

Moving words: Five instances of dance writing

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Abstract

Writing has been cast as monstrous – or at least violent – in its ability to disfigure, maim and destroy the life of live arts. Yet for many dance practitioners, writing is an integral part of studio-based dance processes, a necessary form of reflection and a site for creative experimentation and planning. In recognition of this positive value of writing for dance, this study explores writing that is coextensive with dance practice, in relation to critical theory that engages with writing as performance.

An interdisciplinary, practice-led methodology is drawn on to explore strategies for folding methods of performance practice and experimental documentation together, through emphasizing interconnections between disciplines such as choreographic practice, improvisation, site specific performance, somatics, performance writing, translation theory, literary criticism, artist books, sculptural installation and visual poetry.

This study presents five dance projects in which specific writing practices are employed in generative relation with dance making. A discussion of how artist-writers might mobilize and disrupt a given language in order to create space for somatic and movement-based concepts augments the performance narratives. This draws upon Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the minor literature, Brian Massumi's writing on how post-structural theory might incorporate proprioception and movement and Simone Forti's practice of *Logomotion*, which blurs potential boundaries between writing, speaking and moving within the domain of performance improvisation.

This research comprises five artist books and a thesis. The artist books continue the dance performances that initiated them, with each one illustrating a particular methodology for writing out of dance practice. The thesis outlines practice-led accounts of dance writing in order to demonstrate 1) methodologies for developing writing practices that are co-extensive with dance making and 2) philosophical implications of each specific project/artist book, within contemporary performance practice. Together these form *the library of moving words*, posited as a moving resource for researchers who are integrating studio-based research, performance, writing and critical theory.

Student Declaration

Doctor of Philosophy Declaration (by performance / exhibition)

“I, Alys Longley, declare that the PhD exegesis entitled *Moving words: Five instances of dance writing* is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This exegesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this exegesis is my own work”.

Signature

Date

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List of Publications and Awards

Journal Articles

LONGLEY, A.M., WILLIS, E. Almost Reaching You/ Missing U. *Performance Research* 15(2), Performance DVD, p.34, 2010

LONGLEY, A.M., WILLIS, E., HARVEY, M.R., HARRIS, B. Almost Reaching You / Missing U, *Fracija*, 50, p106-111, 2009

LONGLEY, A.M. Moving words: improvising with Simone Forti, *Writings on Dance*, 24, p63-75, 2008

Performance Works

LONGLEY, A.M. *Insomnia Poems Improvisation*. Auckland, Soul Center of the Body and Mind, 2007

LONGLEY, A.M, and SMITH, V.A. Camper, *Tempo: New Zealand's Festival of Dance*, Tapac Centre for Performing Arts, Auckland, 2007

LONGLEY, A.M., WILLIS, E., HARVEY, M.R., HARRIS, B. Almost Reaching You / Missing U, *Shift, Performance Studies International, PSI:15: Mis-performance (curated event)*, Zagreb, Zagreb National Theatre, 2009

LONGLEY, A.M. *Insomnia Poems, The One Project*, Gundry Street Studios, Sean Curham, 2009

LONGLEY, A.M., WILLIS, E., HARVEY, M.R., HARRIS, B. Almost Reaching You/ Missing U, *Glitch Performance and Media Arts Programme: Misperforming: Symposium on Unstable Paradigms of Performance and Media Arts*, St Paul St Gallery, AUT, Auckland, 2009

LONGLEY, A.M. (2007) *Kinesthetic Archive, 104 Trios*, Unitec Dance Theatre, Auckland, New Zealand,

Papers Published in Conference Proceedings

LONGLEY, A.M. Rethinking Dance Writing, *World Dance Alliance: Global Summit*, Dr Cheryl Stock(ed.), *World Dance Alliance: Global Summit, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, 14 - 18 July, 2008*

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Conference Presentations

LONGLEY, A.M. 'Dancing Minor Literatures', *Dancing Across the Disciplines, Otago University, 28-30 June 2010*

LONGLEY, A.M. 'Misperforming Studio Practice with Pages', *Misperforming Symposium, AUT University, Auckland, 28 November, 2009*

LONGLEY, A.M. 'A Discussion of Performance Making and Writing Via the Immersed Project', *Performances Studies International Conference 15, Zagreb University, Zagreb, Croatia, 24 - 28 June, 2009*, <http://catalogue.psi15.com/646/a-discussion-of-performance-making-and-writing-via-the-immersed-project/>

LONGLEY, A.M. 'Not Knowing But Following', *Silent Voices Forbidden Lives: Censorship and Performance THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR THEATRE RESEARCH, Lisbon, Portugal, 12 - 18 July, 2009*

Awards

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Moving words: Five instances of dance writing

Introduction

1.0 Arrival

Sunday 2 August 2009: 11:47am

Office 508, The University of Auckland, New Zealand

Weather: A warm sunny winter's day, the window is open to allow in fresh air

I go to begin writing this chapter – the one that greets you, the first one of the thesis. I am imagining you drawing this book out of the 5 other books that make up its family, so you already know that it doesn't stand alone but is part of a small library, that it is intended not to be read by itself but in relationship to a body of artist books. This is one of very many times that I have written this chapter, in a process of searching for a specific tone, a specific voice, a specific mode of invitation, a way of setting out a plan for what will become a cooperative series of relationships between events, pages and readings.

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

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

This is a doctoral thesis, situated in the field of practice-led research. So I guess you have figured out that I'm starting out with the practice that underpins the story of the research and the processual story of how that research comes to be written.

