

the foreign language of motion

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PREFACE SERIES

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For Rosie, Lanie and Jeffrey

the foreign language of motion

a project from the kinesthetic archive

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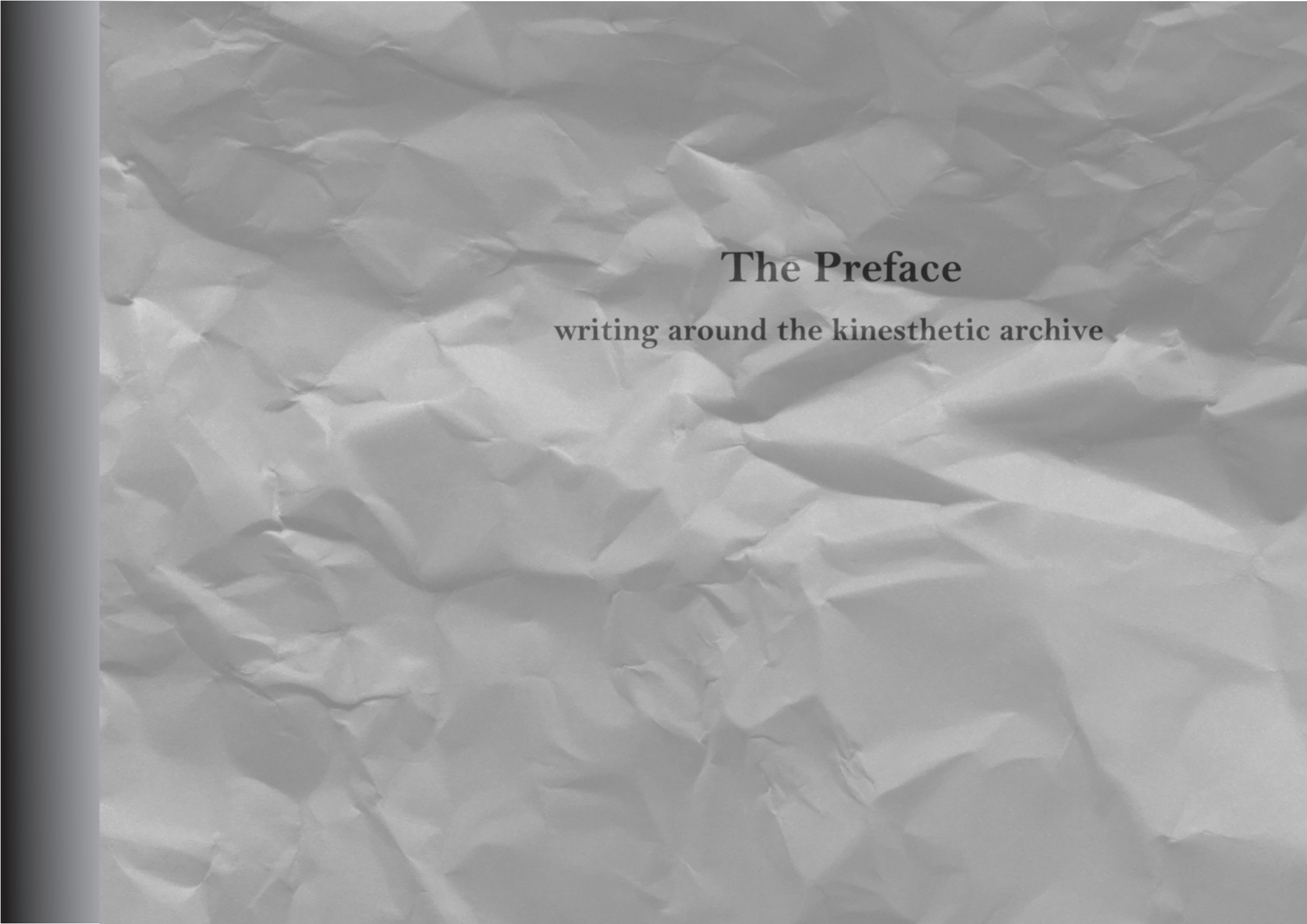
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The Preface

writing around the kinesthetic archive

The page performs the process: choreographing journal notes

After an extended period of writing, editing, experimenting with book design and developing choreographic material in collaboration with these texts, I sit at my desk with *the kinesthetic archive book* and consider what I have done, in the form of a list.

this book is :

*an attempt
a following
a tracking
a listening
an attending
an articulation
a partial archive of movement
an experiment in documentation
an interactive object
activated by touch and sight
a refined presentation of selected journal notes
a form of translation
a form of transliteration
an event
a response
a product of two years of sustained dance practice*

this book is not :

*a representation
a description
a duck or animal (or other obvious thing that it is not such as an umbrella or cake)
a substitution for dancing
involved in killing or otherwise maiming any of the dance ideas that initiated it*

And now it sits in your hands. Time stretches between us, you might know approximately how much, but I don't, not from here. How many hours away from here are you? How many breaths? How many memories? How many kilometers? How many swallows (counting yours and mine together)? Heartbeats? Days? Years? Decades? Months? Tsunamis? Tornados? Holidays? Sleeps? How many academic trends? How many extraordinary and discipline-changing bodies of research? This project aims to contribute to a growing body of research advocating for and providing specific examples of creative practice research with the assumption that practice-led methods of producing knowledge and theory open generative spaces for thought, practice, critical thinking and education. This essay is in two parts, a book of experimental writing referred to as *the kinesthetic archive book*, and a contextual essay folded before and after it. Together these form *the foreign language of motion*. Which opens up a space for you to encounter some of the how's and why's behind the choreographic provocations that form *the kinesthetic archive book*. It discusses specific methodologies for studio practice (and processes of writing out of studio practice) in relation to critical theory and the fields of performance and dance studies. Welcome. Come on in.

Arrival

I go to begin this writing – to greet you, the reader. You are reading this alongside the pages of *the kinesthetic archive book*, as it is intended not to be read by itself but in relationship to a body of performance writing. This is one of very many times that I have written this act of introducing, in a process of searching for a specific tone, a specific voice, a specific mode of invitation, a way of setting out a plan for what will become a cooperative series of relationships between events, pages and readings.

I went to begin but the font was wrong. Cambria is the font this device automatically sets to, but a font inappropriate for this project. After changing to 'Bell MT' we can begin. Why is it a font can invite or distract a reader from a pathway of text, a writer from writing?

I've written out various notes on various pieces of paper. This act of typing and this particular font are helping to organize and to (hopefully) progress what began as a sketch with language. I've been reading Mathew Goulish's careful and lyrical excavation on the act of beginning in his book *39 Microlectures in proximity of performance* (Goulish 2000). The beginning of a performance denotes that which is to come, tells what kind of stories form the doorway to a work.

This critical essay is situated in the field of practice-led research. So I guess you have figured out that

I'm starting out with the practice that underpins the story of the research and the processual story of how that research comes to be written.

Performance and writing in the context of practice-led research

There is a growing body of research through practice that explores, as performance theorist Susan Melrose would put it, practitioner-theoretical modes of research. Hasemen (2007) discusses the term practice-led research as a relatively recent methodological term that “asserts the primacy of practice and insists that because creative practice is both ongoing and persistent, practitioner researchers do not merely “think” their way through or out of a problem, but rather they “practice” to a resolution” (Haseman, 2007, p.147). In dance studies, the practice of dance as a form of knowledge has led to a paradigm shift that has challenged logocentric assumptions of knowledge and created space for embodied, transitional, relational and live research work. Performance researcher Carol Brown discusses this move as embracing the “messy materiality of bodies” (Brown, 1997, p.135) and the complexity, ambiguity and ephemerality of dance processes and their modes of articulation. As this paradigm has grown, so have the number of rich examples of practice-led dance research and the diverse range of writing about practices, rehearsal processes, collaborative forms of decision-making and other forms of knowledge particular to performance making. Informed by the work of researchers such as Susan Melrose, there has been a shift in the paradigm from spectator studies of completed performances to engagement with studio practices as research. Despite these developments Melrose (2002, 2006) proposes that the field of performance studies continues to be in need of language to discuss the specificity of practitioner-based processes such as intuition and other forms of disciplinary specific decision-making. She asks; “How might we identify the expert knowledge-practices, their operations and boundary-markers, within work which we also require to be challenging, innovative, and to offer new insights? And what might be its most productive relationship with writing?” (Melrose, 2002, p.4). Writers Peggy Phelan, André Lepecki and Rebecca Schneider are central protagonists in such debates. Phelan’s seminal argument in *unmarked: the ontology of performance*, (1993) has been so widely quoted that it is now difficult to find citation of her work without reference to its academic popularity.¹ Let’s hear it again.

Performance’s only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and

lessens the promise of its own ontology. Performance's being, like the ontology of subjectivity proposed here, becomes itself through disappearance. (Phelan, 1993, p.146)

Phelan's creation of a binary between performance and acts of documentation refuses to recognize ways in which documentation itself might be seen as performative. This tendency is echoed in Andr  Lepecki's essay *Inscribing Dance* (Lepecki, 2004) in which Lepecki traces the roots of the documental tradition in dance to a desire to correct the 'flaw' of its materiality, preventing dance from gaining validity as a form of knowledge. Lepecki discusses how ephemerality, the very trope that documental traditions aim to prevent, is reframed by a Derridean theoretical approach that,

means to throw the presentness of the verb *to be* into the space of friction between writing and dance, a space mediated by gendered bodies as systems of exchange, as practices of counterfeiting, as spaces of troubling restlessness through which dance's presence becomes undecidable, multiple, lawless, a presence whose present can point simultaneously toward yet unthinkable ontological coimpossibilities of pastness, presentness, and futurity. (2004, p.137)

Lepecki and Phelan argue for the ephemerality of dance as a powerful theoretical tool wherein dance's disappearance constitutes its most generative feature. This recognition of live performance has served to validate the work of live artists and to support the notion that a defining aspect of performance lies in its "resistance to linguistic grasping" (Lepecki, 2004, p.139) as a performance cannot be caught, held or made available to history by language. To attempt to do so is a form of violence to the ontology of performance.

This argument has been strongly debated and problematized by performance researchers who consider documentation not only an integral element of a practitioner's work, but a form of performance in itself. *the kinesthetic archive project* is concerned with practitioner-led approaches to performance writing rather than documentation per se and proceeds from a number of questions. It asks: How might writing slip from its documenting, historicizing bounds to enter into the slippery ontology of performance? Can writing make itself disappear?

I am imagining academic writing as a monster ready to eat anything in its path – including, and maybe especially, dance. By the time this rhetorical style and its grammatical forms are done with a dance, all the life will be sucked out of it. Perhaps practice-led researchers create well-intentioned monsters, monsters trying to change their ways by confronting logocentricity and advocating for

the knowledge-producing value of embodied and material knowledges, but which somehow become monsters nevertheless. Just like this essay is. Just like, perhaps, academic research has to be. Does it? In any case, writing has indeed been cast as monstrous – or at least violent – in its ability to disfigure, maim and destroy the life of live arts. But are monsters always bad? Don't we need monsters in the same way we need failure?² Don't monsters offer spaces for imagining and becoming?

And isn't writing one of the central practices underpinning vast amounts of creative work? Both Lepecki and Phelan gesture toward the potential for a non-documental mode of writing, a writing that is performative rather than constative³. A writing of movement rather than fixity. A writing of erasure rather than presence. A writing towards multiplicity rather than singular memory.

