

DISTANCIAS CORTAS

Tool Box For Performance Practice and Reflection

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Special thanks to Lucien Easton &
Natalia Jimenez Gallardo

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Introduction.

This paper consist of interviews and a series of movement practices, mixed with thoughts and reflections. The interviews are a three way conversation with Natalia Jiménez Gallardo and Javier Druida, who talk about movement and contact, and how this takes place and importance in their lives. With this text I invite you to look at these topics through the lenses of their own experiences, knowledge and jobs.

Natalia Jiménez Gallardo is a dancer, choreographer, teacher, shiatsu therapist and former president of the Andalusian Dance Association, PAD.

Javier Druida is an anthropologist, former priest, dancer, social worker, working with abused women and kids.

All the interviews are translated from Spanish to English.

These interviews will be mix together with performance practices, exploring the topics presented in this paper.

In some of these practices, I create scenarios. For example Chapter 1: “The Five Senses”, there is a guided movement practice that you can read and follow. In other chapters, such as in Chapter 2: “A New Place”, the practices are present as a proposition where you can reflect on ways to explore the subjects - a seed that can grow in different paths is presented to you to follow wherever your imagination leads you.

Content.

The first chapter, "*The Five Senses*", starts with "*The Beginning of Everything*", where we make a journey from being babies to adulthood. We'll see how, as babies, we live submerged in the senses and how, when we become older, the senses start to evolve into something that we listen less and have less in mind, becoming something autonomous. Javier introduces the idea of how family structures and the consequences of our childhood influence our development and personalities. This is also connected to external factors such as the privileges or limitations that we have or the kind of society that we live in. This idea brought me to think about spaces and objects as something alive, as something that have its own boundaries, personality and rules once we start to relate to them.

Natalia Jimenez Gallardo introduces her thoughts about her childhood and the conclusions she came to by looking back at it through the lenses of movement and the senses.

The middle part of this first chapter are movement practices around the five senses, where there is a collection of some practices from different movement professionals, like Michele Rizzo and Aitana Cordero, and other practices that I propose for each of the five main senses. With these movement practices I want to invite you to rediscover the simplicity of the five senses. Reducing everything to that sense to understand its powers. You can have fun doing simple things just by putting the focus on one of them. You can also discover new things about yourself and from the world that you didn't realise, like the texture of a wall or the sound of a stick on the grass, or your connection with a specific texture or smell.

To end this chapter we have "*To Love As Well As To Hate Requires Closeness*" which reflects on how the awareness of the limits and physical boundaries we have as humans are intertwined, confused, unclear or how we simply skip them. Javier Druidas talks about his experiences as a social worker and how "*women who have been abused go through a kind of displacement in which their bodies no longer belong to them.*" He also talks about his perceptions of the movements that mistreated people develops. "To mistreat is to deny someone's body, presence and personality".

This is followed by the reflection that Natalia has about the importance of having harmonious relationships with the spaces and how the presences of toxic relationships affects us mentally and physically, but also about how kids are very inspiring and releasing to observe: "There is something about playing with children that brings me back to this place of spontaneity, of going down to the ground, of climbing, of rediscovering, of not believing that I know, of not knowing, of savouring something, of exploring..."

We close this section with reflections about "*Sex and Contact*" by Natalia and Javier: how sex - as an intimate encounter "that occurs when the naked body wants to feel pleasure and to provoke it in the other person"- can be one of the first experiences of listening to the other's body, while listening to your own at the same time.

The second chapter, "*A New Space, The Body As A Tool*" is a proposed guide of movement practices for disrupting what we understand as normal behaviour in spaces to perform, experiment, transgress, subvert patterns by, for example, isolating stimulus, activating spaces or exploring different concepts, provoking new perspectives and approaches.

For that purpose I use cultural aspects but also architecture, which creates limits and restrictions within ourselves. This is structured throughout the division of the concepts: Space, (where is also included proxemics and distances), Voice and Time.

I give ideas and variations where you can choose how to play and how to relate to it. That can be from trying the practices to just think about them, listening where your body and mind brings you. Hypothetic or possible scenarios are presented to be modified and to be played with. I set a direction but not a path; that decision is left in your hands. There is not only a proposition of a practice movement but also my reflections on the propositions and other people's ideas and knowledge, such as Bonnie Brainbridge Cohen's and Javier Druida's.

This paper concludes with a game that mixes all the explained practices, where I propose different spaces, distances, directions, movement quality, voice quality, and time perceptions. You can pick some qualities of these groups and mix them to experiment with these matches. For example: Historic space, with short distances, with a collapsing quality movement using a sharp voice.

THE FIVE SENSES

We start to develop our senses while we begin our lives inside our mothers belly. Touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste are the base of our stimulus. We are immersed in them since birth. We become under them and totally enthralled by them, since the liquid sounds of the belly when we are inside our mother, to the air or sun touching our skin when we are outside in the world. It takes so much space in us that we don't need more stimulus than the taste of a piece of apple, a stick or a light to be fully concentrate, enthralled and connected.

The textures, the visuals, the noises, the smells and the tastes start to develop in our body and brain when we start to develop in our mom's belly. When we grow up, all these senses are just there, but the intensity of them and the space they take in our emotions - or the space we allow them to take in our emotions - is less. We put them in a side and they became autonomous of us.

This chapter has the aim to give you tools to come back to them and let them take the space they could have in your life.

The beginning of everything.

The contact -the touch- is one of the most essential senses to survive and the first one we develop. At an early age, caresses and physical contact are as important and basic as eating or sleeping. It is essential for our physical and mental health, as well as a way of communicating with others. This relationship we have with our family when we are born establish structures in our personality and dynamics that accompany us throughout life.

How do these structures of "the beginning of a life" affect the future of this person?

What are the movements around a beginning?

-Being "this beginning" a starting point of a life, look at all the characteristics and people around this new person joining life.

How does society and privileges influences and shape us by limiting freedom and giving and taking power?

This are some of the questions Javier reflects about in the next interview.

Javier Druida:

"The first movement we do in our lives is to join. When a new person is going to join life, the house is prepared to do a welcoming. By doing this, it has being created a space of movement for this person. A space for them to join with their body, a space of welcoming. In that space there are messages that are very clear and that define things like gender or limits. In that space, the fear of falling, control, containment... are projected. We are incorporated into an architecture of movement that is not free; that is constructed.

We enter the world in this way, in unconsciously defined paths. You didn't ask, you just came and those who were there before receive you.

