

Title

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Body of Article

INDEPENDENT DANCE

Around 1980 Miranda Tufnell and Laurie Booth set up Independent Dance to broaden accessibility. Using a grant from Gulbenkian, they brought artists to London, including Steve Paxton, Kasuo Ono, Eiko and Koma, as well as creating workshops with local dance artists. ID has been offering regular professional contemporary dance classes in London since 1990. With no fixed studio space, activity took place in various sites. Led by several figures key to British dance history, the programmes were curated by Rosemary Butcher and Fin Walker, and included contributions from Clare Lovett, with Gill Clarke and Fiona Millward, Betsy Gregory, Scott Clarke and Caroline Scott amongst others. Only when ID registered as a company in 2004 did Gill Clarke and Fiona Millward become co-directors. ID is currently comprised of several strands of activity, including the provision of daily Morning Classes, workshops, feedback forums, talks, and since 2009, a festival. In its own words:

ID is an artist-led organisation providing a responsive framework to support, sustain and stimulate dance artists in their ongoing development as professionals. It provides a specialist and coherent programme offering opportunities to learn, deepen enquiry, share practice and exchange ideas as part of an interdependent international community. (ID website, 2014)

ID exists amongst several supporting frameworks that continually inform activity and attitude, and like its initiation and earlier years, continues to be carried forward by many, rather than a single progenitor. The extensive ethos section of the ID website portrays dance as a multiplicity. Significant value is placed on rigorous inquiry, serious play, inclusivity, knowledge and skill, and - crucially - reciprocity between dance and other forms of art practice, education and body-mind training. Attention is drawn to how fluidly an individual may be an artist, teacher, student and participant simultaneously in a context of portfolio careers and on-going commitment to professional development. Acknowledging a fluid community, where roles can and do change, underscores how the what_now festivals are an expression not only of dance art, but of human relationships beyond a specific arts practice.

The organisational framework of staff at ID was five individuals, all working-part time, over of the what_now festival in 2014, plus several extras as volunteers, placements and an advisory board. 2015 marks the transition of Fiona Millward's departure, and Kirsty Alexander and Gitta Wigro taking leadership as co-directors. There is a regular cycle of teachers for classes each term, composed of practitioners from other parts of the UK, Europe and the rest of the world. The community passing through ID as participants in classes and workshops varies through annual cycles of academic terms, the phrasing of graduation, employment periods and the larger context of London itself, with different sites available for dance, fitness training and professional development. ID considers participation in talks and workshops vital for the vigour of dance practice conceptually and practically, and it is this attitude of facilitating ongoing education that appears to inform its curatorial choices. The degree to which one may feel part of the community is then perhaps contingent on a sensibility of self-development and intellectual grappling through and for creative expansion.

ID shares a building with Siobhan Davies Dance. The transmission and exploration of dance requires suitable time and space, and the building is an anchor. Studio space is not only for creation, rehearsal and occasional performance, but continual cultivation and maintenance of the body-mind that dances, teachers and/or choreographers. Sharing time and space is a necessary aspect to the dynamic of both the community that is involved with ID, and the wider field of dance. ID, itself as an emergent process, offers and adapts tangible and intangible resources to those in the city, and who pass through. In turn, this framework continues to develop community through repeated visits and trust, generating loyalty and enduring investment in ID by its community, as part of the wider field of dance and arts organisations.

ID is funded by Arts Council England (ACE) to deliver, specifically, artistic professional development. Not alone in that remit, ID is positioned amongst agencies and organisations representing and supporting dance practice in London and nation-wide, some of which have a focus towards producing and presenting work (part of the National Dance Network). These vary in scale, subsidy and ambition. There are other agencies like ID which are not National Portfolio Organisations (e.g. Dance Digital), nor part of the NDN (Cheshire Dance). London has multiple dance-orientated organisations, including Greenwich Dance, The Place and East London Dance (all part of the NDN), Dance Research Studio, Chisenhale Dance Space and TripSpace. There are studios known to house dance and movement training such as Moving East and the London Buddhist Arts Centre, with different programming processes. Each context has some constitutional and ideological similarities, with varying strategic and unintentional degrees of dependence and independence, as suits their means and statements of intent. The field is dynamic and competitive in proving value and relevance. Strategy and pursuit, much like the individual artists' statement, evolve both in response to the wider field of cultural and political production, as well as from interests in pursuing particular aesthetic and ideological perspectives.