Interconnections between dance and writing have been conceptualized in diverse ways, for example as external to the ontology of performance and a betrayal of the live, (Phelan, 1993), as “a translation of live art into dead records” (Heathfield, 1997, para. 1) as a form of listening (Minnick, 2003), as a “record and a tool of making decisions about the nature of the work” (Lycouris, 2000, para. 1) “as markers and traces to be used as triggers and stimuli, as a catalyst to artistic creation” (DeLahunta et al, 2004, p.68), and as “a tablet for physicalizing thought without full-bodied dancing” (McGregor in DeLahunta et al, 2004, p.69). Choreographer DD Dorveller articulates a methodology for studio practice wherein moving, talking, touching and writing are given equal priority and time, with the travel of ideas between forms central to the movement of research. She describes her workshop process as aiming,

to understand assumptions about style, body, self, technique, unspoken rules, expertise, et cetera. The aim is to proliferate unexpected results, to try many things quickly, and to foment revolution. We will explore moving, touching, talking, and writing, together and alone. Please don't come without a notebook and a pen, and wear clothes you can do these things in (Dorveller, 2012).

Creating a practice generative of unexpected results demands a strange combination of adherence to structure and commitment to breaking or redefining it. For Dorveller, the travel of ideas between different formal logics creates spaces for dance research to occur.

the kinesthetic archive project seeks to explore movement-initiated writing practices by researching methodologies that continue the trajectory of performance logics to the site of the page and to the body of the book. It asks: How might dance practice initiate a creasing and folding of language?

It investigates ways in which movement practice might enable, create and be in direct relationship with page-related practices, and interrogates methodologies for employing specific technical/ formal/ stylistic approaches to performance writing. The relationship between kinesthesia and text, the ethics of translation, writing the somatic and the affective play of drawing are key subjects in this essay. *the kinesthetic archive book* explores a design concept concerned with how a page might engage with transition and mobility through attending to aesthetic properties such as surfaces and layers within page design. The methodology for developing this book utilized a process of gleaning ideas, by valuing small details, notes, drawings, memories, images, and conversations, as these gesture towards an understanding of how the logic of dance thinking mutates over time in a highly specific (and often elusive) way. It presents fragments of choreographic materials from an ongoing dance practice, with a focus on affect, partial stories, evoking somatic or virtual moments rather than narrative or description. Kinesthetic and sensory modes of movement practice are attended to in writing, and in page design. They travel through the texture or grain of particular vowels, through the spatial choreography of letters weighted by or floating on surfaces. This essay will refer you to specific pages in *the kinesthetic archive book* as specific instances or examples create the structure of this writing.

Solo in Duet Form, p. 4-23

Solo in duet form is a rehearsal process of interdependent independence - Valerie Smith and I rehearse together because it is easier than rehearsing alone. We work on separate solos, with the intention to perform them together. We warm up together, work independently for a long stretch, share our work in process and collaborate on different means of documentation and feedback for each other.

Our studio practice has continued over ten years. A strong sense of shared knowledge and unspoken understanding permeates our work together. As I watch Val's movement, I often write and draw my thoughts, and I weave her feedback into my movement between pages and studio spaces. It is this writing that forms Section One of *the kinesthetic archive book*. This kind of automatic writing and drawing functions through the openness of its form, through an insistence on writing into the unknown. Philosopher Rebecca Solnit, in her book *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* (Solnit, 2006) discusses the importance of the unknown in philosophy and creative practice, in response to a question of the pre-Socratic philosopher Meno:

How will you go about finding that thing the nature of which is totally unknown to you? (Meno, cited in Solnit, 2006, p.4)

The *Solo in Duet Form* practice that Val and I developed over many years provided a way in which we could support each other to find that unknown thing. Page 14 of *the kinesthetic archive book*, *Wednesday May 10 2006 4:36 pm* presents a rumination on improvisation. We deliberately go into a space without a particular score or intention, and begin with waiting, with listening intently to the particular moment. There is a sense of phenomenological description here, of bracketing the etiquettes of the world out in order to attend to one moment in its particularity. This page echoes the way in which my consciousness shifts with physical sensation in performance improvisation. This text is written in the second person, a writer describing herself as if through another's eyes – “You are waiting like a fisherman, for a call from beneath the sea of your skin”. This authorial technique echoes performing with concurrent awarenesses; the awareness of sensation and feeling from inside the body, and the awareness of how one's movement phrase is being read by another. This evocation of a performer's dual attention is clear in the line, “Intently listening, listening intently. You are this and that and the other thing, pale and how your hair moves when you shift the momentum of your neck”. The ‘listening intently’ referred to here refers to attention that shifts from the dancer describing herself as an object or thing with an external focus (‘how your hair moves’) to a somatic focus (‘when you shift the momentum of your neck’). This transition occurs in very few words, just as a dancer moves between states of attention with fluidity.

This shifting from the somatic sense to the sense of being witnessed is inherent throughout the *Solo in Duet Form* structure. Sharing the rehearsal space (whether towards solo or shared research or performance outcomes) allows us to recognize crucial moments in each other's work – often just as one of us is at the point of discarding material and beginning again, the other recognises a valuable point of development and something on the verge of loss is saved.

Remembering Scott Smith	33
Architecture of the bones	34
(the possible is a memory, to have it)	35
that to capture	36
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Watching Emma Strapps	50

Intro 1.

A procedure in touching the edges of a given concept



The foreign language of motion



Traversing uneven surfaces of sound



"This is a document made from the idea of glass"



~~Studio Practice 6 December~~ Intro 2

How to create space around the muscles of the eyes? Drawing
eyelashes and eyebrows away from each other



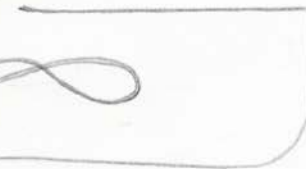
Relationships with objects that underpin the day



Discontinuous levels of energy



And then when you hear it the second
time you've already gotten it into your body



As we mix voices together



Travelling toward volume



So many variables you
watch the accidental
enter your vision and
also the moment the bodies meet
match, disengage, enter and reenter thought up skins

Almost like evening. Let returning be.
Janet well, no y.
Actually something disobedient,
the porcupine addiction
shine song repeat in my brain
almost like night
something in me returning,
desire for an Almost
something in me turning
almost like returning

The transformation of the face
in the act of seeing.

Connecting the wrist with the
forehead, a simple act.

The words I memorised from Val's
choreographic feedback,

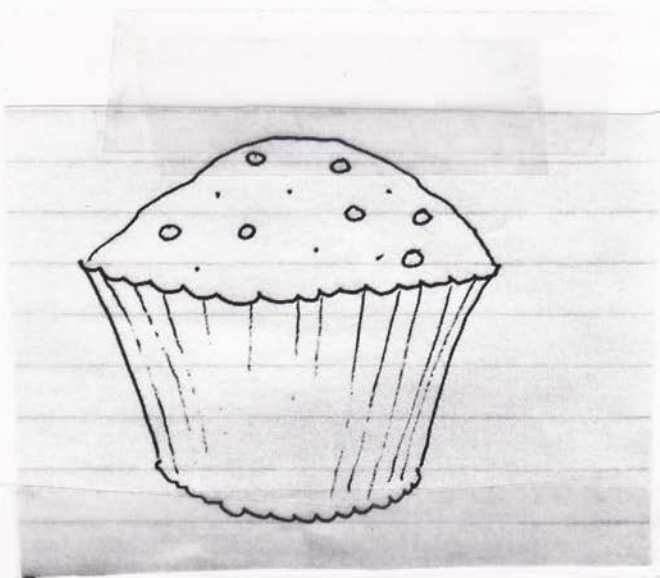
"It comes up past the perineum, past the heart, and out through the top of
the head, and your right had just
reflects that, it's quite tense."

Tension in the spine. Controlling the
weight of the head on the
small cervical vertebrae,
balancing the weight of the
brain. Counterbalanced.

Valerie's response to Alys Dancing

3 August

You were restrained
in a dining area that
I called a living
room and there were
cakes that were too small
and rigidly made
and tightly iced.



To be flattened

by the series of expansions
your work has become.

Adding words to yourself.

Strange doorways.

Entry points to rain.

You are trying
 to find
 the iceberg
 buried in the history of your gestures.

To locate the
 floating ice that memory
 places behind its screens

Almost impossible

Intention
 and
 action
 and
 memory

You can't reach anything here but
 you have reached a standstill

You can't reach anything here
 but you have reached
 the standstill
 you were trying to find

and then and
 then and
 then and

then and stand still

In the absence
of sound you
are surrounded by
the texture of two
hours worth of sounds

In the absence of sound you are surrounded by the texture of two
hours worth of sounds.

Wednesday May 10 2006 4:36pm

You are waiting like a fisherman. You are waiting like a fisherman for a call from beneath the sea of your skin. Intently, listening, listening, intently. You are this and that and the other thing, pale and how your hair moves when you shift the momentum of your neck. This and this and this. Crepuscular time. Blossoms of last minutes before your phrase will end,

seconds ticking by. And then what. Outside you hear cars. Your hands are at your ears and then what and then you can hear less. Eyes are closed tired eyes from upright to here, two lengths of minutes. Lengthening with daylight's measure

Daylight comes in measured lengths
Daylight comes in measured lengths

3 May 2006

I write quickly, hoping this
will give me the time
to search with these
words for the thing I
need to hear myself
say. Keep the letters
before you. Think
after you write. Think
after them.

hoping

3

them

hoping
them
give
to

1. The tasting of skin surface
2. Transformed face
3. Wrist to forehead.
4. Searching for the contents of a dream
5. The invasive obsessions of touch
6. The out-breath of balance
7. How tightly you hold the intensity of the stars
8. Lines between points. Points of intensity. Of still intensity
11. Every time you love it is a corner.
18. The heavy weight of a bear's throat
19. Sudden clicks of rhythm. Staccato stops. Many of which create bent rhythms.
21. And then endowed with this fluidity, this gathering time, this gathering time, bent time.
23. god ground gulp gate give gift get
24. Anything Anything Anything
25. Everything Everything Everything
27. Flick this strangely coloured light from my heart please and watch it leave
28. The space between the pads of your feet and the floor carries the pronunciation of hours.

was
I[^] watching your
eyes in the
wall of your
body as it
breathed

I was watching your eyes in the
wall of your body as it breathed.

Sometimes I

am

Sometimes I am blind and I try to find you.
Sometimes I fall backwards into empty space,
unsure of my own periphery. I am at home here
with you in this space with new spaces in all its
pockets. You jump on a pocket and you enter a
new landscape.

&

I

try

to

find



the alphabet is a collection of kinesthetic properties

the timbre of the bones of the feet



The frames of each duty, the light
reflected off white vehicles.
I dreamt I shot myself in the
back, and if I danced, I could
die. Why did I do that to
myself? Was it some kind of way
of saving myself from other agonies?
The glint of white vehicles.
The violence we can only conceive of in dreams.

if you say so i turn only 5 times, 5 years old, 5
simple actions to show distress i understand y
our quandry i want to say sure i want to see th
e sea shore and i want. Black food. Grass in a
mple measure and the seed enclosed in your h
ands. We began early and we end early in yest
erday's concepts. How singular can a touch be
how direct in its notion of the proximities of b
elonging together. Through time. Place can it e
ver be irrelevant. The need for more time. For
every unexpected process to sound its measure

as they fell out of themselves
& into each other

Remember when we were in the train station and you noticed how differently the clock sounded at the different numbers— the sound for 4 was different to the sound of 5. And you reckoned if we were blind we could tell what numbers the clock was saying by the sound the numbers made as they fell out of themselves and into each other.

The sound of 4 turning
Into 5, the sound of 1 turning
Into 2, the sound of 7 turning
Into 8.