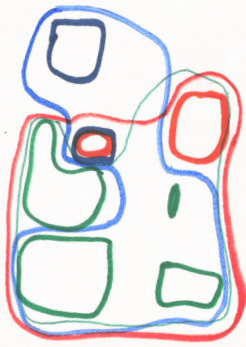
A second form of movement we do are the words, the sounds, being it also an induction to movement.

-"I was born with the clear message that there are older people who have structures and rules, and you were born to join those rules."

As a member of a family, you take your place in this family order. You create positions and distances from the other family members. The contact between siblings and family defines you for the rest of your life in how you relate to others.

*We are born with a territoriality over the body, with a more or less defined sense of ownership. These are our territorial limits. The body will always accompany you, you can change your house, change your clothes, but you cannot change your body,*1 it is your border marking. The relationship and position that you keep with your siblings and family members educates that body in the limits of the relationship -what is or isn't allowed, depending on whether a mandate is or ins't tolerable.*

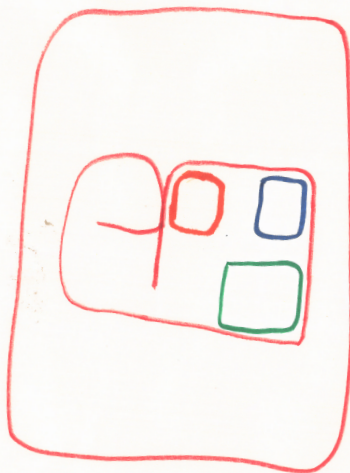
Your territorial space is your skin. In the first 24 months of life, attachment develops, it is where we learn to communicate with our skin. Through contact with the mother, through breastfeeding, through contact with the mother's smell and the sound of the mother's heart. The child will later love within the affective pattern created then. Everything we are in the future is concentrated in this construction of the corporeality that is located in the affectivity and emotion."



- PERSONAL SPACE + SPACE OF MOV A
- SHARED SPACE + SPACE OF MOV A
- PERSONAL SPACE + SPACE OF MOV B
- SHARED SPACE + SPACE OF MOV B
- PERSONAL SPACE + SPACE OF MOV C
- SHARED SPACE + SPACE OF MOV C



- SHARED SPACE + SPACE OF MOVEMENT FOR A
- PERSONAL SPACE + SPACE OF MOVEMENT FOR A
- SHARED SPACE + SPACE OF MOVEMENT FOR B
- PERSONAL SPACE + SPACE OF MOVEMENT FOR B



- SHARED SPACE + SPACE OF MOVEMENT FOR ALL
- PERSONAL SPACE + SPACE OF MOVEMENT FOR A
- PERSONAL SPACE + SPACE OF MOVEMENT FOR B
- PERSONAL SPACE + SPACE OF MOVEMENT FOR C

(*1 Bea: you can transform it but not change it.)

When we invite people (our baby, lover, friend, family, etc.) to our "space of movement", Javier says, we allow them their own space within our own, so the space of movement starts to transform in a live and fluid way. Boundaries change from more to less strict, more and less defined.

Where is your "space of movement"? Is this space only your space of movement or do you share it in some way with others? How much space is a "shared space" of movement and how much it is your own space -"personal space"?

I found this very interesting as a concept. Let's draw it to visualise how it looks. The next drawings represent three different houses and how the different space of movement takes place in them. You too! (The empty page is for the reader to draw)

In the drawing 1 and 2 we see how some personal space is outside the shared space. We can see there is a restriction of freedom, a limit.

In the drawing 3 we see how the personal spaces are inside the shared space. This space of movement is shared only when the “owner” allows it. Depending on the people concerned, the boundaries of this shared space can be really clear, or they can change through dialogue.

If we talk about a public space, it could be organised by schedules, days, people, roles, hierarchy, etc.

In every space, if we “zoom in”, every shelf, thing and object will also have an owner and it will have their own parameters of sharing more or less defined.

We live in a society full of norms, ownership, capitalism and materialism. This drawing practice can make us understand how much we own; tell the difference between the things we own to be used and the things we own for the owning itself. It can also help us to know how much we share consciously and unconsciously; how attached we are to things and how much do we need in our lives.

This is also marked by how we grow up and the different privileges we either have or don't . Privilege can be measured by our gender, religion, skin color, citizenship, language, housing situation, education, abilities, sexuality, geolocation, mental health, body sizes, etc. The way we relate to objects and people is different depending on how much space and things we possess -or are forced to share- growing up, although it keeps transforming and reshaping all our lives. It establishes how we move around the different environments and within a society.

Javier talks about his own perspective of growing up as a boy in the Spanish culture, and about the children he works with as a social worker.

Javier Druida:

"Movement always follows cultural patterns; ethnomotricity. It is crossed by gender patterns, status patterns, food patterns, all this defines the movement.

In my case, that movement was cut out by the idea of man. That anthropomorphism that is incorporated into life in my case had a strict gender structure. The way I cut my hair, the way I wear my clothes, the way I covered my body, the way I undressed, the way I went to the bathroom to relieve myself, which are routine movements in everyday life but which are the ones that really make up your margins of freedom, were also cut out in education by a rigid gender pattern.

It is curious because you study this kind of things in theory but you can't abstract from them when you want to put them into practice. People are aware of their own limits and live happily without these margins of freedom because they are integrated, socialized and “normal”, in quotation marks.

The contact with the other develops first in a ludic way through play and has no burden or meaning. The children's movement, although it has those unconscious rules that we have talked about, has much wider canon of freedom, but then it is tamed. The child is told not to sit like this, not to dress like that, not to move like this, the way she dresses limits the margins of her movements and the capacity of her movements to move freely. The woman's movement is built for inward looking, shorter movements, so that her movement away from her protective areas is not too long. The man's movement is made for exploration.”

People are aware of its own limits and lives happily without these margins of freedom because they are integrated, socialised and “normal”, in quotation marks.

When we leave that society by migrating or changing social groups, the personal limits can be challenged, and the standards for what is right and wrong can change. For example, privilege changes depending on the location you're in. As Javier says, society makes us fit somehow in its mold, depending on our privileges we will fit more or less, but we will live happily inside those margins of freedom that the society gives us, thinking and accepting that that is what we deserve.

The position we take in relation to the senses when we grow up.

Where do we place our awareness and listening towards our senses as we grow up?

How does our culture teach us to position ourselves in relation to the perception and relationship we have with our body and our senses?

Where are the limits imposed by the social system towards the body?

Natalia reflects on these questions and addresses them in the following interview.

Natalia Jiménez Gallardo:

“There is something in the education system that makes us learn from the act of memorising. I have the recollection of myself as a little girl moving a lot. I had the need to have my legs above my torso; something that was completely impossible at school, where you have to sit in a certain way.

That limit meant and has meant a lot in the memory of my body.