The cultural capital ID holds, in and of its own exertions historically, but also with the support of ACE creates a particular interdependence for independence. ID is amongst other educational frameworks for ongoing professional development and creation of community found in visual

arts and music. There is a long history of democratic education and free schools movements. Some relevant examples include Open School East (London, established 2013), Movement Research (New York, USA, 1978), Royaumont International Centre for dance and music artists (Asnieres sur Oise, France, 1964) and the Choreographic Lab (formerly Northampton, 1996). ID bridges to educational institutions, creating reciprocity between professional artistic and research processes.

DANCE

Dance is championed through ID, both conceptually and in practice, as an independent entity, capable of being connected but also autonomous. Dance is situated through ID as free to interact on its own terms with other bodies of knowledge, modes of discourse and representation, and not guided by a singular opinion of what dance is, but rather by questions of what it can be and do. ID's creation of contexts for dance as an ongoing practice allows for many influences, exchanges and enquiries. Creativity and pedagogy find space to grow and be nourished in these generous conditions. By virtue of its supporting structures, ID is in a position to risk expectations, playing with definition, purpose and practice. Mobilising questions that approach less clearly defined, and more complicated or interstitial aspects of dance is, at this stage in the history of ID, is necessary for continuing a reputation and dialogic relationship with its supporting structures and community as a site that invites experiential rigour. Answers become temporary, or contingent; their mutability and interconnectedness apparent.

However amidst the flux of influences and changes from within and without, repeated tropes found by tracing past activity and current intentions indicate how ID has an enduring attitude towards dance that embraces it as socially vital, where body-mind is powerful and where challenge is welcome.

Written by Gill Clarke in 2007:

We celebrate the impact holistic dance practices can have on health and well-being through increased movement awareness and sense of self. (ID website 2007)

Dance art here is valued in a reciprocal relationship with body-mind practices that develop processual knowledge. The Morning Class series disseminates a range of body-mind and somatic practices through, with and for dance. Somatic practices, stemming from diverse sources including enhancing physical, psychological, emotional health and performance, include many approaches underneath this umbrella title, but are all experiential by nature.

Challenge is offered deliberately, and hopefully met by participants in somatic movement education. With a prevailing interest in possibility and full psycho-physical participation, movement explorations are characterised by unpredictable responses: movers may feel somewhat uncomfortable, vulnerable, bored, frustrated, enlightened, empowered, reconfigured, elated, embarrassed, and so on. This is not to say these responses are a pre-requisite for

valuable movement experiences, but it cannot be ignored that sensation can lead to feeling, and that feelings evoked can be challenging. ID contains these learning frames to keep offering space to challenge expectations so participants may discover what else can happen, be opened, enriched or reinforced, kinaesthetically and creatively. It is this spirit of immersion, challenge and reflection that became extended to audiences through the what_now festival.

Willing to acknowledge the totality and potential of the individual, as typified in many body-mind practices and somatic movement education processes, ID supports the cultivation of deep inward and outward connectedness. The final page of the 2007 document shares an eloquent passage from Siobhan Davies in which she elucidates a specific integration of a dance artist (likely in performance but maybe in rehearsal) whereby the 'connection between thought, movement and feeling' occurs as something 'delicious'. This requires commitment. The training for arriving, albeit temporarily, in this gestalt, where the contents and container of the body that dances are imbued with richness and vitality, or clarity according to Davies, is not through mere repetition with the problematic effect of cloning and obedience. 'Instead, an individual approach to learning is needed, a way to be exposed to and to absorb new knowledge whilst remaining rigorous about how one decides to work and draw movement out of or into the story of one's own body'.