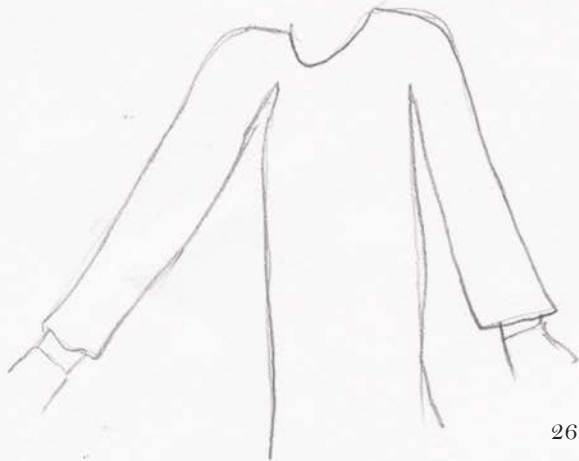
5:28pm

as they fell out of themselves
& into each other

There is nothing
missing
I have walked every stitch that you sewed
Your drifting attachment to this earth
Pulled threads
We shed our skins with every step,
and at night
we complete our clothes

For the new day

The amount of leaving held within a
body, this I am measuring with my
wrists, with my arms.
Not alone. The pads of your feet
Walked upon my skin which so
wished you beside me.
You can measure these things blindfolded.
You can sense where the creases of
the past are folded within you.



Falling petals
Drummed against me
From the cherry shadows
of the window's tree
petals calmly
embraced in the fall of the wind
caught here
(all dancers show one cupped, outstretched wrist)
and here
(all dancers place one hand to indicate the right shoulder joint)
and here
(all dancers turn to show the back of the neck)

if they keep holding me in like this then I shall die
relentlessly
the moon will say
she fell and fell against the petals

Circle

This is a place with paper walls

Made stronger with each memory

Surround me in that which is infinite

I want always to have the moments of our past

Rain up on me unexpectedly

(& sing me whole)

Remembering Scott Smith

Loss of control
Responding to tasks
Response to stimulus
Noticing and shifting habits

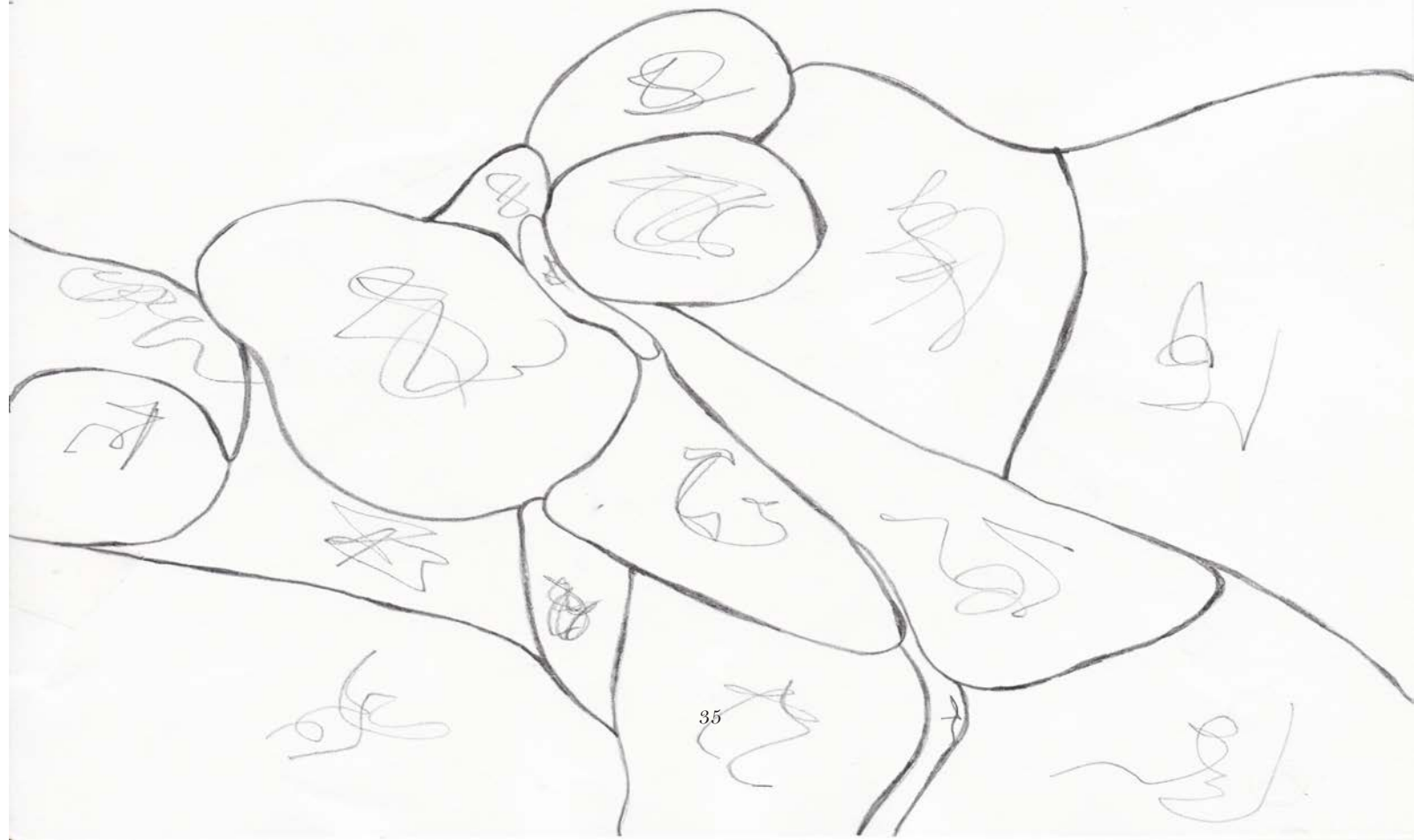
finding
ways
to
participate
in
activities
so
that
something
new
can
happen

Experience of the body as reflex
Making a space for possible newness
Moving more like I'm thinking not how
I'm expecting to move

1. architecture of the bones
2. distal ends
3. motion and rest
4. the ends of the earth
5. water turning backwards
6. spirals through the spine
7. temperature of skin
8. muscles wrapping
9. feedback circuits
10. the information of the sound of your movement in the space
11. the diaphragm moving down
12. the sense of breathing in through your navel and letting your weight drop to the floor
13. the spine as a limb
14. kinesthetic analogues

~~Kinesthetic Archive 2~~

The separate being of the spine it
reminds your body of the
(the possible is a memory, to have it)
experience of me, of continents
is separation,
an independence of bones therein



That to capture
something
Mostly to notice it
is enough

What is it
to notice something?

Cessna, 300, 350, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

Watching Catalina

1. Which way does the water run in Uruguay?
2. 4 circles of your hair
3. Topography of skin, clothing surface, soft cotton
4. Iguana shedding skin
5. Eyelash to shoulder blade
6. The grammar of bones
7. Sympathy
8. Recognise the state of sympathy
9. Everything has many halves
10. Volume of space
11. Careful bones
12. Lists of aeroplanes from all over the world
Take off is a philosophy of folding
And perhaps engines lie in the eyelashes, like time
Caretaker of the space you quietly watch over
What these soft tissues might become
13. Flamenco dancing and cups of coffee prepared by
teams of dressmakers sewing the seams of the skin awake
14. The plate before the heart
15. Counting reeds or stones
Images of rivers
16. What it is to stand
17. The temperature of the hands upon skin
18. Edging a stream of light through a dark space

DC10, Bo
300's, A
3,000's, A

200's,
200's,
777,

787 (coming soon) airbuses, A320, A321,
A330, A340, DC3, DC4, DC8, DC10,
MD80's, F27, F28, F50, F100, Embraer
(Brazilian) ATR's (European) Dornier
Dash 8, Dash 7, BAE146 (British Aerospace)

Notes on BMC workshop

The insides of bones

The architecture of the inner ear

Ruffini's End Organ

The angles of joints

The tonality of motion

Not inhibiting but riding

Bone is very vascularized tissue

Fluid wave in the canal of the ear

Degrees of sensation

The skin as envelope

3.
time exhumes
architecture of its
steadfastness, all becomes
mobile. I'm waiting for the ribs to
open their brows, listening
intently with the pads of
fingers, the trees of nerves
flags for release

4.
muscles support differently
and structure changes,
you are in your
weight anew

5.
vibrations of sound in the blood

this very detailed shaking of cells

a patterned code clinging

to tissues of memory

endless library of time and

times consequences

2.
working with visual sense as an
architecture that you're constructing and
deconstructing in movement exploration

dark sand dreams
rinse distance
alone, perhaps effort

stone touch
touch stone

senses evidence salt
earlier perhaps
late afterwards

stone touch
touch stone

the zoologist in the story
a boat, a sea
rinse me in your dark sand dreams

touch stone touch stone



29 July 2006, Teaching Dance 201, Creative Practice

Have

You are not going to have to show
anyone she said and then

Can't breathe and then breathing
more. The lessons of the flesh

Undoing information from the
lined pages of memory.

**Response to Brent Harris's Installation Work
CNZ offices**

September 06

The space moved into being another space by these generous disruptions these exacerbated distances ~~between words and ears and then~~ the linking of disparate things. By the end a new fracturing, in the rhythm of interruption, slightly anew the space and our skins, explained into humour, into resting into leaving, the mechanics of generosity, placed in this barely comprehensible order, and what you see is order itself.

Notes fr

om site specific workshop

14/9/06

Kate in and out
Kate watching Maia
Maia in and out
Maia head back on railing
Bon across space
Rachelle in background
Kate across on climbing wall
Bon in and out
Repeated motion
Kate going forward as F Bon went back
Bon as archway, lying across space
J Perspective
Kate Bon Maia trio
isolated body parts
Bon and Val/ Rachelle and Samara
Val walking down stairs quartet
diagonal line
pointing motif
Val looking up. Rachelle to Bon
Bon speak
Samara tracking
Samara exit
Bon, Val, Rachelle trio
Samara in and out
Rachelle tracking, Val exit
Samara in background
Rachelle/Samara duet

Rehearsal Text

April 2006

Find a point of stillness near another body
Notice your weight, rises and falls
Notice your breath, rises and falls
Notice yourself blinking.
Can you sense the breathing of the person before you
without moving your eyes?

Can you feel interrupted from your body? Like
it's an object quite separate to you?
Can you feel as though your skull is hollow?
Notice the you-ness, the inseparateness
Notice your fingernails, the back of your ribs
Look away from the person beside you,
Imagine her heart beating

Let your imagination range to the earth below
this building, and the sky outside and above it,
our bodies in this suspended, gravity filled
space we call air.
See the earth and sky without seeing them.
See each other without seeing each other
See yourself without seeing yourself.

creasing: Density. The folding back circle around weight of half of pelvis moves other half. Throat transitions the opening of arm blade

Dropped and held at once tense
and circling at
once reaching, softly she
steadies gravity's existence.

Fingertips reach toward the weighted illusion
of openness, turn the protective enclosure
of ribs as they float and fall, float and fall, a
zoo encasing the animals of the organs

Pelvis smoothly run its anchor out, connects
distal ends of fingertips to edges of sphere
Plates of bones press
and release constantly.

Very strong arteries. Phone wire ligaments.
Messages so clear they are unsettling.
Open all accounts to light. Press to earth, typed by breath.

Tuck the pressure of wrist
under and feel the blood pumping
in the veins, birdlike aligned
beside brachial artery, briefly.

Femur leans soft ribs receive
Swing around to give and take and take and give and
take and take and give and give and take the hand outreaches

birds wrist only just traced bleach

Subtle thoughts of a mouth, memory fed.
Pressure along elbow to engage the lymph nodes, press
and rolled dough. Every pore made awake and stretched,

walking, fed, away.