When I was a little girl my mother signed me up for dancing classes, but dancing in a very funny way. It was very focused on putting on the gypsy costume, to stick my bottom out, to be very funny. It was a type of dance more related to tradition, folklore, music, etc. It was nice, but it was rigid, it put us in order: who did better, who did worse.

There's a very exhibitionist side to dancing. And there was a moment when I decided that I didn't want people to consume me, but I wanted to develop this “going inwards and understanding the world through the senses” to speak and communicate. That's when I understood that dancing is a language and it's a way of speaking.

When I realised that it is a language, through these sensations and the power that it has, I found the power of enunciation of the body, which is in everyone. That power makes it possible for me to communicate with a plant, an animal, with everything. That's when I started to feel a different kind of intelligence.

My intelligence felt a bit subordinated to getting a mark, to being in front or behind, to being in the centre. Then suddenly you realise how the system limits the spaces. Not just a chair at a desk where a girl doesn't fit, because she doesn't. The kids are so big that not even the teacher can assume it, because they may also come from a trapped life and different kind of intelligence.

When you start to move you realise that you can occupy space on all planes and directions, that you can move it and that you can move in it. You become space and you can become music and it's nothing strange, which it is too, because I have a lot of faith in movement. But it is also an empowerment, because you realise that you can do mathematics, generate geometry, be a living organism with other bodies, leave your weight behind and that you have a direct relationship with gravity, that you can fly... How did we castrate this essential part that comes with us? We step on the ground every day.

I claim that to move offers a way of thinking, and that's why I like to choose where I place myself, how for example I need to take a walk before saying something.

I don't get to feel completely free because it can also be very shocking or very provocative and it's still true that I use the stages to be free, although the cultural industry also limits me, but it is what it is. This is the way, to move in community and to empower the body as a language and whatever we need to say. If we need a camera, if we need to write... the word is wonderful but the word comes from out of a body; it is a body. If the word is not inhabited by something, what is it? There was a movement before anyone wrote it, there was a movement before we said "This" word. Someone passed this on to me, didn't they? So there's the whole movement of all the human beings -which I'm grateful for- passed through the world and making me be here today saying this.”

We can keep adding sensations captured by our senses we weren't aware of, but actually we perceived them before. We have to retrieve them and collect them, because we had partly lost the ability to connect to them over time. As babies we walk in a constant imbalance; we practice over and over and become balanced overtime. This imbalance can be recovered, which can lead to the ability of being voice -imbalanced or thinking- imbalanced. We can detach the imbalance from being just a body quality.

There is also the possibility of moving fast and moving slow, moving with music or without music, going with the rhythm or against the rhythm. From here we can fly all the way to the physics, and study our bodies velocity, acceleration, constant, force, direction, position and frequency.

For example, we can just focus on the sense of equilibrium and dynamic equilibrium, which would be imbalance. Or just Focus in the hands and presence of that body that supports yours
focus in the hands and presence of the other body who gives you support and information about yourself and the other body. Anything that we focus on it amplifies their presence, it takes over the other senses and stimulus, or add a new layer.

Senses's practices.

I went back in my memory to recollect different practices I did during my life, as well as invented new ones based on the three-way conversations we have in this chapter. To explore how we can play with the five main senses, to come back to them, to use them and increase their volume.

(The movement practices are in colours.)

The first practice is to get in touch with your body and the earth.

Ask someone to read the instructions to you, or read it to someone else to guide the practice.

“Close your eyes.

How does your body feels?

Focus on the part of your body you are leaning on and how is supporting your entire body, thanks to the earth and the gravity.

Focus on this part and feel the weight.

Imagine the space around you, listen to the space where you are.

Feel your weight.

Feel the volume of your body in the space.

Let the density of the air and the temperature touch you...

Your own body temperature”

Let's investigate how it is to move your body with your eyes closed. Just a simple step, or a simple change of weight can be something loud in your senses. When we silence the noise by closing our eyes to return to the body, any movement, no matter how small, can become loud.

“With your eyes closed, move your arms to feel their weight, incorporating different parts of your body to the movement: legs, ankle, hips, neck...”

With this dynamics we can perceive our internal body space without having to respond to any external stimulus.

TOUCH

Intensifying touch.

Let's focus on the layer that covers your body: the skin.

Move around with your eyes closed and the attention in the skin, walk with your arms and legs.

Listening and discovering the dimensions, volumes and textures through the skin with the eyes closed.

If we find someone in the way, we discover them too. The texture of their hair, their clothes, the backpacks, walls, the wooden floor...

...Just close your eyes and discover the surround through your skin."

Example: you are in an outdoor table eating with a friend.

"Close your eyes. Feel your body and put the focus on the layer that covers your body: the skin.

Listen through it.

Touch the air, touch your friend's clothes, their hair, the table texture, the chair, the glass or the plate, the food.

You can stand up and walk towards the wall, listen to the texture and discover what is the wall made of.

Just close your eyes and discover through your skin the surround. Do other senses become more present and strong too, apart from the touch?

What do you have around? How are the textures of the walls? And the floor? Is the grass wet? Do you smell it?"

By doing this you get more information about the space than you do with your eyes closed.

How does the distance from the table to the wall feel? Does it match with your pre perception? Maybe you imagined it was shorter or longer.

Walking with the eye closed.

(Practice for two people by Aitana Cordero. 3 hours minimum)

One person is going to close their eyes, the other person is going to keep them open.

The person with their opened eyes will guide the other one through the city -or wherever they are- by holding hands while walking.

After 10 minutes of displacement the person with the eyes open leaves the hand of the closed eyes person.

The person with the eyes closed has 50 minutes to walk, touch, smell and investigate the space by themselves.

When this time is over, they swap roles again, 10 minutes of displacement and 50 minutes of experience with the eyes closed.

Rules for this part of the exercise:

-Don't talk.

-Don't over protect the person with the eyes closed. Only touch them when they ask for it or to avoid an accident.

Next part...

Once you both have done this journey, hold hands again and look for a coffee place, ask for something to drink and don't let go of each other's hands. Look at each other's eyes and don't talk to each other.

When you finish your drinks, pay and leave in different directions. Look for a place to write a letter and leave it in the street.

Things to experience with the eyes closed:

-Touch

-Walk all the time

-Think during five minutes that you are invisible

-Think once in a while "what if every step brings me to a new and unknown place"

-Fall in love at least twice

-Find the sea

-Cross the street with Rosalia

-Send a secret message to your mom

-Leave an unforgettable trace here

Scanning body. (Practice for two people. From a workshop by María Jesús de los Reyes Manzano, Shiatsu teacher.)