The communities who associate themselves with ID perhaps in some way share or are invited to consider this sensibility and holistic approach to the development of themselves as dance artists, though not a shared aesthetic. What an individual dancer, choreographer and teacher does and makes with an experience is their prerogative. This perspective iterates the creative capacity of the individual to be responsibly in working relationships, especially when the material properties of dance art are contingent on health and communication.

Dance as a flux of multitudinous paradoxes is reflected in ID's approach to learning, autonomy and community. Creativity is aligned here to intellectual and somatic finesse. Body-mind is perceived of as fully capable when more integrated, sensitive and agile, without schisms or privileges to either body or mind. Through its own curated dialogues, generating conditions and spaces for discussion and experimentation, ID actively responds to and supports existing dialogues of dance practice and education. From a foundation of championing somatic practice as critical, ID demonstrates a certain plasticity, a willingness to change and be changed through interaction and participation; a core principle of mature somatic, and existential, enquiry.

FESTIVAL

The what_now festival in April 2014 took the form of a public residency. Taking this quote below as its starting point, the festival emerged from the suggestion that 'artists need to construct new conditions for the realisation of community' (festival programme).

We can reach every point in the world but, more importantly, we can be reached from any point in the world. Privacy and its possibilities are abolished. Attention is under siege

everywhere. [...] As a result, the conditions for community have run aground and new philosophical categories are needed

Franco 'Bifo' Berardi, *The Soul at Work* (2009)

An open call was made some months earlier requesting proposals from artists to be residents in the festival. From around 100 applications, 19 were selected by festival curator Frank Bock in communication with Katy Coe, Hamish MacPherson and Efrosini Protopapa, who were referred to as space holders. Together they had been in dialogue about the design of the festival since September 2013, also with Fiona Millward, Kirsty Alexander and Gitta Wigro. Whilst Frank Bock is named as curator in the written material of the festival, the nature of the emergent processes exemplified in the festival design means that emphasis is more appropriately given to shared-authorship and co-curation.

The selected artists and the four space holders lived together in the building for four days and three nights: a semi-curated and willing temporary community. After their experience of the festival, the resident artists wrote responses, some of which are included anonymously within this text in italics. These parallel voices help share outwardly something of the interiority of that group, as there was much unseen by audiences (including myself as an audience member at the festival).

During the festival, the building was also occupied by a rota of regular staff and volunteers. The public, audience members, were invited to attend the festival and activities over one evening and two days of the residency period. As well as the various, and deliberately unscheduled, activities of the resident artists, there was a dinner and four scheduled talks. Geographer Derek McCormack presented *Thinking and moving with atmospheric things* and the post-talk discussion stayed in the Roof Studio. Following subsequent talks, discussion took place in the Research Studio, where more circular orientation allowed for easier flow of exchange than the spatial divide created by a projector screen and rows of seating. Writer and artist Caroline Bergvall presented *Writing Gestures*; specialist in philosophy of education Joris Vlieghe presented *Being-Entirely-Flesh* and specialist in theatre studies and performance philosophy Laura Cull presented *A(n Interrupted) Lecture on Attention in 9 parts*. The programmed talks offered the only more commonly structured events of the festival. Audience were seated facing the same way, and there was performance of expertise and information on topics not emerging from dance practice explicitly, but selected to stream into the festival container to resonate with residents and audience.

Audiences were invited to 'explore the building and find the artists at work, and to be part of what is happening' (festival programme). This invitation was made relatively quietly by volunteers or through the receptionist handing over the festival programme, which also contained these instructions of engagement:

- 1. By being in the space, you are already part of the activity.**
- 2. You choose how to engage with what is going on; you can join in, watch, listen in, converse, move, read, ask, share, declare, leave.**
- 3. When the building closes, a bell will ring twice.**

Existential concerns for both the individual and for the field of dance practice were somewhat near the surface in this festival: at stake over the four days was the extent to which a process of being and becoming, melding and melting could be stayed with and attended to. There appeared to be an uncompromising ambition for patience and the creation of spaces for separate-togetherness. This subtle process approximates the live encounter of performance, in which, for both audience and performer, there is a lived experience of gaze, proximity, kinaesthetic awareness and breath. However, dance performance and reception is being tested further by transplanting a fraction of the more familiar conventions of audience-performer relationships and de-marked performance spaces to a frame of the whole building, implicating everything in the shared performance event. This decentralised and de-centralising process took a risk with audiences' attention, patience and confidence to meet the fragmented whole.