Afterword

Movement-initiated writing

We are living at a time when a vast amount of performance practices and theories have been explicitly complicating the never simple relations between pastness, historicity, memory, and archiving with notions of presentness, futurity, movement, forgetting and destruction. Mediating all these poles, writing appears as a dynamic, hyper-kinetic operator that draws from its constitutive mobility its full performative force. (Lepecki, 2008, p. 2)

In his more recent work André Lepecki (2008) elucidates writing as a form of movement. His discussion of writing as a 'hyper-kinetic force' draws attention to potentials for writing to move strongly outside its documenting tendencies into a more complex and slippery play with readers. A key element of this mobility might be considered to be in writing that crosses disciplinary boundaries and textual conventions. It is common for practice-led research projects to generate writing from the site of the studio and for the resultant writing to reflect and develop performance logics and concepts (Brown, 1999; Ellis, 2005; Forti, 2003a, 2006; Crisp and Ginot, 2007; Minnick, 2003). The term documentation is often employed in reference to methods for gathering together process-based notes and reflections in a form that allows processual knowledge to travel past the site of the rehearsal space. This term also refers to highly formalized notation systems (such as Laban notation) that are designed to facilitate the reproduction of choreography through time. The multiple agendas and purposes at work within the field of performance documentation has led to critiques by leading performance theorists who claim that documentation is outside of the ontology of performance, yet, as performance researchers such as Simon Ellis, Sophia Lycouris and Rebecca Schneider assert, documentation is folded into the development of performance in innumerable ways. Ellis writes that,

not only is it important to generate new methods for representing experience, but the process of representing experience changes that experience, *and* it alters our very processes of understanding. This presents a context for imagining an interdependent relationship between liveness and documentation, in which new representational practices offer an experiential means of entering the project's *domain*. (Ellis, 2005, p.36, authors' emphasis)

Rebecca Schneider's (2008) article *The Document Performance* discusses the potential for methods of documentation to be understood as performances in themselves. According to Schneider, the blurring

of documentation and performance practices “raises tantalizing questions about the duration of performance; about the limits or limitlessness of liveness; and about the trajectory of a scene into its playing and replaying across hands and eyes that encounter it *still* in circulation” (Schneider, 2008, p.118).

In order to highlight this study’s focus on process based, practitioner-led experience, the term movement-initiated writing refers to a dance writing practice in which:

- The practices of embodied performance practice and writing are imbricated in each other. If the writer has not participated as an active practitioner in the creative practice work of which they write, they are working in the more general field of documentation, rather than movement-initiated writing.
- An emergent methodology is followed – that is, writing emerges out of attention to performance logics. Unexpected, illogical, random, poetic and incoherent streams of text and drawing are invited as a way to generate process specific vocabularies.
- Writing might merge with drawing or other forms of image or meaning-making. This studio practice invites in a mixed-media approach, in which forms overlap and extend each other.
- The purpose of writing is to contribute to the development of performance logics. Movement-initiated writing aims to feed, develop, extend and/or refine dance ideas from the site of the studio.

In a call for contributors to a practice-led working group entitled *Silent Voices, Forbidden Lives, A Participatory Lab* performance researcher Baz Kershaw identified – “three types of member participation, defined as observer or documenter, or, for want of a better word, ‘rapturor’ (from ‘rapt’, i.e, prepared for total involvement in the manner of an actor/ performer in rehearsal)” (Kershaw, 2009). Movement-initiated writing practices emerge through what Kershaw would describe as the ‘rapturor’ position, wherein dancers are immersed in a given creative process and write from inside the work. Perhaps to write something monstrous, perhaps not.

Performance knowledges and logics

Practice-led research has rapidly grown over the last two decades as have modes of philosophy that recognize embodied processes as sites of knowledge where meaning is actively generated, critiqued and developed. Despite these developments, on beginning this project it wasn’t obvious to me how I might create space for studio-led meanings alongside critical writing. How to acknowledge knowledge

gleaned through dance practice? This has demanded I actively resist ‘proper’ methods of academic writing, and invent alternative writing practices. The opening paragraph of an early attempt read:

As a researcher writing dance practice, am I expected to only include writing about dance in literature reviews and to ignore information that I have received in movement, or through informal discussion with other dancers? It seems that to do so would be to ignore a wide range of extremely relevant information. Yet to include dance workshops, classes and conversations demands a particular style of writing – one that diverts from the academic standard – as academic writing has traditionally attempted to exhume influence of the moving body, and what I am attempting is to invite it. Inviting the moving body into text may mean the writing is as unstable as it is stable, as rhythmic as a heartbeat, as able to stretch and lengthen as the tissues that support the skeleton. We are compressed and we expand in relation to our environment, and in bodywork it is often the case that a surprising amount of space is found in the sensation of reaching or lengthening in what we can feel that we know.

In her discussion of the 2003 Practice as Research in Performance Conference, Bella Merlin writes, “Acknowledgment was made of the fact that much of the knowledge gained through practical research may not be linguistically available to us – indeed should we be trying to look for its logical articulation?” (Merlin, 2004, p. 44). Eight years later, performance writers have stretched and expanded approaches to practice and writing in ways that evoke somatic, studio-based and intuitive forms of performance knowledge. The question of whether it is of use to search for “logical articulation” is a recurring one, which offers two immediate pathways of response. Firstly, a yes or no answer as to whether logical articulation is of any use to performance research. The second pathway might be to give up the logical articulation and find out what can be articulated of performance work when traditionally academic logics fail, but other things become clear.

The challenge of writing about performance making from a practitioner’s perspective is also a pragmatic one, and lies in finding an approach to the page that generates and enables creative practice, identifying the words, syntax, grammar through which to connect virtual and material pages with the rich and complex world of studio-based interaction and decision-making. I have chosen the term ‘performance logics’ as a way to refer to modes of thinking or knowledge that are particular to embodied studio practices. Examples of such ‘logics’ are multitudinous, but might include conceptual pathways, atmospheres, somatic qualities, aesthetic concerns and spatial designs. Dance academic Anna Pakes writes of choreographic logic in relation to the history of logic studies in philosophy, in order

to elucidate “the choreographer-researcher’s claim to knowledge” (Pakes, 2009, p.10). She identifies the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis* as one that helps to identify the epistemological value of the choreographer-as-researcher’s work (p. 20).

The kind of research needed in this domain is ... a creative sensitivity to circumstances as they present themselves. *Phronesis* is not concerned so much with general principles, universal laws or causal understanding, but rather with what *cannot* be generalized. It is a kind of attunement to the *particularities* of situations and experiences, requiring subjective involvement rather than objective detachment; and it has an irreducibly personal dimension in its dependence upon, and the fact that it folds back into, subjective and intersubjective experience. (Pakes, 2009, p.19, authors’ emphasis)

Discussion of performance logics in this project align with Pakes’ articulation of phronetic knowing, as this study emphasizes emergent, particular, subjective and intersubjective knowledge. Such knowledge arises through practical wisdom in which there is no consistent rule to guide decision-making. Rather, a guiding logic is informed by specific aesthetic and kinesthetic concepts that change radically from project to project.

The Collins Paperback Dictionary defines the term logics as “a particular system of reasoning” that could relate to “the interdependence of a series of events or facts” (Collins, 1999, p.473). The ‘system of reasoning’ that leads from one idea to another in dance practice is very particular – both in terms of practices specific to the broad field of dance and in terms of the enormous diversity of ways that dance practitioners generate their work. This way of considering the movement of performance concepts recognises both the singularity of processes and the possibility that specific tactics can be adapted to new creative sites. As Hélène Cixous writes, “what I have to tell you cannot be generalized but it can be shared” (Cixous, cited in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.192”).

John Hyde Preston: But what if when you tried to write, you felt stopped, suffocated, and no words came and if they came at all they were wooden and without meaning? What if you had the feeling you would never write another word?

Gertrude Stein: Preston, the way to resume is to resume. It is the only way. So how can you know what will be? What will be best in it is what you really do not know

now. If you knew it all it would not be creation, but dictation. (Preston and Stein, cited in Simon, 1994, p.155-156)

In his book *Parables for the Virtual* (Massumi, 2002) philosopher Brian Massumi critiques post structural discourse for its focus on how inscriptive processes of language prevent rather than open up spaces for consideration of the sensorial implications of the body. He discusses the philosophical implications of allowing meaning to be unstable and proposes a practice of writing which moves from theories of positioning and inscription, to ones of transition and mobility. He argues that the complexity of these processes of movement engender ontological insights that offer fertile ground for philosophy. In order to create space for transition, sensation, and movement Massumi proposes that writing must entail risk:

The writing tries not only to accept the risk of sprouting deviant, but also to invite it. Take joy in your digressions. Because that is where the unexpected arises. That is the experimental aspect. If you know where you will end up when you begin, nothing has happened in the meantime. You have to be willing to surprise yourself writing things you didn't think you thought. (Massumi, 2002, p.18)

In as far as belief is a reliable form of manifesting the desire for a possible world, she believes in everyday tactics. That different kinds of writing create spaces for different kinds of thinking. That the way written words play against each other creates affective conceptual spaces. That the daily practice of writing allows one to experiment with different kinds of doings through different kinds of writing. That by experimenting with what writing can do, practice-led researchers might find registers of writing to support and articulate different kinds of creative logic.

The moment you go to write there is a moment of pause, of positioning yourself inside the imminent text, finding a voice or engaging with the arrangement of a multiplicity of voices. In the book *Certain Fragments* Tim Etchells describes how, in writing, the choice of pronoun strongly affects the nature, quality, and tone of writing:

Perhaps the most useful discovery was in the writing I did describing our work at a distance – referring always to 'they', writing as if *Forced Entertainment* were some distant, semi-fictional group of people in a country far away. The distance was useful – a fictionalizing maneuver that nodded to the versional nature of all history. Along with the distance came other discoveries – a way of intercutting different voices,

different layers, eschewing a single line in favor of fragments arranged around a centre that is only ever implied. (Etchells, 1999, p.16)

Methodologies for investigating specific approaches to performance writing through this project include experimentation with: imagery, translation of somatic sensations, rhythm, page layout, authorial position (as described above in Etchell's account), voice, vocabulary, the texture and surfaces of pages, relationships to atmosphere or space. An assumption carried into this research practice is that methods for writing influence methods of creative studio practice and vice-versa.

Writing from the studio, I have found free writing allows many elements of practice to register in a single page. This involves writing into the unknown without concern for the 'rules' of writing such as grammar and punctuation, encouraging ideas to move quickly, randomly and unexpectedly. Such fluidity and mobility is central to allowing a non-linear, non-representational approach to writing to manifest in this research. A formative influence in the development of these dance-based journaling strategies has been Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones* (Goldberg, 1986). As Judith Guest writes in her forward, the value of *Writing Down The Bones* is in how it creates a sense of "giving people permission to think the thoughts that come, and to write them down and make sense of them in any way they wish" (Guest, 1986, p. xiii).

In order to allow the sense of free writing and journaling to define the style of *the kinesthetic archive book*, I have deliberately allowed certain spelling mistakes to stand uncorrected, as their pages are scanned directly from journals. This includes page 7 where "had" should read "hand", page 24, where "choreographing the body recieves loss" should read "receives loss", page 30, where "repitition" should read "repetition", and Claire Cowan's compositional score for *Circle*, in which "infinite, is spelt "infinite". The deliberate inclusion of errors in this book aims to reinforce the sense of freewriting as a writing practice that allows attention to move away from the rulebook of correct writing. It instead focuses on moving affective states toward pages, following a Deleuzian conception of style, which emphasizes the active way in which ideas come alive through the style of language writers evolve. As Deleuze writes, "Style in philosophy is the movement of concepts. This movement's only present, of course, in the sentences, but the sole point of the sentences is to give it life, a life of its own" (Deleuze, 1995, p.140). This emphasis on style highlights the processual nature of writing as opposed to conceptualizations of writing that assume knowledge is transferred to the page through a neutral language.