1.1 Performance and writing in the context of practice-led research

There is a growing body of research through practice that explores, as performance theorist Susan Melrose would put it, practitioner theoretical modes of research. Hasemen (2007)

discusses the term practice-led research as a relatively recent methodological term that “asserts the primacy of practice and insists that because creative practice is both ongoing and persistent, practitioner researchers do not merely “think” their way through or out of a problem, but rather they “practice” to a resolution” (Haseman, 2007, p.147). In dance studies, the practice of dance as a form of knowledge has led to a paradigm shift that has challenged logocentric assumptions of knowledge and created space for embodied, transitional, relational and live research work. Performance researcher Carol Brown discusses this move as embracing the “messy materiality of bodies” (Brown, 1997, p.135) and the complexity, ambiguity and ephemerality of dance processes and their modes of articulation. As this paradigm has grown, so have the number of rich examples of practitioner based dance research and the diverse range of writing about practices, rehearsal processes, collaborative forms of decision-making and other forms of knowledge particular to performance making. Informed by the work of researchers such as Melrose, there has been a shift in the paradigm from spectator studies of completed performances to engagement with studio practices as research. Despite these developments Melrose (2002, 2006) proposes that the field of performance studies continues to be in need of language to discuss the specificity of practitioner-based processes such as intuition and other forms of disciplinary specific decision-making. She asks; “How might we identify the expert knowledge-practices, their operations and boundary-markers, within work which we also require to be challenging, innovative, and to offer new insights? And what might be its most productive relationship with writing?” (Melrose, 2002, p.4).

Over the last ten years I have contributed to the development of a body of artistic work that navigates between choreography, performance improvisation, poetry and experimental prose. In working between pages, dance studios and theatres, I have found that my poetry and my dance making carried each other through creative development, that in a sense, they formed each other. Studying and working in a range of academic dance studies programs provided opportunities to teach choreography and observe others doing so, to share in a wide range of choreographic and improvisation processes in development, and to participate and observe dance ideas cycling through experimental, pedagogical and professional practice – provoking the development of dance as a form. One of the most obvious ways that this development is fed by performance makers is through their interactions with pages; through journaling, reading, noting written feedback or jogging memory with language or images. However, the status and function of writing as a medium of performance research continues to be intensely debated as performance artists seek for recognition of the knowledge-producing, research driven processes inherent in studio practice and performance.

Writers Peggy Phelan, Andrè Lepecki and Rebecca Schneider are central protagonists in such debates. Phelan’s seminal argument in *unmarked: the ontology of performance*, (1993) has been so

widely quoted that it is now difficult to find citation of her work without reference to its academic popularity.¹ Let's hear it again.

Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations *of* representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology. Performance's being, like the ontology of subjectivity proposed here, becomes itself through disappearance. (Phelan, 1993, p.146)

Phelan's creation of a binary between performance and acts of documentation refuses to recognize ways in which documentation itself might be seen as performative. This tendency is echoed in André Lepecki's essay *Inscribing Dance* (Lepecki, 2004) in which Lepecki traces the roots of the documental tradition in dance to a desire to correct the 'flaw' of its materiality, preventing dance from gaining validity as a form of knowledge.

Lepecki discusses how ephemerality, the very trope that documental traditions aim to prevent, is reframed by a Derridean theoretical approach that,

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

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

¹ Simon Ellis, for example, describes this statement as "oft-quoted" (Ellis, 2005, p.25) and Sophia Lycouris writes that it "almost sounds like a manifesto" (Lycouris, 2000, para. 5)

detail in Chapter Two of this thesis – *kinesthetic archive* – this argument has been strongly debated and problematized by performance researchers who consider documentation not only an integral element of a practitioner’s work, but a form of performance in itself.

This study is concerned with practitioner-led approaches to writing rather than documentation per se and proceeds from a number of questions. It asks: How might writing slip from its documenting, historicizing bounds to enter into the slippery ontology of performance? Can writing make itself disappear? Dance academic Susan Leigh Foster has contributed to such questions over the last two decades. In *Choreographing History* (Foster, 1995) Foster traces choreographic history as one that evolved through writing, and draws attention to the dancerly, material gestures that underpin the process of writing. Foster also writes of bodily movement *as* writing, blurring as she does so any boundaries between these practices.

How to transpose the moved in the direction of the written. Describing bodies’ movements, the writing itself must move. It must put into play figures of speech and forms of phrase and sentence construction that evoke the texture and timing of bodies in motion. It must also become inhabited by all the different bodies that participate in the constructive process of determining historical bodily signification. How could the writing record these bodies’ gestures toward one another, the giving and taking of weight, the coordinated or clashing momentum of their trajectories through space, the shaping or rhythmic patterning of their danced dialogue. (Foster, 1995, p.9)

Such questions around the potentials of writing to engage with physical momentum or for a transposition of movement into language, contribute to the theoretical ground of this study. Such transposition is not without its challenges, as attested to in Barbara Browning’s review of *Choreographing History*, in which Browning notes that overall “this volume seems to reproduce the very institutional circumscriptions which have held dance scholarship back” (Browning, 1996, p.162). Browning attends to the subtle divisions of language that continue to separate the categories of ‘dancer’ and ‘historian’ throughout Foster’s book, as an example of the insidious ways in which binaries between body/mind and dancer/academic are lodged in academic writing, even when that very writing ostensibly aims to disrupt such binaries.

I am imagining academic writing as a monster ready to eat anything in its path – including, and maybe especially, dance. By the time this rhetorical style and its grammatical forms are done with a dance, all the life will be sucked out of it. I’m thinking of Foster’s own project as a

well-intentioned monster, a monster trying to change its ways by working with alternative styles and alternative approaches to grammar, but which is a monster nevertheless. Just like this thesis is. Just like, perhaps, a PhD has to be. Does it? In any case, writing has indeed been cast as monstrous – or at least violent – in its ability to disfigure, maim and destroy the life of live arts.

On the other hand, writing can just as easily be considered one of the central practices that underpin various live arts practices. The writers discussed above each gesture toward the potential for a non-documental mode of writing, a writing that is performative rather than constative². A writing of movement rather than fixity. A writing of erasure rather than presence. A writing towards multiplicity rather than singular memory.

Interconnections between dance and writing have been conceptualized in diverse ways, for example as external to the ontology of performance and a betrayal of the live, (Phelan, 1993), as “a translation of live art into dead records” (Heathfield, 1997, para. 1) as a form of listening (Minnick, 2003), as a “record and a tool of making decisions about the nature of the work” (Lycouris, 2000, para. 1) “as markers and traces to be used as triggers and stimuli, as a catalyst to artistic creation” (DeLahunta et al, 2004, p.68), and as “a tablet for physicalizing thought without full-bodied dancing” (McGregor in DeLahunta et al, 2004, p.69).