A goal of the festival was to willingly suspend resolution and end-point in a radical attempt to create the conditions for *thought to break into what we don't know we don't know*. Firstly, what was the activity the resident artists were engaged in which audiences were, partially, present? Much of the resident artists' process was indeed unseen, and I refer you to Amaara Raheem's writing and photo essay in the bibliography for further detail.

The resident artists were facilitated in and generated their own processes of questioning how to be attentive to each other, how to initiate action and how to share it. Things happened without a particular target or aim, and without much recourse to familiar strategies. In doing so, a very particular kind of space was created for open questions, explored through thought, word, interaction, action and inaction. This community engaged in sustaining space and time for socially, creatively and perceptually examining any unseen assumptions and patterns. Other than the scheduled talks, the festival could be interpreted as having produced processes, rather than performances.

What is being creative? Being creative has absolutely nothing to do with an audience.

Taking place in a city dominated by *neoliberal and free-market ideology*, I perceive this festival to be radical in its creation of a frame that created an experiential space for the question: *how can we as artists [...] think and do and become, procedurally, alternative communities?* The role of the artist here emphasises art-making to be in a dynamic reciprocal relationship with society, and whilst this is always inherent, here it is brought to conscious awareness for interrogation through various means. Consequently, when audiences were present, opening up what could have been a wholly private endeavour, they too were invited to be equal in the co-creation and responsibility of these endeavours, rather than witnesses or consumers of a tangibly defined performance duration or artefact.

What were the conditions that broached shared responsibility? Presence and attention were crucial: to self, to other, to environment. However, presence in this festival was interrogated through the nature of the residency itself where activity could take place all over the building at any time. Audiences had to navigate how they would engage with a multiplicity of action, and how they might pay attention to it. This was evident in how they dispersed and regrouped throughout the building. The entrance became a new room in itself, with paper sheets over the windows obscuring the offices beyond. Various boxes, paper, chairs and snatches of writings

were left around. Whilst it is attractive to examine the treatment of objects and words for their semantic shifts and multiple meanings, in this instance how the audience was perceived is of greater significance in understanding this festival and its more radical propositions in the exploration of community.

The vision of the festival held a perspective that creative processes are not the prevail of the self-identified artist. Everyone is making choices all the time, and how these are framed produces differences of self-perception and notions of social role. This context perhaps even challenged identifications of self. It asked the individual to take responsibility for how much they may recalibrate their expectations, relinquish control over them and suspend predicting particular answers, of themselves as much as of dance practice. These are common questions and desires of many contemporary performance festivals, and this festival is an example where the stark contemplative duration succeeded in creating space for multiple, inherently kinaesthetic, answers.

The effect of such a demonstration and assertion of process was made possible through the shared community of the resident artists. Strength in numbers accentuated the conditions for practice of presence. Whilst shared in context, the resident artists, and similarly the audience, were not homogenous in behaviour, vocal production (amount, tone, volume) and practical activity. Individual differences generated space for reflection, degrees of inclusion and various explorations of invitation through watching, talking, moving, touching, eating, listening and reading in the practice of solo togetherness.

Dancing and moving exemplify processes of meeting, being together and parting. This fundamental phrase repeats everywhere in the act of living in the world. The activities of the festival allowed time and space for heightened exploration of this cycle of interaction as a creative act of community and communality. However, the act of making and accepting an invitation into any value system remains an on-going question. It appeared to be a collective responsibility to invite audiences into the processes, yet each individual resident artist in the group had different strategies, aims and expectations.