One's always writing to bring something to life, to free life from where it's trapped, to trace lines of flight. The language for doing that can't be a homogeneous system,

it's something unstable, always heterogeneous, in which style carves differences of potential between which things can pass, come to pass, a spark can flash and break out of language itself, to make us see and think what was lying in the shadow around the words, things we were hardly aware existed. (Deleuze, 1995, p. 141)

This idea of writing highlights the *practice* through which ideas are brought into being. Roland Barthes writes in *The Death of the Author*, that writing is drawn out of “multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue” (Barthes, 1977, p. 148). This conceptualization of practice highlights the potential co-extensiveness of dancing, writing, and everyday life. The specific approach the writer takes to the page, the way she deals with events at the periphery of her attention as she takes pen to paper, whether her expectations are ambitious or exploratory – variables that relate to the life of the practice have a strong bearing on the development and growth of written ideas. Barthes discusses “the set of those ‘rules’ which predetermine the work – and it is important to distinguish the different coordinates: working time, working space, and the action of writing itself – the ‘protocols’ of work” (Barthes, 1985, p.178).

Barthes’ notion of the ‘grain of the voice’ links to Deleuze’s conception of style and emphasizes an affective dimension or ‘grain’ that, “works at the language – not what it says, but the voluptuousness of its sounds – signifiers, of its letters” (Barthes, 1977, p.182). According to Quack (2004) Barthes’ notion of the ‘grain’ of the voice also relates to pages in sensory terms: “the grain of a Barthesian page can always be felt” (Quack, 2004, p.135). The grain is registered when a sound is heard or an image seen that cannot be registered by traditional analytical or descriptive language.

What is it that allows us to understand sound and music with our feeling bodies without words? The grain of sound goes beyond adjectives: it does not much help to describe a bee, a cello or electro-acoustic sound as ‘lovely’ or ‘loud’, whereas buzzing, because it gets closer to the original sound, is closer to the grain of the voice. (Quack, 2004, p.135)

Quack’s discussion of the grain of sound draws attention to the difference between language that describes sound, for example, via adjectives that focus on generic secondary traits such as volume, and words that ‘get closer’ to a singular quality through a poetic route that attends to felt meaning and affect.

Highlighting writing as a material, kinesthetic act, an act that is attentive to ‘the grain’, provides

writers with the agency to work rhizomatically and poetically, evoking felt affect in language, alongside tactics such as literally or linearly describing actions. In contrast to conceiving of writing as being produced through authorial knowledge formed prior to textual articulation, this project conceptualizes writing as a practice, a kinesthetic act, a mode to which there are endless approaches. A writer might assume they need to 'know' what they plan to achieve, and what kind of language they will use, before they begin to write. This is a very different model to one in which ideas are discovered through a collaboration with text, page and the variables of a moment in which an author meets the edges of her language and her knowledge through a textual practice. The approach to writing adopted here might be paralleled by an improvisatory, experimental approach to dance, wherein one's practice includes a focus on learning how to work with a state of not-knowing.

We could conceptualize *the kinesthetic archive project* as a means of creating rhizomes between processes that form dance based events and reading events. The rhizome is key in the vocabulary of terms generated by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to define specific philosophical concepts. A rhizome is a system of organization that works through interconnection and multiplicity rather than linearity and hierarchy. "Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different to the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.7). The concept of the fold also recurs throughout this thesis.

The multiple is not merely that which has many parts, but that which is folded in many ways. (Deleuze, 1991, p.228)

This concept has specific connotations within philosophical discourse. In his book *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (Deleuze, 1993), Deleuze uses this term to discuss a way of considering relationships between what we might call the virtual and the actual, the inside and the outside, or between matter and the immaterial, epitomized by Baroque thinking, particularly in the work of Leibniz's theories of architecture.

The labyrinth of continuity is not a line which would dissolve into independent points, like sand flowing in grains, but is like a piece of fabric or a sheet of paper which divides into an infinite number of folds or disintegrates into curved moments, each one determined by the consistency or the participation of its setting. (Deleuze, 1991, p.231)

Deleuze's discussion of the fold relates in many ways to this study, to the literal folding of pages as a way of creasing outside into inside, of creating conceptual and physical spaces within the object of the book and in providing a conceptual frame for considering dance and writing as folds in a trajectory of ideas rather than separate entities. This recognition of the intrinsic connectedness of things relates to the interdisciplinary practice of this research. Deleuze envisions "a Baroque line, passed down in strict accordance with the fold and which could bring together architects, painters, musicians, poets, philosophers" (Deleuze, 1991, p.241). The fields of performance writing and the artist book have both evolved through an interplay between artistic disciplines, through which, in this project, I fold dance, writing practices, and pages into a coextensive performance event that occurs when reading becomes dancing through *the kinesthetic archive book*.

Implicit in the paradigm of practice-led research methodology is an assumption that artistic practice offers a means to explore ways of theorizing and articulating knowledge that are in excess of the written. Indeed, practice-led research offers up possibilities for thinking that are non-linear and rhizomatic, that have potential to offer alternative routes through processing concepts, in contrast to the linearity of traditional academic epistemologies. *the kinesthetic archive book* aims to translate the non-linear, perhaps fragmentary, somatic, spatial, rhythmic and dynamic insights gleaned from dance research into writing practice. Songwriter P.J Harvey writes; "When I watch you move, I can't think straight" (Harvey, 2000). Might we meet our movement thinking with page works that are equally bent, corporeal and animated? And are there specific writing practices that might allow the emergence of such page spaces?

A magpie approach to dance writing, p. 47-52

Led by questions around what might be the best way to notate my reading, I asked, 'how else might dance writers integrate their reading with their creative practice?' The poem *dwelling space* (page 43) is a poetic response to Carol Brown's article (Brown, 2002) of the same name. It is an experiment with finding models for reading and responding to dance writing. *Dwelling space* offers an example of responding to Brown's research *generatively* – aiming to generate new logics and spaces for creative practice using another's language and concepts as a starting point. This method involves a rhizomatic use of language in which disjunctive, unexpected spaces between concepts create openings for new ideas to emerge. The aim is to bring qualities of experimentation from the site of the studio to the body of the book. Improvisatory tactics like repetition, re-organising the space, timing, rhythm, order, phrasing allows unpredictable spaces of practice, concepts and poetics to arise.

Pages 43-50 present experiments in writing, borrowing vocabulary, style and structure from other

writers and spaces in an effort to play with my writing habits and to develop new means of practice. Reading specific authors, seeing performances, participating in and teaching dance classes, I allowed the style of a vocabulary to wash through and unsettle my habits of writing. *After Hone Tuwhare's Rain* on page 44, for example, clearly engages with the poetic structure that defines well-known New Zealand poet Hone Tuwhare's work *Rain* - a poem about the senses' intimate knowledge of weather that reads as a kind of love poem to the rain. The rhythmic structure and vocabulary of Tuwhare's poem resound through my writing, which emerged on reflection of a dance rehearsal. The following poem on page 45, *After Yann Martel's The Life of Pi* (Martel, 2001) engages with the thematic concept of Martel's novel, but the rhythm and structure of the poem arose through dance practice. These three poems (*Dwelling Space: Carol Brown, After Hone Tuwhare's Rain, After Yann Martel's The Life of Pi*) all provide examples where an approach to writing is found in deliberately working with porousness with the vocabulary, structure, syntax and concepts of other texts, allowing new structures for movement-initiated writing to be found by experimenting with written style and form.

Performance writing and artist books

When reading this book, please take your time. Remember that you do not necessarily need to start at the beginning. Start anywhere; stop anywhere. Don't worry about reaching the end. Don't read the whole book if you don't want to. Look through the table of contents, and start at the point that sounds most interesting to you. Read one line repeatedly for two days. Do whatever you need to with this book, and if possible, do not let it damage your thoughts. Put it down, and read something else. Read this book as a creative act. (Goulish, 2000, p.3)

A book is a specific kind of order, a specific kind of contextualization, a specific kind of offering. Mathew Goulish's imperative to "read this book as a creative act" (2000, p.3) articulates an approach to reading that plays against linear, chronological structures and instead values fragments, creative disjunction and collage. In the case of *the kinesthetic archive book* such spaces are fashioned through rhizomatic relationships with dance practices, dances and texts pushing each other into becoming, allowing the logic of moving to flood the performance, editing, and presentation of writing. Joan Simon describes the artist books of Ann Hamilton as "sensuous, tactile presences remade by the mark of the body" (Simon, 2006, p.3). Artist's books highlight the kinesthetic practice of reading, through focussing on the materiality and aesthetics of book design. The active choreography of space, movement, texture, design and concept are pushed to thresholds in experimentation with what a book

can be, provoking exploration of how movement logics might be embedded in the interface between scribed and read gestures. Book artists purposefully attend to the physical interactions between reader and page, exploring the elasticity of meaning as pages are turned and hands brush spine and covers as rich sites of collaboration. As book artist and theorist Johanna Hoffman writes:

The content of a book speaks through its form. This makes the process of reading a book as much of an important art as the art of making it. Structural inventions such as arrangement and differentiation of pages, tearings, foldings, cuts, etc. introduce rhythmical values and make the object become an orchestration of some definite fragment of space and time. (Hoffmann, 2001, p.21)

Just as the writing style of a text creates what it is able to say, the material form of a book creates the theatrical site of its performance. As Ric Allsopp writes, “The site of performance can no longer be thought of as separate from the extended environments and networks within which it takes place” (Allsopp, 2004, p. 5). Considering books as sites of performance has implications for the role of the reader and the way in which performances of reading are conceptualized.

The reader of a book is also its performer. In this way the book acquires one more dimension: the history of its performances. It is based on repetitions which have nothing to do with sameness but induce an activation of time and space, motif and context, animation and metamorphosis. (Hoffmann, 2001, p.21)

Inherent in any reference to the book is a gesture towards actions of transfer and transaction implicit in the act of reading. The potential for disrupting expectations of passive readers and singular textual meanings permeates the fields of performance writing and artist books. Performance researcher John Hall writes of the kinesthetic dimension of reading inherent in the surface of pages.

A ‘book’ is a fold containing pages...a page is a surface to be handled, touched and stroked. Each page is also a space and a view. As a space it is a site where objects are (or could be) placed (composition) and where movement takes place between them (‘reading’). The objects are marks. Even an empty page is scanned, perhaps felt. (Hall, 2004, p.16)

The field of artist books emphasizes processes of meaning-making wherein form and content become indistinguishable. Specific materials and design choices embedded in *the kinesthetic archive project* attempt

to allow particular dance logics to spill into the ‘grain’ of the page – the torsion in the feel of spaces, lettering, image, the material handling (Bolt, 2004) of the work as it is activated by readers. The spill of choreographic thinking into material objects is a subject of in-depth research by choreographer William Forsythe, whose *Choreographic Objects* project asks, “What else, besides the body, could physical thinking look like?” (Forsythe, 2010, para. 7). With this research Forsythe has led a series of interdisciplinary dance projects that each explore ways in which choreographic thinking may be manifested in non-human form. These projects incite movement and invite consideration of the richness of kinesthetic ways of processing experience. As Forsythe writes, “a choreographic object is not a substitute for the body, but rather an alternative site for the understanding of potential instigation and organization of action to reside” (Forsythe, 2010, para. 12).

Feeding choreographic structures, p. 24-32

Pages 24 to 32 of *the kinesthetic archive book* presents poems written during the development of *Suture* (Longley and Pedersen, 2006), a collaborative, interdisciplinary performance. My memory of choreographing, co-directing and co-producing *Suture* with artist/clothing designer Rachelle Pedersen, in collaboration with two composers and three dancers, is of creating pathways of response and of continual translation between forms. My starting points were 1) poetic, small fragments of text to enter rehearsals with, 2) the beginnings of garments, 3) the concept of stitching as a metaphor. Choreographic ideas emerged from Pedersen’s aesthetic, and the physical restrictions of her garments. As we had worked together and known each other for many years, I was able to concentrate on the conceptual implications of her work, as a key element of choreographic development in terms of creating character, narrative, and image based dance phrases. Early in the rehearsal process, watching a rehearsal, I noted that I was “choreographing the way a body receives loss” (p. 24) and this became a key thematic element as rehearsals continued. These words became fragments of character and beginning points for improvisation scores.