Standing with the feet on the ground, close your eyes. The other person is going to hear you through their hands, ~~its-going~~ to touch all the surface of your body. From head to feet.

This radiography should be made in the calmness and in the listening of the other's body.

The one who is listening stays longer in the places that intrigues them, the parts they don't understand or where you feel it needs to be touched.

Let's stay here... just land your two hands on their

skin, don't move, allow yourself to stay there, just in contact.

Listen to the other person through this channel, skin to skin.

Look for another place in this strange body. Discover it through touch.

Travel through the body scanning with your two hands, play with pressure, feel the temperature, think about healing or sending energy.

We can look with the hands, we can feel things we don't feel just with our open eyes. Often we are so oblivious to it.

"By annulling the layer of sight I raised the volume of touch, so I perceived the skin, and by perceiving the skin I perceived the other person from that organ that covers our whole body. I can communicate, I can transmit my logic of feeling the world." Natalia Jiménez Gallardo said.

"The architecture and the dancer": Reading with the eyes close. (Practice for 2 people by Michele Rizzo.)

We are standing up with soft techno music.

The person who has their eyes opened will be the Architect.

The person with their eyes closed will be the Dancer.

The Architect places their hands in the Dancer's chest and back. The Architect starts to draw a settle swiny movement on the Dancer's chest.

When the Architect feels that the dancer knows the path of movement being marked onto them, the Architect brakes the contact with the Dancer and observes their moves from a distance.

The Architect approaches the Dancer and joins their "settle swiny" movement holding hands, or any other part of their extremities, introducing a new swaying variation to the Dancer's movement.

The Architect should embody Dancer's movement to understand how to communicate and include a variation in the movement they are projecting into Dancer's body.

The architect is going to be in contact with the dancer as long as they need to give the information of the movement.

The dancer has to keep on this movement variation the architect gave them and understand it.

The Architect goes in and out to give variations to the movement loop Dancer is in.

When you play the Architect role, try to give a lot of information. The Dancer is not going to be able to get it, you have to go little by little. For the Dancer, a simple movement is enough; you will experience how with your eyes closed the simplest movement becomes very big and intense.

I connected the sense of touch directly with the Kinaesthetic learning.

What is a Kinaesthetic learner or kinaesthetic intelligent?

The [Cambridge Dictionary](#) defines kinaesthesia as 'the ability to know where the parts of your body are and how they are moving.' Kinaesthetic learning links the process of learning to physical activity. It is a learning style during which the learner has to feel, move or touch in order to learn more effectively, by doing, exploring and discovering.

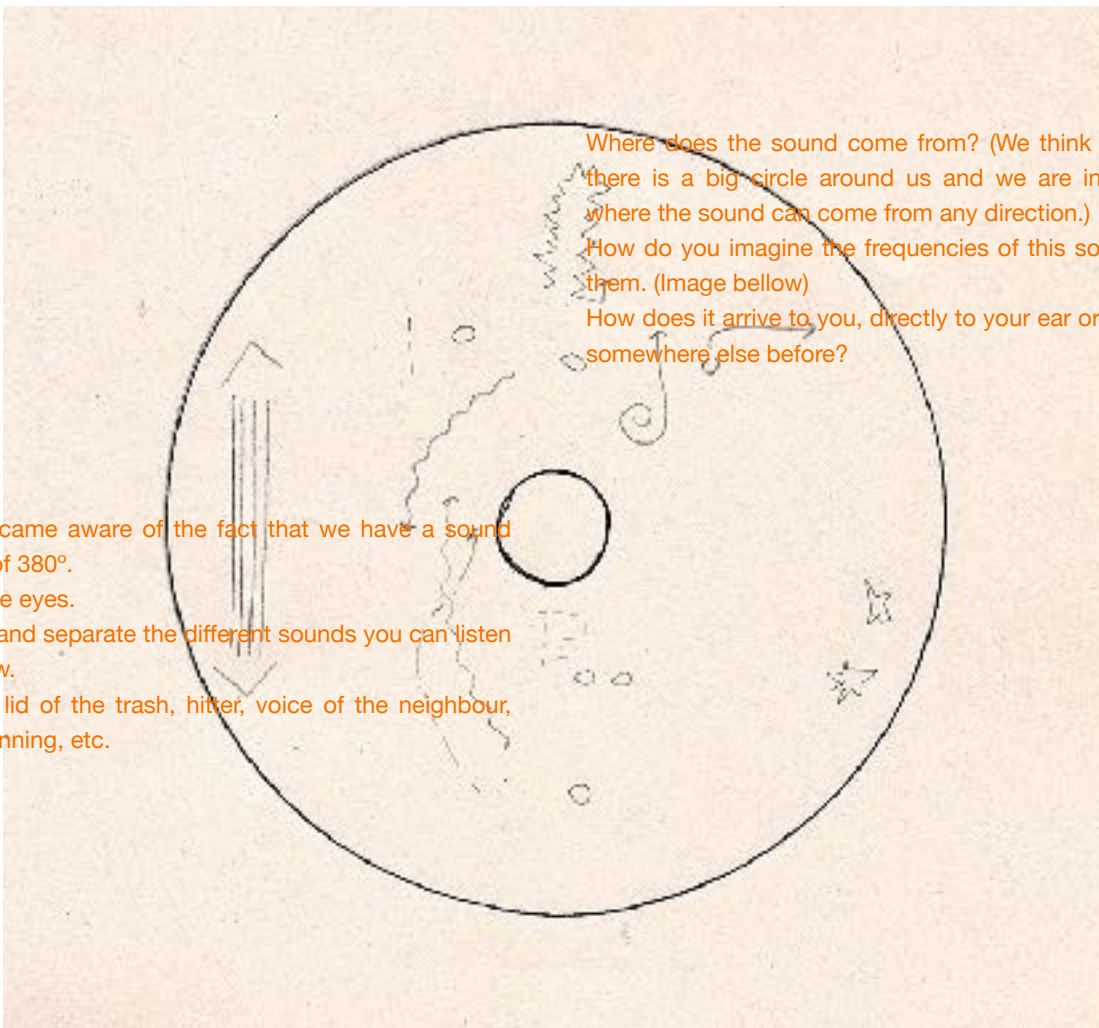
The other learning styles will be: visual, auditory, and reading and writing.

Bay Atlantic University describes the Kinaesthetic learner as *a person who would rather perform physical activity to learn something, as an active participant, instead of passively listening to a lecture or watching a demonstration. That is why the best way of learning something new is by having your hands-on those things you are trying to learn.*

Dance and performance would be something that works very well with kinaesthetic learners, as it is the intelligence of strength, endurance, flexibility, balance, dexterity, movement, expressions and body language. It is also about tact obtained from objects, materials and tools.