Every morning when I wake up, I ask my self what now? [...] Try to distinguish between what you feel you should do and what you think you should do.

From reading the texts of the artists in residence, one activity described the practice of 'active passivity', an experience of time dilation and pleasure. *This sensation is like being lazy and slow and then bringing this sensation into an active becoming. It is about using it for another cause and it's about resistance. It's about creating this extra layer of thickness in your skin.*

This is a potentially conducive state to help bypass vulnerability felt in not-knowing, leaving potent curiosity and creative resilience instead. This artist considers this state to be contagious. However this sensibility, like the overall intentions of the festival, was not necessarily met by all audiences. Here the very act of stepping over a threshold is highlighted as fragile; contagion cannot be assumed. Some feedback from audiences highlighted personal feelings of division and exclusivity, whilst some writing from the resident artists appeared to also find friction between their closed-doors time and public time.

Then there was all the work that got tucked away when the public came and lost its vitality

The framework set up the potential for encounter, which was manifested at different degrees of intensity and transparency over the festival. The arrival of audience, and the public talks, were, for some residents, articulated as being a negotiation, implying some degree of rupture from a previous continuity, or sense of building community. This is a reminder that engagement is mitigated by the individual's capacity of body-mind to recognise over-stimulation and waning endurance, and already existing knowledge and motivations.

There was a preparation we made for the public, like cleaning our teeth. I still have questions on how to deal with those moments of facing the public and not letting everything drop, whilst allowing others in. A constant negotiation of wanting to be social and needing to digest.

Proximity, Kunst argues (2009), is powerful and crucial in new navigations of role, affect and creation. She notes that it can be fragmentary. Fragmentation in the festival occurred temporally as well as spatially, invoked by the building and the friction of audience/performer role, perception and agency. Proximity to the living other invokes the rebellious caveat that separates live arts from other art forms, making a virtue of disappearance and presence. Other forms of knowing and capital are engendered and cultivated, and here to be cherished. The festival delicately curated an experiential space for audiences that cast the performance object as the intangible space between individuals in that shared space, provoking strong subjective experiences: a mirror of community itself.

Artist residencies vary in structure. A residency framework provides a focussed workplace and concentration of attention, making a practical and conceptual space for exploration and risk-taking, and are generally private. However, end-of-residency public sharings can presuppose reaching a destination that intrinsically affects a research process. Artist-in-residence structures within festivals are not unusual, but to create almost the entirety of a festival as a residency, except for some public talks, experiments with and resists many paradigms simultaneously. In pushing expectations through this hybrid of residency and festival, and through inviting audiences to co-create their journey, the experiential nature of live dance and performance practice was exposed as both fragile but potent.

But this process was sometimes discombobulating. Was I the only one to feel this?

Community feels like a constant observation, practice, experiment and enjoyment in where I begin and end and where you begin and end. [...] I am in every room when I am only in one room.

The context also reveal a repeated phenomenon of how what was at the centre of attention for one individual may be have been peripheral to another. Presence is subject to constant negotiation with inner and outer stimuli. At one of the talks, the attention of an audience member was pulled by hearing sounds of voices coming through speakers behind her head. The ambiguity or interruption of a speaking building and unofficial sound caused her to furrow her brow. For someone specifically attending the talk, rather than the festival at large, accidental ambient Elephant and Castle sirens outside the studio might be imperceptible or irritating; for those experiencing events in new hierarchies, it was a reminder of the intense inner-outer

experience of the festival, of ID, and of an individual sense of perceptual position. Attention may be under siege, yet a reminder of an outside world and one's own and shared histories may evoke awareness of individual agency or be a catalyst to reinitiate attention with determination.

This was a subtle festival. Space and time, both qualitatively and quantitatively, were given over for generative processes of continual digesting, filtering, grappling and relishing of immaterial and material properties. With time not so explicitly partitioned, this ungoverned or rebellious time was valued as a condition for knowing, and as an audience member in the building, the experience of slowing down was palpable. Deceleration can increase sensitivity, though experiencing 'now' is difficult.