This study is specifically interested in exploring pages created by performance makers as a means to feed and develop artistic thinking through practice, as suggested by Lycouris, DeLahunta and McGregor. It seeks to explore movement-initiated writing practices by researching methodologies that continue the trajectory of performance logics to the site of the page and to the body of the artist book. This study asks: How might dance practice initiate a creasing and folding of language? Three key aims of this study are, firstly, to investigate ways in which movement practice might enable, create and be in direct relationship with page-related practices, secondly, to discuss specific instances wherein artist books emerge out of dance practice, and thirdly, to interrogate methodologies for employing specific technical/ formal/ stylistic approaches to performance writing through five instances of performance making. Each of these aims supports my intention to develop and articulate methods of writing that emerge through dancing, and to explore tactics for feeding dance practice through various modalities of writing and the creation of artist books. These research aims have led to the creation of five practice-led research projects, each of which employs different methodologies for interweaving dance practice with explorative writing.

² The term constative is drawn from J.L Austin’s book *How to do things with Words* (Austin, 1962) in which Austin differentiates between performative and constative utterances. He describes constative utterances as statements “as the typical or paradigm case” (Austin, 1962, p.132).

The first project in *the library of moving words* is *the kinesthetic archive project*. It explores the everyday life of a dance practice through a range of different sites. The chapter contextualizing *the kinesthetic archive project* engages with the relationship between kinesthesia and text, with the ethics of translation, with writing the somatic and with the affective play of handwriting. The artist book that performs this project explores a design concept concerned with the surfaces and layers of pages, with how a page might engage with transition and mobility. *the kinesthetic archive project* is the most wide-ranging of all the books in *the library of moving words*. While the other books focus on discrete studio practices, with specific dancers and artistic aims, *the kinesthetic archive project* utilizes a process of gleaning ideas that is central to my sense of being a dance practitioner. The usefulness of gleaning as an approach to harvesting insight from dance practice lies in valuing small details, notes, drawings, memories, images, and conversations, as these gesture towards an understanding of how the logic of dance thinking mutates over time in a highly specific (and often elusive) way.

The second project in *the library of moving words* has a much more specific engagement with the reader, as an artist book that reflects one particular dance workshop. This project is entitled *moving letters; a workshop with simone forti*. Each 'page' of this artist book follows a specific design process, with papers and printing processes all carefully aligning in a consistent relationship with key issues from Forti's teaching. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) discussion of the minor literature opens a space for analyzing the philosophical implications of Forti's work. Comparison of Forti's writing practices with those of poet David Antin provides further insight into methods of writing that translate movement and spoken improvisation to the page via stylistic techniques such as grammar and lay-out. The *moving letters* artist book explores the form of the accordion book to literally crease and fold movement into pages. This design highlights the temporal dimension of the workshop, with each page in the artist book engaging with a specific days work and each fold in each book referring to a workshop session within the day. The pages of the *moving letters* book thus include the reader in a site of movement research, so that a particular sense of opening and invitation distinguishes this book from the others, in the same way that particular forms of dance workshop facilitation allow for participants to sense their selves in new ways.

The third project in *the library of moving words* tracks the improvisation score *The Little peeling Cottage*, which involves writing in response to moving and moving as a response to writing as a score for live performance. This score was one part of a larger, site specific performance work and the artist book that emerged through this project considers the book as body and as theatre. A geography book from the 1960s offered boundaries and starting points for me to install texts and images created via dance performance to the specific theatres of these pages.

The process of working with a found book as a site for the development of choreographic ideas engaged with the installation book works of artist Ann Hamilton and the rich critical discourse that surrounds her work.

The fourth *moving words* project explores indeterminacy, unintelligibility, failure, process and ambiguity. It tracks a choreographic process as it begins and develops, to the point in the work where a range of directions, provocations and possibilities have developed, but structure and clarity are yet to be found. In the artist book structure, this state translates to a book form that can be read in any direction; there is no clear front, back, up, or down, every angle is equally useful as a point of navigation. This book is designed to incite movement and produces the reader as mover. I have attempted to 'stick with' the overwhelming sense of being lost, uncomfortable, insecure and immersed in the work with no clear marker of which way to proceed. Thus this third project is titled *immersed*. What does emerge as clear content throughout all elements of the *immersed* project is a play with the instructional language of the imperative as an engine for performance structure and development. The provocations or imperatives that I engaged with in our rehearsal process became a key part of the content for the *immersed* artist book.

The final project in *the library of moving words* is the *Insomnia Poems*. This project emerged out of a duet improvisation practice with dancer Katherine Tate, in which journal notes and photographs from our ongoing work formed the material to create a pack of cards. The cards were then used as a starting point for generating a body of improvisation and choreographic scores. In the *Insomnia Poems* language directly generates choreographic potential – words are activated as a score or game, as cues that function as triggers for action.

1.2 Performance knowledges and logics

Practice-led research has rapidly grown over the last two decades as have modes of philosophy that recognize embodied processes as sites of knowledge where meaning is actively generated, critiqued and developed. Yet when I began this study I questioned how, in this research project, I might create space for studio-led meanings within the chapters of a doctoral thesis. When beginning to write a literature review for this research, the first issue that really challenged me was of acknowledgement. How to acknowledge knowledge gleaned through dance practice? The opening paragraph of an early attempt at a literature review (April 2006) read:

As a researcher writing dance practice, am I expected to only include

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

The question of how to acknowledge lineages of dance knowledge in written form has continually challenged me, as has my intention to acknowledge the way ideas I've learnt from specific dance practitioners sit inside the body of my movement vocabulary, shifting the logic of my thinking.

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

The challenge of writing about performance making from a practitioner's perspective is also a pragmatic one, and lies in finding an appropriate approach to the page, identifying the words, syntax, grammar through which to discuss the rich and complex world of studio-based interaction and decision-making. For this study, I have chosen the term 'performance logics' as a way to refer to modes of thinking or knowledge that are particular to dance-led studio

practice. Examples of such 'logics' are multitudinous, but might include conceptual pathways, atmospheres, somatic qualities, aesthetic concerns and spatial designs. Dance academic Anna Pakes writes of choreographic logic in relation to the history of logic studies in philosophy, in order to elucidate "the choreographer-researcher's claim to knowledge" (Pakes, 2009, p.10). She identifies the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis* as one that helps to identify the epistemological value of the choreographer-as-researcher's work (p. 20).