HEARING

Look with your ears. (Practice for one or more people. Rescued from the music lessons I attended when I was 7 years old.)



Where does the sound come from? (We think about it like there is a big circle around us and we are in the middle where the sound can come from any direction.)

How do you imagine the frequencies of this sounds? Draw them. (Image bellow)

How does it arrive to you, directly to your ear or is bouncing somewhere else before?

Let's become aware of the fact that we have a sound pickup of 380°.

Close the eyes.

Identify and separate the different sounds you can listen right now.

Ej: bus, lid of the trash, hitter, voice of the neighbour, water running, etc.

Drawing
By
Lucía
Del Valle

SMELL

Practices for a group of people.

Practice 1 From an Aitana Cordero Workshop

Before a movement practice, all the people walk around the space looking at each other.

While walking, go closer to each one of them and smell them.

Do this again after another movement practice and perceive the difference in their smell.

Practice 2

One person closes their eyes, the rest passes one by one close to the person smelling. The person has to guess who is.

In the book “Movement Research: Stories and Journeys by Ria Higler”, she talks about smell as a sense connected to the first chakra. Being a good sense of survival and feeling safe as these are basic conditions for development and growth. As we smell food, or the air, or one another, we consequently decide if it is good for us or not.

“Dogs can smell much better than humans, and we can see a reflection of what they smell in the movement of their tails. In movement practice, you can activate your sense of smell and connect all the way down through your body, with the tailbone. This way, you take what you smell deeper into the body and feel your response to it, as a human being or while finding the animal inside you.” - Ria Higler.

Finding your animal. Practice By Ria Higler.

Lie down on the floor. Close your eyes. Activate the senses of smell and taste, which are connected with the first and second chakras, the belly, the base, the sense of survival and feeling safe. Let this guide you in your movements. Connect with your breathing and feel how it changes, or allow it to change. Find sounds. Slowly, your inner animal may arise... Then, gradually open your eyes and see how your animal relates to this environment...

TASTE

Eat with your eyes closed.

Now your only focus is in the path of the food from the plate to your mouth, and in the tasting and chewing.

Can you feel more nuances of flavours with your eyes closed?

Can you eat the food with your hands? Yes! You can. Now your hands are your instruments.

How does it taste when someone feeds you?

Focus on the texture of the food and your fingers, the temperature, the volume.

Does it taste the same with your hands as it does with a fork?

The changes make the food taste differently. Valeria Mata says in her book "Todo Lo Que Se Mueve": "Entre los utensilios para comer, el tenedor es el más reciente y supuso que se evitara el contacto de la mano con la comida. Un gesto de refinamiento, nuevas formas de la distancia y la delicadeza." EN "Among the eating utensils, the fork is the most recent one and meant the end of contact between the hand and the food. A gesture of refinement, new forms of distance and delicacy".

Here she cites the book "The Empire of Signs" by Roland Barthes, "He talks of chopsticks as a more affectionate instrument with food and, unlike our more aggressive cutlery, they do not pierce or cut it, but only transports it respectfully from the plate to the mouth."

SIGHT

According to Natalia Jiménez Gallardo, *“we can transcript movement in different ways, with our body we can translate the air, plants or cars movement. We can channel this informations to express them in other way or format. It could be drawing, singing, sculpting, etc. The end results of this translations are again received by another body and creates movement again. For example, we can see someone’s identity by checking the way they look at a piece: what they look at and for how long. There is also what you can’t see but you feel. “*

Let what you see touch you 1. (Practice for one or more people)

This happens often watching art, listening to music, reading, etc: you don’t touch it but it feels like it touches you because it stimulates your imagination, triggers memories, and prompts you to question your beliefs or perception. Because every person is moved by different things, let’s visit the most simple way to experience this contact of “no physical contact”.

Think about a natural place you feel connected to. It can be a simple tree in the middle of the park, or a forest in Sweden, a lake in Guatemala, the mountains of Sevilla, or a Beach in Cádiz, a place you know very well or a place you never visited before. Once we are there:

Start to walk around, listen to the space, what it says to you and where it leads you. If you listen closely, you will see how the space becomes louder. By looking, you will feel how the space comes closer to you, as if your body was bigger in that space, or as the space could also notice you and say hi back.

Feel how the breeze touches your hair and cheeks, your hands and the sound holds you while the plants and the earth talks to you.

The other day I visited a communal garden that I used to go when I was teenager. Going in there was like a slap of silence in the middle of my concrete city center neighbourhood in Sevilla. A big wild garden surrounded by the back of the buildings.

Going in there was like receiving a hug from your grandma. I was missing that space so much without having realised it. This feeling it pushes me to lay on a tree, to touch everything. All that time I felt the plants and the space coming closer to me. Everything there was coming closer and touching me even if it was as far as the top of the tree, or the sounds of the cracking of the trees. A hug from nature. I felt comforted and connected to myself, with my memories and my essence.

Let what you see touch you 2. Being something from the outside.

While moving in the street, walking, biking, running, look how other things move. Let those external impulses and movements affect you.

For example: the movement of a leaf tingling because of the wind. Embody the leaf.

A car passing very fast, or stopping: how can your body translate these external movements?

Ex: Some workers flattening the floor tiles. Be that floor.

Be the echo of these impulses.

To love as well as to hate requires closeness.

Contact is very powerful and can contain many different meanings. It can be used for many different purposes. Care can send so many different connotations to another person. A simple gesture to the other can mean and provoke a very nice emotion or it can provoke the opposite.

The same people we think love us, people we share intimate spaces with and spend long periods of time with, are sometimes the same people who cross our boundaries and don't respect us.

Javier Druida, as a social worker, works with women and kids that suffered aggression. He talks about how "the same hand that caresses can be the same hand that hits" and its consequences in the bodies of the assaulted.

Natalia Jiménez Gallardo will later talk about how this society sometimes is an oppressive hand, how she identifies these spaces of bodily oppression and her experience as a dancer, a constant searcher of freedom. Also, Javier will talk about how he has found contact dance as a way of freeing himself. And they will share their thoughts around self-love and sex.

Javier Druida:

"The body is an instrument of total expression, it doesn't only have aesthetics; it has ethics, conscience, territorial demarcation, and a territorial awareness of what limits are. It is a way of total and personal expression; no other art has that power. You build it, feel it and do it, all at once. Is like a playwright, who writes, interprets and does everything simultaneously." - Javier.

"Women who have been abused go through a kind of displacement in which their bodies no longer belong to them. They lose their sense of ownership over their bodies, they are expropriated of their bodies. In non-verbal communication with these people, one of the things that breaks me the most is the gaze.