Writing is a form of watching for you, a method for attending to movement vocabulary in space and time, you often find after watching a section of movement you’re left quite unable to say what you remembered, but if you scrawl notes or write directly after observing an improvisation or movement phrase somehow the images, tones, or spatial elements of work flood the paper. These methods of ‘documentation’ then become feedback notes, materials to share with collaborators and navigation points as the structure of the work develops. They are integral in your ability to communicate with collaborators and to lead one rehearsal into the next.

The texts *Amounts of Leaving* (page 26) and *She Measures the Weight of Her Own Breath* (p.31) for example, were written as a kind of feedback that helped to define the quality and spacing of choreographic phrases, as well as refining the intentions of the dancers. The poem *Held here and here and here* (p.27) emerged through writing while generating improvisation phrases. I used writing as a way to distinguish between different improvisation states and to create scores for them. This poem then became the name of a specific section which composers Claire Cowan and Quasimodo could distinguish, and was used in the score of the work. We recorded dancer Cat Ruka speaking the poem, which became an instrument within a textured score.

The text *Missing* (p.25) emerged from writing that attempted to clarify the intentions of different phrases, as a tool towards heightening performance states. In the end it became a formative part of *Suture* – generating a choreographic motif from the imagery of shedding skin and transforming into something other. This concept of transforming out of your skin became a key theme through the costuming, choreography, music and lighting. A central compositional motif that weaved through the score was titled “Wrapping and Unwrapping”. The poetic, evocative nature of words is central in my ability to communicate with composers and designers in a shared language. Often movement, when it is in early rehearsal, is not the best starting point for a composer or designer to work from, but a very specific image, a disjunctive metaphor, or a line of poetry will often become a key that allows artists working in different media to develop a cohesion between concepts, while interpreting the writing in the idiosyncratic manner of their specific disciplinary practice. Val (a dancer in the work) and I named a very slow, contemplative phrase “The Desert”, and this name alone was enough for Claire to begin composing in the early stages of rehearsals. The poem *Circle* (p. 28-29) was written after we had finished *Suture*, when composer Claire Cowan asked me if I had any poems that would work for a choral piece – so I wrote with a deliberate focus on the way words sound – on images that might work with repetition, and be able to be interconnected in different ways. This poem was not specifically written out of dance practice, but it was written out of a collaboration created through choreographic practice. This poem nods to a practice that cultivates the ability to be able to respond in one artistic form to the demands of another. Response between the diverse logics of different artistic modes is central to my understanding of performance writing.

The term kinesthetic archive

The notion of the kinesthetic or of kinesthesia is one of the key tropes in the development of western thought around contemporary dance. It refers to processes of proprioception that underpin sensory awareness of felt movement, and also relates to the experience of feeling in one's body the moved

gestures of another. This term gained currency in dance making, reviewing and practice through the work of John Martin, whose influential writing defined modern dance in terms of the “contagion of bodily movement, which makes the onlooker feel sympathetically in his own musculature the exertions he sees in somebody else’s musculature” (Martin, cited in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.22). Martin posits that it is through this “contagion” that “the dancer is able to convey through movement the most intangible emotional experience” (Martin, cited in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.22). The kinesthetic here is associated with feeling and the communication of the textually intangible, abstract and sensory.

Susan Leigh Foster also writes about the role kinesthetic senses play for dance audiences. As well as exploring kinesthesia as the communication of moved/sensory states, she also concentrates on the political, colonizing effects of kinesthetic empathy, particularly in eighteenth century France. In her recent article *Movement’s contagion: the kinesthetic impact of performance* (Foster, 2008) Foster discusses the history of the ‘kinesthetic sense’ along with terms such as proprioception and the sixth sense, with particular interest in how an audience watching a dance performance will be kinesthetically affected by the ‘contagion’ – a term Foster draws from Martin – of movement, initiated by the mobility of the dancers. With the term, ‘kinesthetic’, Foster refers to:

the sensations of our bones, muscles, ligaments, tendons, and joints. The sensory experience provided by these corporeal elements, often referred to as the kinesthetic sense, has been largely ignored in theories of performance, yet for those of us in dance studies, it remains a predominant aspect of aesthetic experience, one that must be interrogated as part of any inquiry into dance’s significance. (Foster, 2008, p.46)

Her earlier article *Choreographing Empathy* (Foster 2005) explores political and colonial assumptions embedded in assumptions of kinetic empathy, in relation to the development of choreography in eighteenth century France. Foster discusses how kinesthesia became a matter of interest for philosophers at this time. She focuses on the works of dance master Raoul Auger Feuillet and philosopher Abbe de Condillac, who she describes as,

the first to articulate a theory concerning the origin of language in relation to gesture. He envisions consciousness as the product of physical reaching out and encounter with the unknown, and is also one of the first philosophers to stake a claim for consciousness based on the experience of touch. (Foster, 2005, p.83)

Foster draws on Condillac in her working through of the role of embodiment and touch in relation to consciousness, language, history and politics. She connects Condillac's work to that of his contemporary Raoul Auger Feuillet whose method of dance notation was adopted widely throughout northern Europe and England. Feuillet is attributed with defining the term choreography as, in Foster's words, "the writing down of dances" (Foster, 2005, p.87). She argues that both Condillac and Feuillet, in systematizing and disassembling embodied perception and embodied movement, "each affirm the centrality of a center and its governance over a periphery" (Foster, 2005, p. 88). A key issue here is the relationship between notation and embodiment. Is notating a dance necessarily a form of colonizing it? Does the act of notation imply a kind of centralized governance over the marginal art of dancing? Or might there be forms of notation, (or movement-initiated writing) that promote the proliferation and exchange of dances, while recognizing and affirming the kinesthetic affect of movement? Dance academic Laurence Louppe evocatively describes such notation in the book *Traces of Dance* (Louppe, 1994), which catalogues an exhibition of idiosyncratic forms of dance notation invented by choreographers as they generate dance work. Rather than presenting examples of notation as a way of creating generic records of danced concepts, the dance writings catalogued in this book present notation as a way of carrying highly specific ways of travelling movement to the page:

Scattered, tiny surfaces of life, memory-bodies, mirror-bodies, to what mysterious universe does the multitude of your traces refer? Unfinished writings, humble springboards of virtual space, modest advances beyond the possible, you exist but half way, in the absence of the body that alone can read you. (Louppe, 1994, p.33)

The writings of Susan Leigh Foster and Laurence Louppe emphasize that kinesthetic empathy and forms of dance notation are in no way benign, but reflect wider political assumptions – particularly in the degree to which dance is made to conform to an overarching system or whether there is space for a dance to, in its specificity, rewrite and interrupt given notation systems and writing forms.

Is *the kinesthetic archive* project a colonizing one? It may be considered to be, as it moves from the terrain of touch and kinesthesia to the terrain of the page, yet the mode of movement-initiated writing that I explore in *the kinesthetic archive book* does not create a set system of language. Instead, like many of the examples of choreographic notation exhibited in Louppes' *Traces of Dance* book, it aims to allow gestures of writing and drawing to crease and rupture the systematizing tendencies of grammar, within an improvisatory and somatic approach to studio practice. In *the kinesthetic archive project*, I am using the term *kinesthetic* to refer to movement with a somatic sensibility, in a more general sense,

in order to encompass not only somatic sensations but also relationships between somatic, spatial, choreographic and artistic awarenesses connected to particular movement qualities.

The second half of the twentieth century saw an increase in the attention given to proprioception (embodied perception that is not visually bound) by dance practitioners. Parallel developments in post modern dance, the development of improvisation as a performance form and the growth of practices such as Ideokinesis, Pilates, Feldenkrais, Body Mind Centering and Contact Improvisation strongly influenced trends in Western theatre dance practice. Books such as James Gibson's *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems* (Gibson, 1966) and the studies of Hubert Godard (Dobbels and Rabant, 1996) in embodied consciousness have also affected the way interior gesture and felt sensing are valued in research domains within the arts and sciences. More recently, philosophers have begun to explore proprioception and kinesthesia in post-structuralist terms. Philosopher Jose Gil's article *Paradoxical Body* connects together the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Gilles Deleuze to discuss the spatiality of the body and the notion that skin is the point of openness to the world at the same time as it is the 'container' of the body; interior and exterior are co-existent.

Skin itself is a mutation, it changes nature, it wrinkles, it dilates – it searches for ways to become a new map for new intensities...Skin no longer delimits the body-proper, but it extends beyond it across exterior space: it is the space of the body. (Gil, 2006, p.33)

In a discussion of the paradoxical nature of the body Jose Gil draws on the image of the mobius strip to evoke a sense of embodiment that is simultaneously interior and exterior, moved by and moving. His writing articulates,

the body as meta-phenomenon, simultaneously visible and virtual, a cluster of forces, a transformer of space and time, both emitter of signs and trans-semiotic, endowed by an organic interior ready to be dissolved as soon as it reaches the surface. A body inhabited by – and inhabiting – other bodies and other minds, a body existing at the same time at the opening toward the world provided by language and sensorial contact, and in the seclusion of its singularity through silence and non-inscription...a *paradoxical body*. (Gil, 2006, p.28, author's emphasis)

Gil's affirmation that bodies are "endowed by – and inhabiting – other bodies," challenges the widespread notion that performance is ephemeral. If the concepts of a work remain embedded in bodies of practice

and memory, surely they are something other than disappeared? Is the limit by which performance ideas can be said to be present to an audience dependent on the ability to attend a live show? Or is there a way that we can accept the movement and proliferation of performance past the performance itself, into a multiplicity of potentials? In the case of *the kinesthetic archive project*, these potentials manifest in the spill or the excess of performance making. This project gathers together ideas that flowed through my practice in various sites, through attending to the journals that traveled with me from one project to another.

In a choreographic process ideas circulate between bodies, movements, dances, pages, sound scores, scenographic elements, etc. This circulation through differently constituted bodies creates a play that for some choreographers is *necessary* for a performance to come into being. *the kinesthetic archive project* considers writing a productive force that brings new ideas into being out of the difference between (for example) moments, cultures, vocabularies, perceptions, people, forms. I am considering the performance event as a fulcrum that heightens the conceptual momentum of a given work to travel beyond the bounds of its processual development. In the same way, your body can be considered to extend out far beyond the edges of its skin surfaces. As Gil writes, the space of the body “prolongs the body’s limits beyond its visible contours; it is an intensified space, when compared with the habitual tactility of the skin” (Gil, 2006, p.22).

The body is composed of special matter, which gives it the property of being *in* space and of *becoming* space. That is to say, this body has the property of combining so intimately with exterior space that it draws from it a variety of textures...the body’s texture is spatial; and reciprocally, the texture of space is corporeal. (Gil, 2006, p.28)

The terms ‘kinesthetic’ and ‘archive’ are rich with problems, they sit at the cross-roads of binary assumptions as though to divide the document from the cellular, sensation from information, the ephemeral from the official. I chose to title this work *the kinesthetic archive project* in an effort to blur the boundaries between the document and the transitional, to create transitional documents, to create text that performs its emergence out of bodily practice. If an archive is an historicizing document of past events, it could be that a sense of linear time is embedded in this term. Does the term archive imply a (problematic) binary between past and future? Does it imply that the archive and its contents are somehow separate from the performance event?

Brian Massumi’s discussion of ‘incorporeal materialism’ (Massumi, 2002) discusses embodiment in

terms of the centrality of sensation to knowledge and being. He argues that in order to perceive the formative role transition plays, we must recognize the virtual aspects of corporeality, which exist in relation to continuous motion rather than fixed positions.

