change positions, change level, be close up or far away.

Before commencing acknowledge each other by exchanging eye contact. When the 5 minutes is up, close the activity by again exchanging eye contact.

- ii) *Duration 3 minutes*
The 'witness' reflects back through movement.
The mover becomes the witness here.
Remember to exchange eye contact at the opening and close.

- iii) *Duration 7 minutes: This is a variation on the last session.*
The first mover revisits their moving with the witness resuming their first role.
After some minutes, the witness can join in with the mover and follow where it goes.

Notes:

As we were three people for this session, we had one mover and two witnesses.

For those that knew the structure and practice from the last session, this was a good augmentation. For the person coming to this for the first time, having two witnesses reflecting back was a lot of information to digest. So, working initially with one witness and progressing to two is the most useful. It was suggested that after part ii) the mover could join in with the witnesses and start their revisiting of the material from there rather than going back to soloing.

For those that had done the practice before it was wonderful to see two witnesses. It became a whole composition. A further development would be for the witnesses to somehow unsettle or disrupt the mover so that a change takes place. This is a possible structure for a choreography.

February 4th, 2020, Studio on the Green

Orientation: Reorientation, drawing on what Steve Paxton describes as “the dark side” of the body’ (Morrisey and Bige in Contact Quarterly Summer/Fall 2017 p.22)

Beginnings

Start sitting back -to -back, breathing into each other’s backs.

Gather data, information through your partner’s back, get to know your back through contact with someone else’s.

Repeat the above but now standing back- to -back. There is more room to move around here.

Find your dance through someone else.

‘I am [...] sensing myself through you’ (Morrisey and Bige in Contact Quarterly Summer/Fall 2017 p.22)

Progression:

‘The reversions that Steve is proposing—turning your head and discovering actually that the back of the head is doing the opposite movement—are really about that, yes. Steve even talks about Material for the Spine as being an exploration of the “dark side” of the body. That’s what we are looking for. (Morrisey and Bige in Contact Quarterly Summer/Fall 2017 p.22)

Working with directions:

- i) *Solo: Explore this idea of the back of the head looking forward, or one side of the head looking backward, etc. rather than orientating by the front of the face. Discover what it means to reveal*

those parts of ourselves we cannot see ourselves. Let the looking, the gaze be placed in the back of your head, crown of the head, sole of the foot, heel etc.

- ii) *In Two's: continue this exploration with a witness. Change roles. Discuss.*
- iii) *In Two's: This time you are both movers (there is no witness). Orientate your moving to the other person.*
- iv) *Now develop this as a group practice.*

Observations

It's hard work! Everyone was quite exhausted from the endeavour of this.

By orientating your moving differently compositions were shaped in less obvious ways. So, I might 'watch' 'see' another through the back of my head or side of my face which meant I was 'watching' attending to them but not in the usual manner – less directly, less obviously but still in relationship. This resulted in some compositional forms that were not habitual more subtle.

Stepping into

Everyone stands around the studio.

One person chimes some finger bells or strikes a small gong. Anything that will resonate. When you can no longer hear the sound, and it has died away completely, step into the space and begin to move, still working with your unseen side. People will hear the sound end at slightly different times, and this is fine. Just be authentic to your own experience. There is no need for everyone to be in sync. Follow through with what you are doing until it finds an end. Keep it simple. When the last person has finished moving. The chimes are passed to the next nearest person and the score is repeated. The person with the chimes witnesses what happens (a chance to observe rather than do).

Observations

As a simple structure this worked well and created some wonderful silences. People found it fascinating and hard work. It is the endeavour of it that is important. It offers a different place to move from. A dancer remarked that this wouldn't have happened if we hadn't done all the somatic work at the beginning of the session. Another dancer noted that from time to time she found herself in awkward positions, which was tricky, but she realised that it was something to 'enjoy' as it meant she was finding herself in unfamiliar places, that she was doing something different.