To mistreat someone is to deny their body, their presence and their personality. This annihilation of the other is very noticeable in the person's gaze. The person breaks the link and in breaking it is not able to engage with the gaze. This disconnection is much more hurtful than any bruise; when a child looks at the ground or looks permanently at his hands. When a woman is not able to raise her eyes to the front and engage hers with yours. Or when she does the opposite; she engages hers with yours but you know that she is not connecting but holding. She is used to holding.

To teach the body that the same hand that caresses can be the same hand that hits, I think it is an experience that fractures the soul. A reparation is needed, a return to feeling that The Hand is the hand that caresses, to give back that soft and tender message that the human is soft and tender.

In the work I do with the children, I measure a lot the contact with them at the beginning, then I try to progressively increase it.

The movements that abused children develop are defensive. To enter the territory of their body you have to ask a lot of permission. They have to really see you without that alert. You need them to be absolutely certain that the person in front of them is not going to mistreat them in any way.

Children have a tremendous capacity of regeneration and are capable of reconstructing conflicts from love, and we adults have forgotten that. In the same way that children can use movement much more freely, they also use love much more freely. So they are able to resolve situations of separation or situations of suffering such as sexual abuse. They are able to increase the volume of life and resolve the conflict from another place, which is much more difficult for adults. That's why I especially like working with children, I learn a lot about how a terrible conflict can be solved from somewhere other than anger. Men are educated in impulses and in having to permanently demonstrate our strength, our power and our place in the earth, so this lesson in humility ties me to the work and makes it vocational."

Natalia Jiménez Gallardo:

"It is very important to have places where you can develop a harmonious relationship with the space. In a toxic relationship, I'll eventually start to think that the other person is different than me. This difference becomes an otherness, and the otherness becomes a threat. I can also get to mimic the other person's thinking, so I loose my spontaneous

behaviour. When a child is told to not put their legs above their body, or to stop moving all the time, their spontaneity vanishes and the physical morphology adapts to these impositions. In the book "The Emotional Anatomy, The Structure Of Experience", Stanley Keleman talks about this - bodies that have developed amorphousness.

It is strange how we have to do movement workshops, tenderness workshops, sexuality workshops... Workshops about the reality that belongs to us; this happens because we allow this system -which reduces us- to rob our spontaneity. That's the spiring thing about kids: they preserve the naturalness we have some memory of. There is a curiosity there: of how did they do that? An action that doesn't know where it's going, that goes somewhere else, and that somehow you allow yourself to be and that's it. Nothing is planned. There is something about playing with children that brings me back to this place of spontaneity, of lying down in the ground, of climbing, of rediscovering, of not believing that I know, of not knowing, of savouring something, of exploring."

Sexuality and contact.

Javier Druida:

"One of the socially accepted forms of intimate movement in which the body is the code of communication is sexuality. The first experience of listening to the other's body is that intimate encounter that occurs when the naked body wants to feel pleasure and to provoke it in the other person. Sexuality, as those joyful things that one feels when touching another, is in itself a code of communication in movement."

"Both sexuality and in dance are constructed from an agreement. From my point of view, the technical apparatus that surrounds dance also limits the freedom of expression. I am more in favour of, following a guide, experimenting with your own body on those limits, experimenting on your own freedom."

Natalia Jiménez Gallardo:

"The absence of self-love can come from not knowing ourselves, and touching ourselves is reduced to making porn, this is not that. This is about the skin, about an organ that is like a tribute to life, to feel, to touch and to love oneself. That's the only way, otherwise you die on the inside. Even when you die there is still life, because you decompose in the earth - if they let you decompose in the earth -; there will still be life in the things you leave behind. What you have decided to leave as a memory in other people's skin, in those bodies that you have welcomed, embraced, looked at, been really making contact with. I like the "Sense Of Life" and "The Senses": the word is telling us, if we get lost, we have all the clues; go back to the body, is the sense of life."

Javier Druida:

"Contact dance was a discovery because I come from a "closed territorial space", it is very difficult to allow contact from the proximity. Contact dance brakes this cliché and makes me discover and investigate with freedom, the other's body, the different body; the strange body.

This conscious and motor approach without affectivity has given me a lot of information about myself; about what I feel, about what the other gives back to me. About how you like to be touched, which limits and articular possibilities each of the extremities have. How you can travel holding - supporting the other. How the other can travel holding you, leaning on you. I was breaking the bodily bond and at the same time breaking an emotional distance.

Contact helped me to overcome my fear of being in a group, to handle myself within the drift of everyday life, to handle myself with much more freedom. In the end, contact dance widens your margins of freedom by giving you information about yourself and the other person, about how to approach them and fit in within them. Contact dance tears the schemes apart, makes you feel that the cultural program you were formed with can be broken. First of all, it makes you aware of that program and what your limits are, but then it tells you "well, why not?" You can investigate, experiment, inspect and play with those limits. I think it's exciting for any human being. Because there is room for any kind of movement. In contact the important thing is bodily territories that move and meet each other."

A NEW SPACE, THE BODY AS A TOOL

We can move as an answer to inputs and impulses that we get from our senses. But we can also play with our imagination to create inputs, rules, concepts... and disrupt what we understand as normal behaviour in a space to experiment, perform, transgress, subvert, isolate stimulus, activate spaces and explore concepts.

As we can play with our own imagination to disrupt what we understand as normal behaviour in a Space, we can use our body as a tool to create new realities. Using memories on the five senses to let our imagination construct and create.

Transgression - not respecting, bypassing, going beyond rules or customs. To provoke, to shock, to do things the "wrong" way.

Subversion - to subvert or turn around - underneath a first version.

It came to be used for attempts to overthrow authority structures such as kingdoms and the state.

=/ Sedition suggests an open uprising against authority.

Subversion refers to the basis of faith in the status quo or creating conflict between people.

Recent postmodern and post-structural and feminist authors have written about another way of subversion, it is not directly the state that is to be subverted but the prevailing cultural forces, such as patriarchy and individualism or scientific rationalism.

Natalia said; *"Many times I have been able to experiment with dancing in the street, to play a little with provocation, since we have the possibility of waking up others and that others wake us up. Start dancing and realise that as they don't want to see it, they pretend they don't. But they feel it, because it changes their facial expression."*

We can talk about this disruptions from a movement research - performative eye, but also from a social and cultural point of view. How we are and how we move according to a specific environment and its characteristics or conditions. From the cultural to the physical aspect of it, when we are in a place, in a city, our body can react in different ways because of different external factors. These factors that can influence us from the exterior: the weather, altitude, nutrition, the transport we use, whether it is cycling, walking, bus, train, car... the pace of life, culture and social norms, public spaces and pollution, acoustic noise or contamination, etc.