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

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

The Collins Paperback Dictionary defines the term logics as "a particular system of reasoning" that could relate to "the interdependence of a series of events or facts" (Collins, 1999, p.473). The 'system of reasoning' that leads from one idea to another in dance practice is very particular – both in terms of practices specific to the broad field of dance and in terms of the enormous diversity of ways that dance practitioners generate their work. In this thesis, the particularity of reasoning that informs the development of practitioner-theoretical dance concepts is strongly influenced by a particular lineage of practice. The influence of the interdisciplinary art-community of the United States in the 1960s creates a lineage that extends through the breadth of this project – from how dance is defined, to its approach to improvisation and scored work, to the relationship between studio work and artist books, to methods of structuring and composing bodies of material.

The application of scores for composition and improvisation was a central influence of John Cage's workshops that had profound impact both on the community of dancers linked to the

Judson Church dance community and to the Fluxus art collective³. Many conceptual similarities run between these artist-groups, in particular a radical questioning of form, particularly in relation to the coextensiveness of art and everyday life. As dance writer Deborah Jowitt writes: “Two of the key issues for Cage and those who gathered around him had to do with dismantling or ignoring distinctions between the various art forms, and with allying the materials and processes of art with those of daily life” (Jowitt, 1989, p.13). Methods of generating artistic practice from scores and instructions proliferated in this period, challenging object-based definitions of art that fixed the duration of the art work to a particular performance or thing. Everyday vocabularies of movement, gesture and event were valued in a rejection of dominant aesthetic ideals of virtuosity and technicality.

Art historian Julia Robinson writes “Cage’s class was effectively a ‘workshop’ and the object at the centre of all the activity was the score: the matrix that could hold in its form the most random and experimental propositions for perceptible experience” (Robinson, 2005, p.28). As your engagement with this research project unfolds, you will notice that scores for dance practice are discussed in a range of ways, from being a method of developing rehearsals, to a way of engaging readers of these ‘moving books’ into an active engagement with the concepts discussed.

Dancer Deborah Hay, a member of the Judson Church dance collective and contemporary dance practitioner, has written widely on her studio practice in a way that highlights how creative spaces offered by language provide openings for her choreographic development, and vice versa (Hay, 1994; 2000). Hay’s practice is also distinguished by methods of practice that blur divisions of life and art, her statement that “everyday, the whole day, from the minute you get up, is potentially a dance” (Hay, cited in Foster, 1986, p.6) resonates strongly with the approach to practice that underpins this thesis.

Just as Deborah Hay and her contemporaries in the Fluxus and Judson Church collectives articulated a radical questioning of contemporary aesthetics, the development of a somatic approach to embodiment – which also developed in this period – presented a radical re-valuing of embodiment *as* thinking wherein one’s body is recognized as a site of corporeal knowledge. Throughout the last century somatic practices such as the Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais Technique, Ideokinesis (and the various incarnations of Release Technique), Pilates and Body Mind Centering were developed, researched and systematized. Somatics as an academic field of study originated in the 1970s with the publication of Thomas Hanna’s series of “What is

³ It is worth noting that it was Cage’s presence at Black Mountain College that most influenced the dancers who would later form the Judson Church collective (Jowitt, 1989) whereas his workshops for the New School from 1956 to 1961 are recognized as a key source of Fluxus (Higgins, 2002).

Somatics?” articles (Hanna, 1976, 1976b, 1983). According to Hanna’s definition, somatics is “the art and science of the inter-relational process between awareness, biological function and environment, all three factors understood as a synergistic whole” (Hanna, 1983, p.1).

The approach to somatics that informs the studio practice driving this study initially emerged through my graduate work with Dr Sylvie Fortin, a dance academic and Feldenkrais practitioner. According to Fortin, somatic practices are “also called body therapies, body work, body awareness, mind-body practices, hands-on work, or releasing work” (Fortin, 1995, p.254). In our somatics class, the processes of awareness, biological function and environment that Hanna discusses were explored through touch, experiential anatomy and movement improvisation.

Touch as a kind of listening, exchange, and modality for drawing awareness to particular movement habits, functions and potentials is a central element in many somatic modalities. Touch might be considered an opening of space – a space of shared attention created via the meeting of skin surfaces, exchanging embodied information wherein a “tangible body (is) constituted through the touch of another” – as Elizabeth Dempster writes of the practice of Eva Karczag (Dempster, 2003, p. 43).

In the studio work that underpins *the library of moving words*, rehearsals for each of the projects, despite the conceptual differences between them, often began with partner body-work, that led to somatic alignment exercises and often into Contact Improvisation. For me, this kind of work provides a preparatory warming in to particular tasks and creates an attention of open readiness for movement work and for writing. As outlined above, my approaches to studio practice are informed by lineages of embodied practice that carry tacit assumptions about, for example, the value of touch, or particular approaches to speed, repetition, internal sensing or external shape. I am using the term performance logics to refer to these tacit but nonetheless significant choices that define the different choreographic processes underpinning this research. The writing processes fold out of dance practice as I attempt to allow specific performance logics to define particular approaches to pages.

1.3 Feminist pathways into movement-initiated writing

My writing watches, eyes closed. (Cixous, 1991, p.3)

Although this research is not primarily a feminist study, I would like to note the influence of feminist research in considering issues around writing and embodiment. In particular the work of philosophers Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray (whose influence is noted in Chapter Three

of this thesis) has profoundly contributed to the development of forms of language and grammar that embrace corporeality, transition, sensation and feeling, and this influence extends to *the library of moving words*. Just as somatic studies prioritize a first person experience of embodiment over generalizing scientific models, the writing of Irigaray and Cixous opens space for recognition of a felt, feminine body, intuitive processes and vocabularies alternative to patriarchal discourse.