We spent endless time sitting in a circle pondering over how to make a decision and failing to make one.

...because only through slowing down the production of dance can any potential for change be noticed

The resident artists, through their commitment, the various restrictions of the residency and the holding provided by the context of the festival, were able to simultaneously practice and communicate their tolerance, and in some ways amusement, of not-knowing. The group appeared resilient amidst the fluctuations of audiences present. Here, as an artistic practice, the overall state of on-going attention was held as precious but not wholly private. There was a considerable risk that the celebration of this sensibility was so quiet and stripped back that audiences missed it, unless already prepared and motivated through pre-existing relationships with resident artists, ID or otherwise, to approach with patience and levity. This uncompromising attitude towards an expansive conception of dance, and the audience's significant participating in that, was a particular highlight and defining feature of the festival.

The community of ID is of a scale that faces are recognised and frequently relationships are already established in some form, thus rendering the context in some ways less precarious. However, this already existing familiarity can create a safer environment to experiment within, and indeed may strengthen that community. Moving forward, further exploration of how an invitation into the frame is made may develop this festival residency model for future testing and other expressions of community.

Holding dance to be accountable in its relationality, this festival not only conjectured the importance of the felt sense and proximity, but inherently acknowledged the how practicing community and communality is critical gesture of temporarily stabilising unstable factors.

We have to accept that we are co-independent in these processes. Our co-ness is due to the fact that, while we're alive, we share the same time, but our independence comes from the multiplicity of our perception of that time.

There are not so many spaces conducive to the extent of this experience in everyday life, and in the arts. what_now felt like a point of humanness, of being human, being in contact.

WHAT

The festivals both contribute to and are part of an ongoing intricate interplay between platforms, residencies, creative partnerships with funding and research for development and presentation of dance art, in London and beyond. Through the festivals ID creates a temporary coalescence of following and leading ideas and practice. The 2014 festival demonstrated how the supporting structures of the organisation and building permit such a departure from more familiar acts of production.

The 'what' festivals began in 2009, conceived of by Gill Clarke. The festival is described as a 'platform for invited artist-curators to ask questions of dance, and through dance'. The first festival in 2009 showcased graduate choreographers alongside more established artists. This is a significant shift from a concern with who is given a platform to present their work, which foregrounds the notion of position, to how the material of the work itself manifests and is experienced. Each festival has created a meeting point of research activities, debates and artistic practice, with a different focus through choices in programming and the selection of curators (Gill Clarke 2009 and 2011, straybird/Lucy Cash and Becky Edmunds 2010 and 2012, Frank Bock 2013 and 2014). Collaborative curation emerges as a goal, and choreographic thinking a creative research practice that invites questions rather than definitive answers.

Lucy Cash and Becky Edmunds, curators of the What Matters festival (2012), state:

What Matters is neither a statement nor a direct question; it's rather an invitation to consider the particularity of the works we've chosen, whether that particularity is to do with form or process, material or subject matter. When the word choreography is used outside the context of dance, it is often to suggest a manipulation of bodies or information. We are interested in exploring choreography as an embodied approach to composition which draws on kinaesthetic awareness and the kind of finely-honed perceptual skills that is possible to develop through movement training.

In 2013, the press-release states that the festival seeks to:

unearth and explore the nature and the significance of 'context' in defining new developments in dance and choreographic thinking, both in the UK and abroad.

In 2013, Frank Bock championed social choreography, emphasizing the significance of collective bodies and action in a political time of austerity and decay of individual action. Dance and choreography are underpinned by creative relationships, and that sociality is implicitly resilient and a way of resourcing resilience. Through press-release statements pertaining to a wider field of cultural production and socio-political context, ID exposes its recognition of its interconnected position and invites others to consider such mutuality for endurance.

The festivals have shared an ongoing interest in utilizing the whole building for simultaneous multiplicity in the presentation of works. The use of the Research Studio on the first floor during the 2013 festival was a space not dissimilar to the 2014 one in its fluid, discursive nature. Michael Kliën invited a group of artists to work there:

throughout the 3 days of the festival on a choreographic 'excavation site', which delves into current frameworks for dance and choreography. Audiences will be welcomed into the space to observe their process and to respond.