The body is the container through which all these factors pass, channeling these aspects and affecting us in a physical and mental way.

We can say that culture is shaped by the way the body adapts to the surroundings (nemotricity and ethnomotricity) and the rules within the spaces and other people. For example, how people have to dress, set the table, behave with others, how they think about family, money or about themselves. All these invisible codes stand on the space/location we are in and the time we live in. Distances for example, the city's architecture or its proxemics and voice like language, also play a role in the culture and the environment. The cultural dimension of a society is constructed by these external means. Some rules restrict us and other give us freedom. The same thing can give us freedom in some ways and restrict us in others.

If we put the lens on the social rules and culture, we can observe how the relationship we have with a lot of things change depending on where we are. For instance, let's take the dining table. The architecture of the table and the

choreographies around it change drastically depending on the country, city or even house we look at, because of the culture and social rules.

Who sets the table, the times, the order we seat on, who is served first, who is served last, who serves, whether there is prayer or not, who starts to eat first, you can stand up or not, who can stand up and who can't, what happen when you are done but there is someone still eating, who collects the table, etc. The simplicity of eating is entangled with culture. Also the surface where you eat and how you sit, at what time and for how long you sit.

If we want to subvert the social behaviour rules, a table and its culture choreographies could be a good place to start. We could keep looking to the streets choreographies, how we walk around, all directions mix up, right straight, left backwards, etc. How far or close we go from each other, and what tone we have to use in each place.

Let's experiment with the component of our daily live show, let's play with the space (location), the time, the voice and the distance (proxemics) having our body as the tool to play with. To transgress and subvert, play with our imagination to distort the norms.

Why? Body.

How? Distance.

When? Time.

With what? Voice.

Where? Space.

SPACE

(Practices in *grey*)

Create a space in a location that does not correspond.

Think of a different space than the one you are in now.

What can you do in this other space you are thinking of?

Do it!

Then you could swim without water, draw without paper, clap without context, sweep without broom, dance without music, alone or with someone, fight sportively in the living room or give a speech without talking.

What else can you think of?

Try it.

This could be a practice to experiment with human codification for specific spaces. It could also help to be aware of our limitations depending on the space we are in, and how free or restricted we are depending on the space and its rules.

We have the codes created by the humans, culture aspects, plus the characteristics of that space/city. All these aspects influence our behaviour in a space. But we can brake these codes and use them as a switchers to play and perform the space.

What is a public space and what is a private space? Which one is safer?

What practices do not enter in a public space?

What practices enter in a private space?

It may be that neither of the two spaces are safe, so what gives you the security? Does it depend on the space? In what does depend how safe you feel?

Maybe not all public spaces are made to converge, spaces are not built where there is or could be an "us" in some societies.

The rules of how public space should be inhabited are made by those who inhabit public space?

Everything for me is intimate because it is me relating to everything: public intimacy, public intimate intimacy and private intimacy.

DISTANCES & PROXEMICS

(Practices in grey)

DISTANCES

Use the distance according to the space.

Imagine you are in a different space, use the distances (proxemics & space) in a different way than you usually do.

We can imagine a new architecture in the space we are in now. What happens if we create walls where there aren't? A mountain where there isn't. A fabric hanging in the way, or a strong air from the side.

I sometimes find a key in the others, I take this key and I shut off myself with it.

I put a mountain in the way and don't draw an easy way to get to the top.

I believe what I invented, it starts to be the reality I play with.

I put myself in positions where no one puts me, but I think I belong to.

Play with the proxemics; the distances we maintain according to the personal spaces within other people. This personal space that you can't cross, that goes from the skin to a determinate distances, creating an invisible distance barrier between bodies.

What kind of body territoriality are you? How do you see it?

Draw it.

How close to the other person could you be? How close to the objects can you be?

·Example regarding objects:

The bowl made of little shells my grandma has is always in the same shelf. What happens if I hug it, I empty it or I change its position?

How do you normally relate to it? How close do you get from it when you use it? Or how far?

Which body part do you usually use to touch it? Can you find a new, unexplored way to approach to it?

·Example regarding the Architectures:

I'm now at the library. What would happen if I just walk straight through all the tables around me until I reach the exit? I would find a new way, out of the prescribed path, to the exit. I would find a lot of furniture, even people to sort out, but I would get to the exit anyway. Or maybe not, because there is a wall, or a table and I have in rule set that one can't walk on top of it, so I would have to take a turn.

Now, let's imagine we are in an empty open space. We want to get out of there, but following the same route we would make from our bedroom to the front door. We would have to build up imaginary walls with the characteristic of a real one, that window we always look through and the lift we always get.

Another one: you are in an empty space but then imagine that same space is very crowded. How would you get to the other side of the space with all this people in the way?

·Example regarding the other bodies:

Game for a group of ppl. (Practice by Natalia Jimenez G.) Choose two people, you must form a triangle formation between you and the two others while moving in a space. The others have chosen two different people to follow, the distances will converge all the time.

We climbed the trees together holding hands but now at the traffic light we crossed at 3 meters and our glances don't match.

I remembered how we love each other and I felt close to you.

And now I don't think about you and I feel far from you.

When I arrived at that mountain that could be seen from the window, I could see what was inside the house, inside my neighbourhood and inside your gaze. I could see what I am.

It is the first time in my life that I feel far away from moments of my past. I always thought about what it would be like to be older. I thought that by this point I would be someone else, but I'm still being me.

PROXEMICS

We are educated in the permission over the territory of our body and in the sense of ownership over that territory. We are permanently marking the distances of who we allow to approach and which person or situation we do not. These distances are measured in the proxemic: "the branch of knowledge that deals with the amount of space that people feel is necessary to set between themselves and others". (Oxford definition)

Javier Druida:

*"There are cultures that mark a big distance between people and where it is a sign of politeness to speak with big distances. There are other cultures where distances are shortened, such as Latinos or Mediterranean people. We let in or keep our distance that seems reasonable to us even without ceasing to be linked to the other. We establish that distance depending on whether the other person inspires us, the relationship's nature, gender, status, social class. We move and navigate the world within those margins of distance and proximity, permanently floating based on each one's identity. That limit is very open for some people, and very closed for some others. We make pacts with one another, being in front of a doctor in a white coat creates an emotional, affective and physical distance. Nobody thinks of going in and kissing the doctor. That is a pattern of social relations through contact as a code of communication. **

(* Bea: Proxemics can be very attached with the way of dressing and the codes linked within a style, profession, etc. Rather we know the proxemics by connotations around this dress code or by just feeling it and getting to know this person and developing a relationship with them. We have proxemics linked to personalities and personalities connected to styles, so we think we know how to relate to others according to this. Again, this is just a bias, and the standard for "normal" distance can change; my standard can seem too close for you, or vice versa.)

