

The Double Interview was conducted with both of us simultaneously asking and answering questions of each other. We both started with the same question and then generated questions for the other from the response each gave to the previous question.

Open Practice - 21st March 2018 - Scoring through the visual and kinesthetic

Participants: Lizzie Vilmanis, Sandi Woo, Lucia Delgado, Olga Rubio, Denise Comba, Giselle Di Paolo

Facilitator: Emma Wilson

Session outline:

10 minutes:

Arrival into the space, with the following anchoring questions:

- What can I do that brings me a sense of joy or pleasure?*
- What can I do that attends to my needs in this moment?*
- What can I do that problematises* this situation?*
- What can I do to engage with my habitual mode of being in this space in this moment?*

**problematised: make into a problem that is looking for a solution*

Participants form a group of 2's or 3's

7 minutes:

1 person is the 'doer' and the other/s are the witness/es

The task of the doer is to continue responding to the above questions

The task of the witness/es is to observe and track all that happens, making a mental score over the duration

7 minutes:

Swap roles. The doer/s now engage in remembering the score they created from witnessing

The witness is again observing, tracking all that happens making a mental score

7 minutes:

Again swapping roles

7 minutes:

Again swapping roles

10 minutes:

Discuss and reflect on experiences so far

Performing the score through various filters.

There are 3 successive performative events which happen in the following order:

- Performing the score*
- Retelling /describing in words what happened during the performing of the score*
- Interpreting the retelling of the score through doing (this person was absent from the space during the initial performing so they had no access visually to this score)*

We do this with both scores created by both groups.

10 minutes:

Discuss and reflect on session. Close

What were some key triggers for reflection for you coming from Open Practice this week?

Denise

Sharing, giving, honesty, generosity. It was about an impossible task, it was about recreating, re-embodiment a score we never saw before just through listening to a witness instructing us; it was also about recreating and re-embodiment what we witnessed (and what we remember) our partner did. A level of trust and intimacy, I feel, grew within the group. A sense of wonder, at least for me, seeing my score become alive in different bodies and through different tasks. A sense of wonder of revisiting my score after having witnessed another body doing it. It was like an infinite fountain of inspiration and hope. Something to do with believing in the future, that we can do this together, that nothing is perfect and that we don't strive for perfection. I'm realising I'm talking as 'we'. This is all I felt through my individuality which led me into a collective perception. But of course I only have my point of view. It's interesting though, the feeling of collective greatness, of how deeply this experience touched me.

Intimacy, yes! And a sense of 'we', the collective (audience included). I felt this too. As an audience member I felt this a very specific and special quality to bring into the performance space. I got the sense watching you in the doing that it required the allowance of one to be witnessed in a state of vulnerability - in the uncertainty and the impossibility (relying on memory!). Is

Emma

This week I am coming from my witnessing, choreographic eye as I was not participating in the practice, but sitting out to hold the space and observe. I've been thinking a lot about what the questions that we began the practice with today produced. It was quite a specific quality of inhabiting one's body and the space. Some words that come up for me are quiet, unassuming, 'domestic', as if the audience is the performer herself; she is performing these actions for herself and we as the other audience are witnessing this interaction with self. I'd like to spend a lot more time investigating these questions, inhabiting them to see the range of responses possible - and how to stretch this range. I wonder how to amplify this quality, make it more visible. But not by changing what is being done. It's the framing of what is happening that has the potential to increase visibility. And this requires further exploration.

I love that I am not responsible for the choices people make. I'm interested in creating structures that ask the people involved to take responsibility for what they are producing. This kind of structure is very revealing to show how people are thinking and responding to a situation. The repetition (in the doing and witnessing, doing and witnessing) also keeps people accountable to themselves I think. Because they are the ones initiating action, if at any point this is becoming problematic for them, the individual needs to be the one to initiate change. But always in dialogue with the structure, with the

this something you experienced (or maybe i am just projecting!)?

Or maybe I am projecting as well??? It was definitely a state of vulnerability, not in the sense of weakness but in the sense of something being unfolded and discovered in front of an audience's eye. Something tricky happening 'live', without theatrical representation. I guess I experienced the intimacy through the sharing of that moment, through being present with everyone else in this event, through taking the richness in, more than judging the good or wrong of the execution of the score. Something that kept feeding in for me from last week is also those 'gaps' in the interpretation and re-embodiment of a score. This time I allowed myself to be much more present of those gaps, to inhabit them, to enjoy them, to make them be more.

Oh this is juicy Denise, I love your way of languaging today! 'Something tricky happening live'... 'without theatrical representation' (can we ever avoid that!! But yes I get what you mean)... 'inhabiting the gaps'. This!! Ok so what is my question... I wonder, if this was a process to be explored over a longer period of time, do you think it would be possible to sustain this tenderness, fragility? Or do you think the tendency would be to become overly comfortable then in the gaps that it loses that rawness (which I find so compelling to witness as spectator)?

Ha! That's a good question that I will answer from a very very very personal perspective. I am at a moment in my practice where I love

questions. There should always be a tension between the structure, the 'task', and the individual's own desires, politics, agenda, aesthetics. I'm interested in making this conversation visible.

I also loved the 'retelling'. What does it produce performatively? It opens a whole other space in my attention as viewer. The sphere of imagination. There is a double performance happening - the here and now, seeing and hearing what is happening before me, and the act of creating a mental image of the description the performer is giving us, which refers to another space and time.