A practice of the greatest passivity is our way – really an active way – of getting to know things by letting ourselves be known by them. You don't seek to master. To demonstrate, explain, grasp. And then to lock away in a strongbox. To pocket a part of the riches of the world. But rather to transmit: to make things loved by making them known. (Cixous, 1991, p.57)

Cixous's writing has been central to the development of 'écriture feminine' which highlights the corporeality of writing, the fluidity of written processes, and the female voice in language. Performance theorist Anna Cutler (Cutler, 1998) discusses the relevance of this mode of writing for documenting performance, particularly in its potential for evoking abstract, non-narrative, process-driven performance concepts.

The shifting words on the page, then, represent (and move with) the pace of the performance. The bodily experience of writing shapes and mimics the gestures of the performers' own bodies. The pauses and commas become their utterance and breath, whilst the character and style of the writing reflects the character and style of the work. The structure and rhythm of the language responds to the feel of the event, and poetry and metaphor help to conjure images and meanings that have been offered onstage. (Cutler, 1998, p. 117)

This proposition for performance writing, drawn from Cixous' work, offers valuable insight into new possibilities for performance and its documentation. However, as Susan Melrose emphasizes in her response to Cutler's article, *My Body, Your Body, Her-His Body: Is/Does Some-Body (Live) There?* (Melrose, 1998), Cutler's work is in danger of reinforcing the very binaries that she aims to dissolve, such as practice/theory, male/female and body/mind. Melrose emphasizes the complex ways in which performances critique and document each other *through* practice, and suggests that over-emphasising the role of writing might undermine the critical and theoretical work that performance makers already engage in.

This leads us to the question of how to generate practitioner theoretical work wherein writing supports and contributes to the development of studio processes (just as studio processes support and contribute to the form of writing). Carol Brown's choreographic, written and interdisciplinary work provides an extensive range of ways to consider this question. Her writing in this area has been at the forefront of the field of practice-led research in highlighting issues, contradictions and potentials created in merging academic, choreographic, and somatic modes of awareness.

In her doctoral thesis Brown (1994) discusses choreography as a feminist knowledge that invites fluid and corporeal meanings to be researched and expressed in a way that resists linear and patriarchal tendencies of knowledge and language. Brown writes of her research process: “Underpinning this cartography of cultural and intellectual production is a belief in the impossibility of a fleshless ontology, in a way of knowing that is not also aligned to bodies of specific kinds and their leakages” (Brown 2003, p.1). Reading this quote, you might be inclined to consider that Brown is stating the obvious, after all, how could a fleshless ontology be possible? Isn't it beyond a doubt that humans cannot *be* without the processes of the flesh? And yet the legacy of the book is that the work of writers can be seen to live beyond their individual lives, fleshlessly. The book as a model of discourse has academic primacy, despite the undeniable processes of breathing and moving informing all writers and writing, all readers and reading, and any possible in-between actions that make thinking, being, relating and knowing possible. Brown's commitment to developing modes of academic language and practice emerges out of and continuously returns to dancers' studio practices:

Bringing the dancing body into the academy means creating spaces which enable movement and which can accommodate the messy materiality of bodies. It means situating knowledge in the mobile body with its multi-sensory capacities and inherent instabilities. It means refusing the division between thought and action. (Brown, 1997, p135)

I'm writing this chapter in 2009, twelve years on, as I negotiate the “messy materiality of bodies” in my own doctoral research. I took choreographic workshops with Brown in 1999 and again in 2002 and I have in a small way experienced elements of her choreographic process through participating in her technique classes, watching her works (*Ocean Skin/Flesh Txt.* [1999], *Sleeping in Public* [2002], and *Drawing Writing* [2007]) and participating in choreographic laboratories in which she was a mentor. Brown's practice as a choreographer, writer, and researcher develops distinctive methodologies for interweaving contemporary philosophy with the day to day practice of developing, rehearsing and performing new dance work. Remembering a workshop, it is September in Dunedin, New Zealand, we are working in

the Portobello Hall, a 1940s country hall by the sea. As a dancer the traces of all the dance workshops I have ever done murmur within my body. Writing about that dance workshop with Carol I suddenly remember the environment, the sensation of dancing, the rain drenching our skin as we continued our choreographic intervention into environmental spaces. The dance writes your muscles, and your muscles remember.

1.4 Emergent methodology and narrative research

What I have to tell you cannot be generalized but it can be shared. (Hélène Cixous, cited in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.192)

This study explores particular instances where dancing and page works enter into mutual development. The writing and page works created through this project are all written from the perspective of a practitioner working from inside a specific body of dance ideas. I responded to each of these bodies or sites in the way that seemed to best fit the logic of the dance concepts in development. This research pivots on the specificity of the example and in this thesis I emphasize the singularity of each project as being specific to one artist's experience, following a line of research and questioning in a range of sites, with a range of collaborators. The approaches to performance making, writing, page design and artist books emerging through this project do not present a set of rules or ways of working that can be generalized for other performance projects to adopt. Rather, by focusing on the specific details of how dancing and writing fed each other through a series of particular projects, I hope that this writing might extend to practitioners/academics/ writers/teachers who can take whichever elements of the work that they find useful and mutate them to new contexts. The emergent approach of this research also connects to the qualitative methodology of auto-ethnography, which is "based on the assertion that knowledge is grounded in individual experience, subjectivity, perspective, and positionality" (Plummer et al, 2003, p.29). Or as Sandelowski writes,

When you talk with me about research, do not ask me what I found; I found nothing. Ask me what I invented, what I made up from and out of my data. But know that in asking you to ask me this, I am not confessing to telling any lies about the people or events in my studies/stories. I have told the truth. The proof is in the things I have made – how they look to your mind's eye, whether they satisfy your sense of style and craftsmanship, whether you believe them, and whether they appeal to your heart. (Sandelowski, 1994, p.58)

The field of narrative research offers a methodological framework for practicing writing as a means of understanding and analyzing the five dance projects forming the basis of the study. Each of these projects occurs within a specific context with particular characters, agendas and dynamics. A central challenge of this project is to open a space in writing that provides insight into the decision-making processes and processual events that define specific moments in studio processes. Music researcher Wayne Bowman discusses the value of narrative research as a means to explore complex and layered meanings of arts practice within communities, in a way that integrates multiple voices and perspectives into a single research project. He writes that:

Narrative work can show us the multiplicity and diversity behind apparent uniformity; it can highlight the temporality of musical engagement; it can give us vivid accounts of the processes of rupture and change that are music's life blood; it can help recover the processual and ethical qualities in musical action that theory so often neglects or obscures. (Bowman, 2006, p.11)

Bowman also emphasizes narrative inquiry's inherent "plurality and complexity" (Bowman, 2006, p.11) as a methodology which demands some understanding of and ability to meld multiple modes of address within a single text: academic, philosophical, evocative, poetic, storied and situated voices are often interwoven to provide detailed insight into complex interactions. For this reason it is common for narrative and ethnographic methodologies to be interwoven. Laurel Richardson (Richardson and St Pierre, 2005) has developed the qualitative research methodology of Writing as a Method of Inquiry, a distinctive strand of narrative research that originated in ethnographic inquiry. Richardson is an anthropologist who has developed practices and methodologies for articulating research using creative writing techniques including poetry and storytelling. Her discussion of writing as a method through which ethnographers come to better understand themselves, their work, and what it is they know "displays the writing process and the writing product as deeply intertwined; both are privileged. The product cannot be separated from the producer, the mode of production or the method of knowing" (Richardson and St Pierre, 2005, p.962).

Narrative research proposes that in order to discover new pathways and sites within the terrain of a study, writing must explore a diversity of approaches, to allow researchers to question and work outside of the strict parameters of an academic model, as well as confidently making use of it. Writing forms such as fragments, stories, poems, abstract prose or film scripts are chosen in order to best extend and develop the logic of one's line of inquiry. Working specifically with style, voice, narrative and character also emphasizes the vital role of the reader in constructing meaning. Richardson and St Pierre emphasize the post-modern context framing narrative research. They cite Deleuze and Guattari's point that "writing has nothing to do with signifying. It has to do with surveying, mapping,

even realms that are yet to come” (Deleuze and Guattari, cited in Richardson and St Pierre, 2005, p.270). In this study narrative methodology emphasizes writing as a consistent practice that not only occurs through writing *about* something, but also as a practice of invention that emerges as body moves to the blank page, pen in hand. For example, see the following dialogue between writers John Hyde Preston and Gertrude Stein;

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

Gertrude Stein: Preston, the way to resume is to resume. It is the only way. So how can you know what will be? What will be best in it is what you really do not know now. If you knew it all it would not be creation, but dictation. (Preston and Stein, cited in Simon, 1994, p.155-156)

This study carries the assumption that a narrative, auto-ethnographic methodological approach will allow the processes that underpin movement-initiated writing practices to be made transparent. Such processes might include narratives of how specific pieces of writing begin, physical sensations that influenced particular pages and stories about the challenges and complexities that lie beneath the surface of a particular page or artist book.

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

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

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

Perhaps the most useful discovery was in the writing I did describing our work at a distance – referring always to ‘they’, writing as if *Forced Entertainment* were some distant, semi-fictional group of people in a country far away. The distance was useful – a fictionalizing maneuver that nodded to the versional nature of all history. Along with the distance came other discoveries – a way of intercutting different voices, different layers, eschewing a single line in favor of fragments arranged around a centre that is only ever implied. (Etchells, 1999, p.16)

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

This study seeks to follow a Deleuzian conception of style, which emphasizes the active way in which ideas come alive through the style of language writers evolve. As Deleuze writes, “Style in philosophy is the movement of concepts. This movement’s only present, of course, in the sentences, but the sole point of the sentences is to give it life, a life of its own” (Deleuze, 1995, p.140). This emphasis on style highlights the processual nature of writing as opposed to conceptualizations of writing that assume knowledge is transferred to the page through a neutral language.

One’s always writing to bring something to life, to free life from where it’s trapped, to trace lines of flight. The language for doing that can’t be a homogeneous system, it’s something unstable, always heterogeneous, in which style carves differences of potential between which things can pass, come to pass, a spark can flash and break out of language itself, to make us see and think what was lying in the shadow around the words, things we were hardly aware existed. (Deleuze, 1995, p. 141)

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

Drawing on auto-ethnographic narrative methodology this study attempts to articulate the way in which a writer approaches the everyday task of writing. It is everyday tactics that generate a practice of attention to the way written words play against each other to create affective conceptual spaces. Barthes’ notion of the ‘grain of the voice’ links to Deleuze’s conception of style and emphasizes an affective dimension or ‘grain’ that, “works at the language – not what it says, but the voluptuousness of its sounds – signifiers, of its letters.” (Barthes, 1977, p.182). According to Quack (2004) Barthes’ notion of the ‘grain’ of the voice also relates to pages in sensory terms: “the grain of a Barthesian page can always be felt” (Quack, 2004, p.135). The grain is registered when a sound is heard or an image seen that cannot be registered by traditional analytical or descriptive language.

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

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

Highlighting writing as a material, kinesthetic act, an act that is attentive to ‘the grain’, provides a writer with a different kind of agency. In contrast to conceiving of writing as being produced through authorial knowledge formed prior to textual articulation, this study, *Moving Words*, conceptualizes writing as a practice, a kinesthetic act, a mode to which there are endless approaches. A writer might

assume they need to 'know' what they plan to achieve, and what kind of language they will use, before they begin to write. This is a very different model to one in which ideas are discovered through a collaboration with text, page and the variables of a moment in which an author meets the edges of her language and her knowledge through a textual practice. The approach to writing adopted here might be paralleled by an improvisatory, experimental approach to dance, wherein one's practice includes a focus on learning how to work with a state of not-knowing.