"Before starting the interview I needed to feel comfortable and I didn't mind asking you for a hug. That's a kind of pact we were making, a kind of awareness that we wanted in this interview, to have freedom, and to move within the gambit of the love we have for each other and how we relate to each other."

Sometimes we can go for long periods of time without physical contact, and settling on eye contact - if we are able to look into someone's eyes. Physical contact activates a series of physical mechanisms that contribute to our emotional well-being.

- Contact decreases the production of cortisol, the stress-related hormone. Also related to Kinesthetic learning.
- It increases the production of oxytocin, the hormone related to affection.
- Increases serotonin levels, producing a relaxing effect.
- Lowers blood pressure and heart rate.
- To hug or touch the hands decrease stress.

Not having contact with other bodies in a caring way can manifest itself as symptoms of emotional deficiency.

- A low level of confidence.
- Social isolation, characterised by leaving aside important relationships.
- A higher degree of impulsivity that can lead to aggressive behaviour and reactions.
- Decreased attention span and concentration.
- Lack of development of language and social skills.
- Difficulty in expressing and managing feelings, showing coldness in almost all situations.
- In the long term, it can trigger episodes of anxiety.

VOICE

(Practices in *grey*)

Use the voice according to the space.

Mentally visit an object, a feeling, an emotion, or a place. Make a sound TO BE what you choose.

Example: introduce a progressive human sound (sing, scream, whisper...), repeat what you can hear (machines or humans), translate in tones what you hear, translate the language, play with feedbacks in the zoom meeting, play music, talk slow, talk loud... Look for a situation or space where none of these changes are expected.

Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen says in her book *Sensing, Feeling, and Action*; "In order to vocalise, we must actively engage our organs. Without organic support, we cannot utter a sound. The strength of our voice is based upon the degree of involvement of our total organ system. A blockage somewhere in our organs will be reflected in the quality and intensity of our voice."

We are constantly changing and adapting our way of producing sounds, or listening, or playing. Sometimes I would like to turn up the volume for those around me, to know what they would be saying if their minds were speaking out loud. Other times, I would like everyone to just listen to themselves and what they have in front of them and behind them.

TIME

(Practices in *grey*)

Use the time in relation to the action

Think of an action. Do it longer than you usually do, then shorter, do it more times than usual or reverse.

Example: quick hug, talk to the cashier longer, blink faster, fall down and get up multiple times, pull your hair up and down all the time, repeated drinking, yawn in a loop, look everywhere constantly or slowly, put on and off the glasses very slowly, etc.

When we are busy, we tend to think that there is no time. When we want it to pass quickly, it seems that it takes forever .

Time does not stop, it does not end.

To want time to pass, to want to shorten the feeling we have at the moment, waiting for it to end so something better will come. Also, try to be as present as time allows us, to hold on to this feeling.

Sometimes we don't even perceive time is passing.

We do not know the density of time, we do not know what it corresponds to. Time feels different depending on the specific day and moment we perceive it. The only clear thing here is that it is always the present moment. It is always now.

We can play with time in a clear and direct way when we talk about it, prolonging actions that usually take us less time to perform and vice versa, or repeating actions for a certain time.

GAME

We can pick rules from any of these aspects; space, voice and time. And we can play by mixing their qualities. For example, picking “fast” from the Time box, and “fluid” from the Voice box; Fast movement, fluid voice. Then we will experiment with how this too can be together in the space that you choose to be in.

Ex: Historic space, short distances, collapsing movement quality and sharp voice.

How can a space be?

Boundless, vast, expansive, cosmic, hostile, incomprehensible, infinite, limitless, grand, historic, massive, modern, stunning, earthy, efficient, electronic, fancy, flat, narrow, organic, outside, queer, rectangular, separate, silent, slow, tasteful, thin, transitional, ugly, warm, cold, narrow, wide, high, horizontal, ...

How can distance, directions be?

Long, short, fluctuating, sideways, forwards, up, down, around, straight, circular,

How can a body move? Qualities of movement

Sustained, percussive, suspended, swinging, collapsing, expanding, reducing, powerful, clear, firm, airy, fluid, relax, direct, indirect, light, heavy, pressing, wringing.

How can the voice be?

Soft, hard, intense, powerful, sharp, Interleaved, loud, slow, brittle, broken, creaky, croaky, grating, gravelly, hoarse, low, sharp, high-pitched, honeyed, objective, piercing, shrill, harsh, strident, stertorous, sweet, strangled, broken, tense, dull, discordant, animated, crisp, ethereal, flat, husky, hypnotic, modulate, monotonous, orotund, raucous, resonant, penetrating, etc.

How can the time be?

Early, late, short, fast, slow, brief, old, ancient, loop, jumpy, revers, relaxed, continuous, quick, etc

CONCLUSION

The cause and effect of life may be summed up in the improvised dance of all living beings. Everything matters, every movement, every sound and every posture communicates something. Everything we do is influenced by the context we are in, the society we are in, the society we come from and the space and the time we are at. It could be reduced as the person in that moment of time, that movement in that space at that distance with that volume.

Everything is in constant movement and it never stops. Even in the most silent place in nature there is movement, being silent is the absence of sound, and sound vibrations traveling being movement.

The main message of this text is to use your body to feel life. Be present with the "Sense Of Life" - the senses making the life make sense.

With this interviews I wanted other voices to bring experiences and points of view to different matters around the importance of movement and contact. We can think that all we do interferes with things developing around us. Only by spending time with others or with any kind of space there is an exchange of information. To share spaces, moments, objects, to be present, to pass by every gesture will stay here, and will make a difference.

The senses are something inherent in our being present as humans. In some situations and environments we shut them off, as it happens in some jobs where you have to follow protocols, or in some societies where you are not meant to show your feelings or emotions.

With these practices I invite you to rediscover your senses and feelings. Let them take over your presence, so you re-teach yourself to become enough for the present you, by just feeling one thing. We live now with all the stimulus switched on around us, we always have something else we could be doing. I invite you to focus just on the simple things, like babies do. And travel from there.

It seems to me that, as babies, we get to know the rules of the body, the senses. Then, when we grow up, we start to use them as tools to play and create. This imagination takes a huge part of our childhood. So, perhaps the point is to not forget the base of it all being our body, as well as to loosen and play with the limitation and restrictions of our surrounding environments, spaces and bodies.

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