When a body is in motion, it does not coincide with itself. It coincides with its own transition: its own variation. The range of variations it can be implicated in is not present in any given movement, much less in any position it passes through. In motion, a body is an immediate, unfolding relation to its own nonpresent potential to vary. (Massumi, 2002, p.4)

Massumi's discussion of transition and embodiment draws on Bergson, Spinoza and Deleuze (among others) whose writing resists tendencies to fix potential into grid-like systems (thus removing transition from critical consideration), to posit that past and future need to be recognized as being folded into each other:

past and future are not just strung-out punctual presents. They are continuous dimensions contemporaneous to every present – which is by nature a smudged becoming, not a point-state. Past and future are in direct, topological proximity with each other, operatively joined in a continuity of mutual folding. The present is the crease. (Massumi, 2002, p.200)

Following Massumi, the phrase *kinesthetic archive* refers to the co-extensiveness of past and future, with the term archive gesturing to how the past inhabits embodiment and sensory perception, and the term kinesthetic, the present that creases moments and perceptions into thought. Paula Caspão (2007) provides us with a sharp critique of discourses that specifically define ontologies of dance as being limited to live witnessed moments. Caspão argues that theories of performance that refuse to accept secondary or mediatized sources as artistic events polarize artistic modalities. She writes that “such distinctions limit the field of operating possibilities, when it comes to dance and performance theory” (p.143):

what is missed by our most current perceptions of dance and movement, occurring within a linear timeline and in a Euclidean space, is that the most embodied of our bodily experience always occurs in a relational spatiotemporal smudge whose end differentially loops back to its beginning. (Caspão, 2007, p.139)

Caspão draws on Gilles Deleuze and Brian Massumi to suggest the need for performance research to move past the ‘fusty’ notion that dance and performance is defined by “vanishing present bodies”(Caspão, 2007, p.136) “as if representation wasn’t a dimension of event-reality, re-entering the relational continuum, always re-becoming eventful sensorial perception” (Caspão, 2007, p.141). Caspão’s argument is that the very notion that dance is defined by immediacy, by the being-there through a live witnessing of an event, hinges on definitions of space and time that are linear, Euclidean, and neglectful of alternative perspectives of space, time, the virtual and embodiment. My intentions with the development of *the kinesthetic archive project* align with Caspão’s discussion of the work of choreographer and performer Olga de Soto; “The choreographer not only transformed a documentation process into a performance, she also transformed the very act of performing into one of documentation, displacing both notions of documentation and of dance performance” (Caspão, 2007, p.148).

In his practice-led PhD research *Indelible* Simon Ellis (Ellis 2005) draws on the philosophy of Henri Bergson to discuss time and memory as inventive practices, elucidating how the concept of documentation might play a performative role in actively creating dance work, in an ongoing way:

For Bergson, when a memory ‘enters’ duration, or is called into the present, it ceases to be a memory, and becomes something actually lived, engaged in subjectivity and corporealised. It is *actualised*, and is thus a sensation capable of initiating movement. There is no sensation that is not full of memories. (Ellis, 2005, p.64)

In order to research concepts of memory and the folding of time, Ellis choreographed a dance performance, the documentation of which made up the practice-led element of his research via an interactive DVD Rom. This documentation combined filmed extracts of dance phrases, journal entries of dancers throughout the process, extensive voice recordings, performance materials such as stage designs and sound composition, philosophical propositions, still photographs, poetic writing, and other evocative renderings that emerged throughout the duration of his project. The outcome is a layered montage of dance research that moves through various registers of affect, from the abstract, to the narrative, to the directly probing question. In creating the research exegesis of *Indelible* Ellis used various methods to perturb the more academic, discursive style of his writing, and to bring the logic of practice into his thesis. Ellis inserted transcriptions of the voices that influenced his project – dancers, supervisors, email discussions, performance texts, and poetic fragments into the body of his research text. In this way dance practice leaks and layers through the entirety of the text-based component of his study. One has the sense of moving with the multiplicity of entry points that Ellis employed in order to find a creative and multi-faceted approach to researching the nature of memory via processes

of dance composition.

Translating spaces

Translation...is a simple miming of the responsibility to the trace of the other in the self. (Spivak, 2000, p.397)

Being in translation is an essential defining feature of the concept of culture itself. (Ribiero 2004, para.10)

Translation makes the point that language is always on the move and always being moved. (Allsopp, 2002, p.1)

Translation implies working in a border space where ideas travel beyond their originary language, culture or discipline. Translators and translation theorists are familiar with and articulate in defining the technical and critical complications embedded in notions of ‘remaining true’ to an idea while changing and transforming it, or of deliberately allowing that work to mutate as part of a creative practice. Debates circulate among translators concerning the inventive role of this practice: Is the role of the translator to serve, to invent, to stay true, or to make new? Is it somewhere between this set of possibilities?

Central to the conceptualization of translation that runs through this study is the practice of *attending to another*. This everyday action is loaded with political implications for reaching outside the familiar and recognizing difference. Such an understanding of translation refuses to accept a translation or a document of a performance as secondary to an originary act. Instead each translation is a performance that reinvents a specific creative context. These discussions of translation as an inventive form, the core of which is exchange between cultures echoes my experience of watching movement and writing, the pores of my skin open to the tone of her movement, each element layering upon the other and without knowing how the words scribing paper link to this dance I’m following. I’m miming the act of writing with the hope that the dance will write for me. My job is to attend and to listen, to listen through muscles, nervous system, through each sensory pathway. This practice might be paralleled with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s writing of translation as “the simple miming of the responsibility to the trace of the other in the self” (Spivak, 2000, p.397). The affect of another’s movement shifts my own sense of embodiment, the trace of the other registers kinesthetically. As a writer, my responsibility

in this context is to writing with this movement, via kinesthetic affect.

How does the translator attend to the specificity of the language she translates? ... we are talking of risks, of violence to the translating medium. (Spivak 2000, p. 398)

Consideration of the ethics of translation opens space for a critical investigation of the specific practices utilized to move ideas between forms or languages, between dancing and writing. *The kinesthetic archive book* entailed a series of translations. Each translation is also a translation of a translation of a translation, from rehearsal planning, to communicating between dancers, to dancers exchanging and developing movement, to the page. In *the kinesthetic archive book* the translation is also stylistic, in choosing whether to use standard print, choosing a font or handwritten text, in working specifically at the level of the tone, design, layout and register of page surfaces; each of these elements might be considered a translation of meanings. The political and ethical dimensions of *the kinesthetic archive book* lie in its determination to value affect over linear description. As Caspão writes:

Affect functions as a “critical point” insofar as it can dismantle legitimate orders of discourse as well as definite relations between words, bodies, minds, actions, and objects (Caspão, 2008, p.144).

This project (both in the solo performance and the book project) attempts, as Caspão puts it, to ‘dismantle legitimate orders’ by valuing somatic, sensory, felt and abstract qualities of design and writing. Such qualities are manifested in the book’s emphasis on the texture evoked in the visual surface of the page as much as it does to the texts, redistributing the attention of this dance research away from productions on stages to barely-visible or invisible sensoriums of practice. Caspão goes on to describe the critical impact of the affective dimension of performance and performance writing:

This is the way affect goes against modes of communication that legitimate the “appropriate”, those in which every body, every sense and every thing is attributed a place or non-place. Blurring positions and functions, affect appears as a tool for opening up constant redistributions of the places attributed to every body and every thing. (Caspão, 2007, p.144)

Throughout the different modalities of *the kinesthetic archive*, I aim to create spaces where felt meanings, silent voices, subtext and intuition are recognized for their formative status in performance research. Somatic methods of bodywork are by their nature ‘first person’ – thus they *cannot* be described or shared

and are, in a sense, silent and untranslatable. However, such states are hugely generative of performance concepts and well worth exploring in terms of their bearing upon performance research. The attempts to translate somatic and process based dance states into another form via *the kinesthetic archive project* is motivated by the critical imperative of opening space in dance writing for the importance of sensory affect.

Writing the somatic, p. 33-40

I'm dancing. Experimenting with images that subtly shift the way I sense my spine. I am surrounded by ten or so other dancers, responding to a stream of sounds, the awareness and momentum pathways evoked through Scott's speech. We have moved from discussing concepts and looking at anatomy books, now we move constantly with fragments of image shared through the spoken word, keeping our dancing focused, the investigation developing. The improvisation is brought to a close and I immediately grab my journal and begin drawing and writing, noting key images that were given as taught material, and that I noticed in my own investigation. Focusing on the memory of moving and responding to verbal feedback, I write all the sensations I can. I find if I write them as soon as possible I'm more likely to remember them in their specificity, to catch the precision of images, to remember how different ideas relate to each other.

Pages 33-40 of the *Kinesthetic Archive Book* emerged through my attendance at two somatic workshops; *Materials for the Spine*, with Scott Smith (Smith 2006) and *Body Mind Centering* with Olive Bieringa and Otto Ramstead (Bieringa and Ramstead, 2007). Each of these workshops evolved over a period of five to six intensive days of dancing and presented similar challenges in terms of dance writing; both had a somatic focus. The group worked slowly in the mornings to allow awareness of the complexity of relationships between the systems of the body and they worked on a larger movement scale in the afternoons. Writing out of deeply somatic movement workshops, only the merest fractions seem to glance the paper. During both of these workshops the way I sensed both the sensorium of this body and the interconnectedness of movement systems was heightened intensely. Such movement research has great import for dance studies, yet finding a way of articulating sensory movement experiences wherein each dancer has a (sometimes remarkably) different response to particular stimuli, remains a challenge to researchers.

Reflecting upon the challenge of writing the somatic makes me want to subtitle the section: 'Notes on Impossibility and Failure'. In their discussion of a documentation performance project consisting of live events, Ric Allsopp and Scott DeLahunta (1996) discuss "a persistent disjunction in our attempts to

integrate the body as a coherent site of representation and presence ... (due to) an increasing separation between 'a theorized body' and an 'experienced body' where the theorized body – is represented, generated, located, presented and absented – is privileged over the inherent experience of the body and its systems" (Allsopp and deLahunta, 1996, p. 6).

Here, DeLahunta and Allsopp refer to the difficulty of articulating a project that treats the body as an integrated, experiential site, in a written culture that tends toward separating the experienced from the theorized body. As feminist philosopher Elizabeth Grosz (1994) has observed, theorizing somatic experience within critical theory is highly challenging. In *Parables for the Virtual* philosopher Brian Massumi (2002) similarly writes on the difficulty of valuing sensory information in a post-structuralist critical framework. The body of dance research working from and articulating a somatic ontology is growing exponentially,¹ yet the task of somehow carrying the rich, sensate experiential of intensive somatic workshopping into words remains an elusive task. I respond to this task by running with a partial, fragmentary, biased, abstract approach to writing these workshops. Out of books dense with notes I present a glimpse of texts in the *kinesthetic archive book* that carry a particular sense of somatic logic, intending that each reader makes their own sense from them.

Notes from Site Specific Workshop, p. 48.

Writing right now it is almost two years later and when I read this list I can remember very specific details from that improvisation, the light on the concrete steps, the continually shifting moments as the students responded to each other. This list is an example of writing that seems very plain and uninteresting if the reader wasn't in the workshop, but has the potential to jolt the specific richness of memory. It is straight journal reflection. Jennifer New writes that; "Journals are unsung heroes, the working stiffs of creative life" (New, 2005, p.8), the behind the scenes players on which whole productions and exhibitions rest, but to whom credit is rarely attributed. Journals are literally worn by time, and might be seen as reflecting a mode of temporality. We might consider artists' journals as cases of process art par excellence, a mode of art practice registering temporal, material processes of art making. Choreographers' working journals could also be seen as tools of translation, as paper bodies that support the gestures and marks of concepts on their way to formal articulation. New discusses journals as,

intimate, unpolished works for which an outside audience is either unanticipated or an afterthought. The journal's primary purpose is to serve as a place for its author to sort ideas and observations...In the end, journals may show more fully than any

finished piece what it has meant to be us. (New, 2005, p.18)

This list of notes from a site specific dance project, presented in the two ripped fragments of something half there, something made present by another present's absence, directly refers, in its blunt language, to a specificity of time and place. These lists could also be recycled choreographically to generate structure.