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

1.5 Performance writing and artist books

We find an increasing consensus that writing is something profoundly more dynamic, active, fluid, and indeed mobile *and* ephemeral *and* uncontrollable than it is usually perceived as being. (Lepecki, 2008, p.2)

Surfaces of pages are interactive sites, and spill beyond the materiality of books into digital, street, and other site-based media. Caroline Bergvall's work as a performance writer and academic highlights interplays between spaces, marks and languages. Bergvall discusses performance writing as writing that connects to site, actively plays with relationships between writer and reader, and crosses disciplinary boundaries, particularly between fine arts, performing arts, music, and digital technology. Her work *Eclat* (Bergvall, 2004) is a poetic collaboration that has been presented in book, sonic, and web formats. It utilizes architectural logic, making page design a site specific engagement. "Integration of spatial elements into and as part of the verbal narratives... aims to force up in both writer and reader an awareness of the page as an active and visible environment, an environment which makes explicit the many material dimensions available to writing and breaks down habitual patterns of reading" (Bergvall, 1996, para.8).

The field of performance writing shares many commonalities with particular forms of experimental poetry and prose. Poets such as Steve MacCaffery (1991), David Antin (2005), Susan Howe (1989), Charles Bernstein (1999) and Jerome Rothenberg (2004), who work with the materiality of language and the whole page as a site of meaning, influence the methodologies for performance writing discussed in this study. Literary theorist Marjorie Perloff writes of poet Steve MacCaffery:

MacCaffrey's unit has always been the page rather than the individual concrete poem...a page, the authors conclude, is not just a blank sheet, waiting for 'meaningful' print to be affixed to it, but a kind of trellis, upon which words and letters are fastened visually as well as semantically. (Perloff, 1998, p.265)

Whereas the work of performance writers is often concerned with page works, book artists are concerned with the potentials held in the body of the book. These potentials refer to the logic specific to a given book, the way ideas are opened, sequenced and made interactive through their particular material form.

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

A book is a specific kind of order, a specific kind of contextualization, a specific kind of offering. Mathew Goulis's imperative to "read this book as a creative act" (2000, p.3) resonates with my intentions in creating *the library of moving words*. These books are fashioned through rhizomatic relationships with dance practices, dances and texts pushing each other into becoming. These book works carry my intention to experiment with allowing the logic of dancing to flood the performance, editing, and presentation of writing, to create, as Joan Simon describes the artist books of Ann Hamilton, "sensuous, tactile presences remade by the mark of the body" (Simon, 2006, p.3). The discipline of artist books is one that has arisen primarily in a visual arts context, and while the conjunction of artist books and performance research is not currently a common practice, there are a number of precedents that inform this

practice-led research. Artist books made in direct relationship to dance by artists such as Merce Cunningham, Ann Daly, Simone Forti, Niki Pollard and Rosemary Lee, and Yvon Bonenfant are discussed in later sections of this thesis.

The concept of the artist book as a recognized medium of art practice proliferated in the 1960s. Joan Lyons connects the development of this art form to “the prevailing climate of social and political activism...and the new emphasis on art process...artists were finding that books could *be* artworks in themselves” (Lyons, 1985, p.7). In her work *The Century of Artists’ Books* (Drucker, 1996) Johanna Drucker discusses this artistic genre as developing over the twentieth century, its only distinguishing feature being that artist books, “call attention to the specific character of a book’s identity while they embody the expressive complexity of the book as a communicative form” (p. 359-360). The definition of what constitutes an artist book has remained deliberately open, as new practices in book arts constantly defy and extend formal limitations. In Lyons’ introduction to her book, *Artists’ Books, A Critical Anthology and Sourcebook*, she emphasizes the connections artist books make with art process:

Words, images, colors, marks, and silences become plastic organisms that play across the pages in variable linear sequence. Their importance lies in the formulation of a new perceptual literature whose content alters the concept of authorship and challenges the reader to a new discourse with the printed page. (Lyons, 1985, p.7)

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

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

In an attempt to map out ways that language might fold and crease out of dance experience, this research will explore the literal folds, creases, surfaces, colors, and spaces housed within the potential bodies of a series of five books. Just as the writing style of a text creates what it is able to

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

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

Artist books that are influential in this study include Cowan (2004), Mohns and Deschamps (Mohns, 1994) and Noble (Noble 1998). I am also influenced by the design work of Rachele Pedersen, a craft artist who creates sculptural pieces of fibre art for the body. Chapter Two of this thesis discusses a collaboration between Pedersen and myself in which poetic writing became a way to translate ideas between her design process and my choreographic process in creating a live work.

Conceptually, stitches are a documentation of the heartbeat, which is the strongest indicator of passing moments. Lines of stitching become a blood flow, a pulse, a slightly irregular yet consistent pattern of movement and development. (Pedersen 2006, p.1)

The sense that stitching fabrics together is a pathway of movement strongly informs my idea of artist books, as does Pedersen’s practice of finding and incorporating vintage fabrics, buttons, and threads. The artwork (in this case a hand bound book) becomes a palimpsest that reflects the ephemeral movements of bodies through time and the changing technologies through which we create objects and exchange information.

Dance writer Ann Daly’s hand-bound artist book, *When Writing Becomes Gesture* (Daly, 2004), is a clear example of pages that orchestrate fragments of time and space, emphasizing the interaction of reader and book in a constantly shifting play of concept and form. *When Writing Becomes Gesture* evokes a specific world of dance, seen through the eyes of the author, so that the book combines autobiographical elements alongside processual fragments from choreographic processes, and experimentation with design, font and pages. This book demonstrates the vast potential of dance logic to saturate the work of books, allowing the moving spaces of dance thinking to invade reading conventions. Poetic writing is another key element in Daly’s book. Together with a design style that utilizes witty and experimental use

of scale (from printing a page on a projection slide for readers to extract from the plastic casing and hold up to their eyes, to font enlarged to a letter or two per page) the abstraction of this work gives it a tone and sense of play that echoes the choreographic material (by artists such as Deborah Hay and Bill T. Jones) Daly discusses in the book. *Beached: A Common-Place Book* (Lee and Pollard, 2006) is a book about one specific choreographic process in which the carefully constructed presentation of the book informs readers' sense of qualities and aesthetics that arose in dance making. While the overall form of this book is relatively traditional, the texture of cover and pages, the attention to detail in printing, and the use of affective, poetic texts and multiple registers of writing (interview, description, poetic form, lists) align this book in many ways with *the library of moving words*. *Beached: A Common-Place Book* uses the form of the book to allow insight into the world of rehearsals that lies behind a performance choreographed by UK based dance maker Rosemary Lee, with writer Niki Pollard taking the role of rehearsal observer, so the structure of the book moves between a practitioner and an observer viewpoint. Research by performance artist Jude Walton (Walton, 2009) also highlights rich interconnections between artist books and dance practice, in her exploration of artist books that 'dance' their readings.