The questions were used at the beginning to arrive and warm up and also being aware of what we were doing so we would remember for the next task. It has been twice that my score comes from that context, and probably also supported by the questions itself, especially 'joy and pleasure' and 'what I need' resonate with me in this warming up moment. I say this because I wonder if we would approach these questions after 1 hour moving already, how different the movement would be (or not...?). My questions goes around visibility, watching people make choices, from your outsider perspective, what else did you see that we didn't from inside? And also, can you continue with your question: retelling - what does it produce performatively?

My observations as audience were the appearing tangibility of something that seems quite fragile and invisible. Firstly, the responses to these questions (and I think also because they were framed within an invitation of 'arrival' to OP and into the space) produced material that might normally be a 'prologue' or 'acknowledgements' if we think in terms of a written publication. It's

rawness and truth. I strive not to die as a dancer when I dance. I fight for keeping my soul alive even if my body is executing memorised movements. I truly HOPE that it would be possible to sustain the fragility, the vulnerability, the liveliness, the life of a moment. That's why I talked about hope at the beginning. Of course, achieving this requires will and consciousness, a strong sense of engagement with this almost impossible task, the impossible task of making something happen for the first time, many times. I guess we can become comfortable... but I believe the gaps change, there's probably gaps in different places every time we repeat a score.

So it's a constant search for those gaps. The conditions of the performance ask the performer to be engaged in the act of seeking out those gaps and inhabiting. I wonder how we stay in the search. How to keep hope outside the realm of representation, without 'performing' hope, but the performing of this thing relies on hope. Can you talk more about hope? I think this is an interesting place to be... And is there anything else you wanted to mention?

First thing that comes to mind is that hope lies within the nature of what we do, not in the 'what we do'. For me, it's a force, a flowing river that carries me when I move, independent of what I move. It's the first time I think about hope per se. I never thought about my practice in terms of hope. But it is definitely something that moves me deeply, that supports me, that brings me to places where I feel true, generous and selfish at the same time.

Both words, generous and selfish, also came up at OP this week. I talked about feeling both at the same time. Generous of the score I

not necessarily material that would be included as fleshy part of the product. It's the part that you might even skip over when opening a book to read. As an observer, I had to keep reiterating the question in my mind over and over : 'what am I seeing?'. Because it's both at the same time so overly familiar (those rituals we all do when entering the space, preparing ourselves) and doesn't belong within the realm of significance of 'dance work'. So I had to keep asking myself to define what I was seeing, bringing it into language and the realm of recognition.

As we scored that moment (we ended up with two condensed scores) it produced two little choreographies that I think in the end transcended the simple warm-up nature. Something about repetition and setting a space to perform. In your question to yourself 'what am I seeing?', did what you see evolve in front of your eyes in the 2 hours of OP? How?

I think because the process was offering different filters with which to inhabit this structure - the doing, the witnessing, the translation between visual processing and embodied action, between doing and describing with language, between hearing and interpreting into doing... All of these interventions required a constant re-engagement with the score that was being co-created by the participants involved. And this act of reengaging reveals the inner conversation I mentioned before. As audience members, we could see the questioning going on - how do I do this, approach this, be in this, take ownership of this, attend to and honour the detail of this. So I was witnessing an unfolding dialogue not only through embodied inquiry, embodied grappling with the material that was constantly evolving, but also an

was given and that I offered to the audience. Selfish for seeking my own pleasure, enjoying my own moment of discovery, my magical gaps when I couldn't remember something very precisely. Generous for sharing my moment of vulnerability, generous for receiving the support of the audience. This brings me to the question around what our relationship to the audience is, in terms of roles, in terms of love, judgement, expectations... is the audience always loving and supportive? ...maybe a question for OP.

This sounds like questions we need to explore more! Food for thought... Thank you Denise for bringing your hope, your presence to this unfolding process of exploration and inquiry.

unfolding of mental, cognitive questioning and inquiry that produced a particular focus in performing these tasks.

Yes, it was definitely a process of weaving all those different layers which nourished the process as a whole and which could feed back to it much longer, I think. If there would have been more time, where do you imagine this process would take us? Or what other tasks would you apply to keep going? Was there anything else left unsaid that you would like to talk about?

I long to spend an extended amount of time with these questions to see what they are capable of producing.

As a witness I had the desire to bring multiple bodies together. There were possibilities I would have liked to try if there was time this week... I was thinking about a larger group of people all performing together the variation of performing the interpretation of the score which they only heard but didn't see. I can imagine there would be similarities in the material which emerge, but also much difference, but still retaining a presence of focused inquiry. I would like to try bringing the performing of the retelling together with someone else performing the doing of either the same score (or a different one) . In terms imagining how this process might unfold, what it might produce in the longer term I don't have a specific agenda with that, other than to continue the exploration and see what emerges from this practice. I like thinking of it as a performance practice, as this brings an accountability to the process in this moment. Maybe nothing more will eventuate. But something did happen this week which really excited me. Maybe it will be nothing more. But also it

may become something so much more. It's important for me to acknowledge that. The significance of what happens when it is not framed as a 'something'. And even though it may not have a life to be continued, we can say that something did happen.

Something else that was mentioned during the session which has stuck in my mind was the issue of ownership and authorship. The score was being co-authored by multiple persons throughout the practice. And this shifting of authorship required a constant renegotiation of ownership, provoking the question each time how do I make a claim to this material? What has been lost? What can I bring to it in this moment? What will remain? What will be transformed? I enjoyed seeing this attempt again and again to reenter the material, find one's position within it and the assertion of one's voice, only to see this shift again when someone new steps into the score.

Something always appears, comes into existence, when we frame it, when we learn how to see it... doesn't it? I hope so...!