Writing as drawing

In an analysis of drawing as a form of process art, art theorist Cornelia Butler emphasizes that, “matter is *volatized* in drawing, not hypostasized” (Butler, 1999, p.32, author’s emphasis). This distinction between the potential of drawing to hypostasize or volatize, to fix reality or to make it flighty is highly relevant when one attempts to translate movement qualities to the page. The methodology for generating movement-initiated performance writing employed in *the kinesthetic archive book* assumes that writing is a form of drawing; the aesthetics of handwriting and drawing move bodies of dance practice from dance studios, to journals, through cycles of editing, to book-design, to printing.

The first translation underpinning the pages of *the kinesthetic archive book* occurred for the most part in dance studios, where movement ideas were noted into working journals. Once the journals were full they were left for a period of months. The second translation occurred in rewriting by hand excerpts that glinted with some sense of liveliness, that seemed to keep the performance working, that attended to the grain of the movement, keeping it in circulation (albeit in a vastly different, usually non-literal form). These textual fragments were then edited again with a focus on experimentation with the layout of words in the page space.

Art theorist Emma Dexter writes “Drawing is a feeling, an attitude that is betrayed in its handling as much as in the materials used” (Dexter, 2005, p.6). Handwritten passages have a very different resonance and quality to typed pages. Dexter draws on Heidegger’s notion of ‘handling’ to discuss the way in which the materials and the intention by which an art practice is approached define the understanding that a given practice comes to engender. In the case of *the kinesthetic archive book*, the act of handwriting as a form of drawing became key to my sense of the emergence of writing. Handwriting-as-drawing intensified the sense of the performance of the page and of dance concepts as they travel to readers. *The writing notebooks of Hélène Cixous* (Cixous, 2004) is a book which testifies to the specificity of affect that can be translated through handwriting. This book prints pages of Cixous’ journals, with typewritten edits and handwritten notes on facing pages. Seeing the rhythms of shape and form that animate the first drafts of Cixous’ hand written journals allows the reader an intimate insight into her writing process. In an interview with Susan Sellers, Cixous describes the importance of handwriting to her creative process:

Handwriting is important. All this is handwritten, and I can’t get around that, because I recognize different levels of... rightness, for instance, of the work, or of refining, etc., ... according to the physical aspect of my own handwriting, and I need that.

It makes for different voices, because all those notes speak in different voices, and I recognize them by sight from the look they have, from my own handwriting, because it's all different, all the time. (Cixous, 2004, p.118)

Cixous's description of how her handwriting animates and communicates different elements of her work through the physicality of its affect articulates an approach to handwriting as a drawn form that contains highly particular aesthetic information. With *the kinesthetic archive book* I was determined to allow such information to speak.

Throughout the process of writing and editing all elements of *the kinesthetic archive book* my intention was to attend to and evolve the felt meaning of particular dance practices through the printed, written and drawn site of the page. From the 'edited drafts' journal (which gathered together process notes from many different journals) I then created a file of digitized writing, with the formatting limitations (size of lines, size and style of fonts, obsession with even and orderly line). I then printed these pages as a body of texts, in order to interact with the pages as material bodies in the following ways: returning the gesture of handwriting to texts, attending to every line break, and as the editing process continued, to the placement of text in the wider space of the page and to how pages opening against each other related conceptually and spatially. Over time, digital photographs from the journals merged with printed pages that were drawn on by hand and scanned, in an attempt to translate a sense of incipient change, of contingency, transition and a sense of the interior logic of movement practices to the pages of *the kinesthetic archive book*.

You watch in a new way through the attention of the writing task, p. 50

On page 50 of the *kinesthetic archive book*, 'Watching Emma Strapps' is a text written out of a provocation for writers as they observed a dance improvisation, in a workshop focused on dancing and writing led by dancer practitioner Rosalind Crisp and academic and somatic practitioner Isabelle Ginot (Crisp and Ginot, 2007). Such provocations focus how one attends to events, what one notices, how the muscles of imagination engage with specific creative practices. Provocations for invention may be applied as much to studio-based writing as to developing performance material. Ginot offered a choice of three watching/writing tasks:

1. Watch all the beginnings in the work
2. Imagine you keep one hand on a specific point on a dancer's body, feeling how the person is moving

through the immediate information of (imagined) touch.

3. Watch the impossible body – whatever that means.

I imagine my hand is cupping Emma's ribcage, under her right armpit. Projecting my imagination into the sensations of her body, the processes that are the undercurrent to her movement. Having recently spent an intensive week studying Body Mind Centering, the processes of the body are vivid in my imagination. The process of using Isabelle's writing task provided me with fresh way into perceiving movement, a way to travel somatically with Emma's body. The concentration and energy evoked through watching her kept my hand moving across the page as if electrified, it was as if my body was strongly kinesthetically engaged with hers, in a very specific way. Later, over dinner with Emma, we discuss modes of writing as forms of imagining, different modes of watching as ways of training the imagination, and that these writing scores are movement scores while the moving scores are writing scores.

After the dance explorations the group discussed the idea that the writing shifts how we watch – you watch in a new way through the attention of the writing task.

Opening somatic experience to the page is a technique of translation between modes of attention, where somatic movement sensations enter the kinesthetic actions of writing and drawing; the technical work is as much about undoing tendencies to analyze, undoing the fear that words scribed on paper must be the 'correct' words, and allowing performance writing to be (at times) unpredictable, responsive, ambiguous – a mode of exploration and discovery. Artist-researcher Paul Clarke writes of the positional contradictions in simultaneously practicing and theorizing practice. Contradictions arise when the practice demands as a researcher he is 'in' the work, and then analysis requires he discuss the work from 'outside'. Clarke draws on Michael de Certeau's essay *Walking in the City* to contrast the states of the theorist and the practitioner and draws attention to the complexities of articulating the knowledge of practice:

The bodily and tactile knowledges that enable such immediate practical decisions reside beneath the threshold of consciousness/perception and as such are unrepresentable. They are placed beyond the limits of the practitioner's own discursive knowledges such that they are difficult to speak of / reflect upon. (Clarke, 2004, para. 32)

Central to the entire *kinesthetic archive project* is the attempt to allow concepts embedded in practice to fold into artist's pages. This often means that writing is allowed to follow, as Clarke puts it, the

ideas “that reside beneath the threshold of consciousness/perception”. This research does, however, challenge Clarke’s argument that bodily and tactile knowledges are “unpresentable” in its attempt to allow such knowledges to emerge in the sites of pages, albeit in unpredictable and perhaps less-than-easily-legible forms. Creating this body of pages involved trusting in and becoming familiar with writing from a sense of the unpresentable. A general rule in this writing was ‘don’t presume to know what you will write before you start, allow your writing to be disjunctive, unclear, to have messy grammar, to use the page space, to merge with drawing’.

hoping

Each of the pages of *the kinesthetic archive book* unfolds from exploration into conditions and atmospheres specific to the vagaries of an ongoing practice in dance. *Watching Emma Strapps Dance* (page 50) became a structural device for a solo performance. The poems written out of the *Suture* rehearsal process (pages 24 to 31) were recorded and woven into the fabric of the composition of its electronic score and used as choreographic source material. *Rehearsal Text* (page 49) was written in preparation for a score-based approach to somatic choreography.

The kinesthetic archive book is made up from the small, rarely seen moments of performance processes, such as notes, drawings, memories, images, readings and conversations, recognizing them as miniature performances and as works-in-progress. Poet Bill Manhire conceives of poetry “as a catalyst or an agent for diversification, rather than a message bearing, authoritarian structure” (Manhire cited in O’Brien, 1997, p.30). This conceptualization of poetry as ‘agent for diversification’ marries very well with *the kinesthetic archive project*, where the displacement of ideas between forms (dance, performance writing, poetry, philosophy) mutates them into alternative trajectories. This project proposes that these moments of movement-between are crucial to creative-practice research and that writing from such spaces allows insight into the specificity of practitioner-theoretical knowledges.

So I’m thinking about the act of leaving and the idea of leaving you with something – with what? A close friend once wrote that poems are wonderful because they are small enough to fold into a matchbox but can take a whole lifetime to unwrap. I have no idea where the copy of the poem is that contains that quote, and for some reason quotation marks just don’t *feel* right, right there. They feel like they are creating distance between the voice of this essay, and the voice of this friend. And this friend, Kylie Thomas, was someone who I made performances with, someone who passed away at quite a young age, someone who was very dear, and someone whose voice is actually inside the writing of the whole of this essay, one of the multiple authors inside the proper name of Alys Longley. Isn’t it the case that

things like poems and performances often do take lifetimes to unwrap? With this in mind, shouldn't we aim to employ forms of writing that embrace the slow unfolding of reading, the abstraction that invites the co-existence of complexity and simplicity, allows the possibility that the rules of grammar, sentence structure, page design and even quotation may be bent in order to make space for the affective spaces created by imperfection, looseness of form, movement, mess and the leakiness of bodies? That's what I'd like to leave you with – with images of books spilling over with movement, with pages generated by bodies making stuff, quickly scribed in-between tasks, script readings, duets, rehearsals, notes – messy writing, formulated at breakneck speed to keep up with the sprint of the ideas. Making half sense, but enough sense to be useful. I'd like to leave you with a sense that such moving-writings offer something extremely valuable to post-Cartesian research, to not only performance and dance studies, but to philosophy, ethnography, research in education and to qualitative research. Such writing demands processes of editing and design incorporate affect, texture and atmosphere – leaving space for ambiguity and the layering of concepts. And here's my leaving space

Endnotes

Preface

1. Simon Ellis, for example, describes this statement as “oft-quoted” (Ellis, 2005, p.25) Sophia Lycouris writes that it “almost sounds like a manifesto” (Lycouris, 2000, para. 5), and Margaret Werry and Róisín O’Gorman describe their writing as bawdlerizing Phelan (O’Gorman and Werry, 2012, p. 2).
2. Performance theorists Margaret Werry and Róisín O’Gorman write that, “Performance’s methods of improvisation, rehearsal and experiment assume an accretion of failures as an integral part of the creative process. One must continually make and continually fail in order to create” (Werry and O’Gorman, 2012, p. 2).
3. The term constative is drawn from J.L Austin’s book *How to Do Things With Words* (Austin, 1962) in which Austin differentiates between performative and constative utterances. He describes constative utterances as statements “as the typical or paradigm case” (Austin, 1962, p.132).

Afterword

1. An example of the growth of somatic research in performance studies can be evidenced by the recently released *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices*.

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Alys Longley is a performance maker, researcher and teacher. Her interests include practice-led research, interdisciplinary projects, ethnography, narrative research, somatic practices, ecology and inclusive dance education. Her recent work *Radio Strainer* exists through choreography, film, installation and book forms, with the discipline of translation studies a conceptual research pivot. Alys is a Senior Lecturer in Dance Studies at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. She has recently published her work in *Qualitative Inquiry*; *Emotion, Space Society*; *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*; *Dance Research Aotearoa* and *Writings on Dance*.

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About *the kinesthetic archive project*

the kinesthetic archive book was created through a series of iterations. Material was gathered solely through studio journals of dance practice over approximately 18 months – the focus being on writing directly out of the somatic sensorium of movement in order to explore writing that emerges out of dance practice, carrying logics of dance into written form. A series of journals were then treated as raw material for development of pages that were either photographed, rewritten, scanned or typed and then treated as surfaces for further writing, drawing, scanning, photography, etc.

The final pages were formatted as JPEGs which were then edited into a PDF form via Adobe Indesign. The full text was set in the font Bell MT and printed on Eco 100, a paper made from chlorine-free, 100% recycled content, under the ISO 14001 environmental system. It was hand bound by Clinton Goodwin at the University of Auckland bindery in a half binding. The Winchester University Press logo was then screen printed on the back cover by Struan Hamilton at Elam school of Art.