This space held different material properties – conversation, movement, sound, overlapping – sometimes alone, overlapping or concurrently. This density required the individual to excavate their own cavity, or share an existing space with each other. The analogy of excavation alludes to already an active process within existing histories, and like archeology, the remains are coupled with unseen intangible actions. The 'remains' are those figures present, and meaningfulness is developed and enabled through proximity and through paying attention through all the senses. Modes of relating and one's choice of orientation were on more equal terms in this space, but not equally activated at any one moment.

The scheduled talks in the 2014 festival connected to the Crossing Borders series that Bock curates at ID, and the speakers presented in a relatively formal, familiar manner from academic practice. On the one hand this was at odds with the festival hybridity, on the other it was perhaps recuperative in its specific dynamic and what it demanded of audiences. Here dance was shown to be more the magpie in taking something from these talks. But a question of how interested dance may be in offering itself back to the domains that these speakers hail from, to illuminate something about them from its expertise instead, is a useful one.

Through the spaces they create, the festivals demonstrate how ID takes responsibility for the education and development of the integrated richness of body-mind that Davies refers to as being the zenith of the dance artist (and then perhaps of dance art). Characterised by flexible attention and unpredictable forms within a structure, the 2014 festival attempted to explore this as a continuing process, rather than a temporary state. There was even perhaps a very understated argument to make this integration a necessary condition for dance art, and also for makers, performers, teachers, audience members, prior to any other form of production or performativity as well as discovered through those processes.

The 2014 festival practiced dance as distinctive, of important social value and holding transformational power. In highlighting the threshold of invitation and encounter, conversation, micro-perceptions, richness of sensation of time, duration, endurance and slowing down, different degrees of togetherness were valued and evoked in a space of suspended transition and stabilized mobility. If one of the values found in dance festivals can be the creation of a crucial agonistic space, the festival did this with sensitivity, compassion and care.

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What might this connecting grapheme concern? It might be a symbolic connector of two temporal positions, of past with present. It highlights the interstice between two words as content not abyss, framing the space of the festival as a perpetual and legitimate liminality. It reflects the space that is felt and found in heuristic processes, the space of not knowing what is going to happen; a precondition for learning.

The grapheme is symbolic in a wider scope of bridge building and strengthening the community of ID and its wider communities. ID forms temporary mutuality through contexts generated that are inherently reliant upon others, creates spaces for seeing and being seen at a very deep level. Connecting needs to acknowledge the phrasing of arrival, meeting, departing, which is not singular but cyclical, with multiple beginnings, middles and ends. The 2014 festival held contradiction through quiet chaos, continual threshold and ambiguity, and the underscore alludes to deliberate construction and shared investment to maintain connection through that.

NOW?

The what_now 2014 festival claimed the potential and vitality in and of dance art makers and audiences through a temporary radical space for apprehending the friction between process, production and interdependence. Creating almost structureless structures appeared to be vital in manifesting delicate spaces for active and rigorous questioning. Geographer and author Derek McCormack (2008: 7), in a discussion of Lefebvre and Guattari's shared perception of the importance of thinking spaces, writes about the latter's concern with producing 'facilitating contexts - sites of experience and experiment for thinking relations between bodies, concepts, and materials of various kinds'. The strategy of using questions is a central tenet of any curatorial event. In the creation of the concentric and overlapping circles of community, a micro version of how the field of dance operates, or could operate was demonstrated. If one was willing to step into the sparse depth, where any expectations of overtly heightened event needed to be rapidly rearranged, it was visible that ID made a very strong case for rejecting excess and inviting exchange on an almost cellular level.

As with everything, it changed what happened next

The what_ festivals have become biennial, heralding new changes and challenges, both within the organisation and in the wider political, economic and creative fields of practice. However, art, and dance art, shown through the 2014 festival especially, retains a strong capacity to create new conditions for transgression and creative play with change and continuity.

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