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

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

The field of artist books emphasizes processes of meaning-making wherein form and content become indistinguishable. Specific materials and design choices embedded in *the library of moving words* present an attempt to allow particular dance logics to spill into the 'grain' of the page – the torsion in the space and feel of spaces, lettering, image, the material handling (Bolt, 2004) of the work as it is activated by readers. The spill of choreographic thinking into material objects is a subject of in-depth research by choreographer William Forsythe, whose *Choreographic Objects* project asks, "What else, besides the body, could physical thinking look like?" (Forsythe, 2010, para. 7). With this research Forsythe has led a series of

interdisciplinary dance projects that each explore ways in which choreographic thinking may be manifested in non-human form. These projects incite movement and invite consideration of the richness of kinesthetic ways of processing experience. As Forsythe writes, “a choreographic object is not a substitute for the body, but rather an alternative site for the understanding of potential instigation and organization of action to reside” (Forsythe, 2010, para. 12). One might consider *the library of moving words* as a series of choreographic objects which each focus on the artist book form and the practice of writing in order to create alternative sites for dance thinking to inhabit.

This study does not mean to conflate the fields of performance writing and artist books and the quite separate histories, practices and intentions that underpin these terms. It will, however, fold together inspiration from both fields in developing the methodology of movement-initiated writing outlined in the following section. In their book *Readings on Rhetoric and Performance*, editors Stephen Gencarella and Phaedra Pezzullo write that:

Performative writing attempts to remind readers of the ways words are animated by authors and, in turn, the way words animate the world we live in. Although it need not always focus on the body per se, performative writing attempts to use words and images in ways that communicate sensuous and emotional dimensions of life. Scholarship in this vein can also be seen as a kind of performance itself, rather than a report on someone else's performance. As such, performative writing is an alternative way of representing knowledge, one that brings into focus political and social aspects often ignored by dominant and traditional ways of presenting research. (Gencarella and Pezzullo, 2010, p.113)

In this study the term performance writing is being used to identify the activity of writing as one that shares commonalities with the embodied activity of performance making and some experimental, formal kinds of crafting that goes into bringing ideas alive in creative writing and performance making terrains. I am drawing on ideas about writing from theorists who use the term performance writing (Allsopp, 1999; Bergvall, 1996) and performative writing (Pollock, 1998, Gencarella and Pezzullo, 2010).

Experimentation with the possibilities presented by artist books present this study with a means of layering the formation of bookish matters in forms as deeply connected to dance practice as possible. We could conceptualize this work as a means of creating rhizomes between processes that form dance based events and reading events. The rhizome is key in the

vocabulary of terms generated by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to define specific philosophical concepts. A rhizome is a system of organization that works through interconnection and multiplicity rather than linearity and hierarchy. “Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different to the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.7). The concept of the fold also recurs throughout this thesis.

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

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

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

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

1.6 Movement-initiated writing and *the library of moving words*

We are living at a time when a vast amount of performance practices and theories have been explicitly complicating the never simple relations

between pastness, historicity, memory, and archiving with notions of presentness, futurity, movement, forgetting and destruction. Mediating all these poles, writing appears as a dynamic, hyper-kinetic operator that draws from its constitutive mobility its full performative force. (Lepecki, 2008, p. 2)

Andrè Lepecki's discussion of writing as a 'hyper-kinetic force' draws attention to potentials for writing to move strongly outside its documenting tendencies into a more complex and slippery play with audiences. A key element of this mobility might be considered to be in writing that crosses disciplinary boundaries and textual conventions. In this thesis the terms 'performance writing' and 'artist books' relate to specific fields of page-related practice, which explore and extend notions of pages and books. I am particularly interested in practices of performance writing and artist book creation as means for emphasizing the 'hyper-kinetic force' of writing in material form and in this chapter I have identified some of the specific lineages from which I work.

A key contribution this research intends to make to the field of practice-led research is in its detailed articulation of the concept of movement-initiated writing practice. It is common for practice-led research projects to generate writing from the site of the studio and for the resultant writing to reflect and develop performance logics and concepts (Brown, 1999; Ellis, 2005; Forti, 2003, 2006; Crisp and Ginot, 2007; Minnick, 2003). This study focuses on the specific methodologies through which particular modes of writing interweave with the development of dance practices. The term documentation is often employed in reference to methods for gathering together process-based notes and reflections in a form that allows processual knowledge to travel past the site of the rehearsal space. This term also refers to highly formalized notation systems (such as Laban notation) that are designed to facilitate the reproduction of choreography through time. The multiple agendas and purposes at work within the field of performance documentation has led to critiques by leading performance theorists who claim that documentation is outside of the ontology of performance, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Yet, as performance researchers such as Simon Ellis, Sophia Lycouris and Rebecca Schneider assert, documentation is folded into the development of performance in innumerable ways. Ellis writes that,

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

Rebecca Schneider's (2008) article *The Document Performance* discusses the potential for methods of documentation to be understood as performances in themselves. According to Schneider, the blurring of documentation and performance practices "raises tantalizing questions about the duration of performance; about the limits or limitlessness of liveness; and about the trajectory of a scene into its playing and replaying across hands and eyes that encounter it *still* in circulation" (Schneider, 2008, p.118).

Schneider (2008) and Ellis (2005) discuss documentation in a way that clearly aligns with the intentions of this research project, and the practice of movement-initiated writing may well be considered to be a facet of documentation. However, in order to highlight this study's focus on process based, practitioner led experience, the term movement-initiated writing refers to a dance writing practice in which:

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

In a recent call for contributors to a practice-led working group entitled *Silent Voices, Forbidden Lives, A Participatory Lab* performance researcher Baz Kershaw identified – "three types of member participation, defined as observer or documenter, or, for want of a better word, 'rapturor' (from 'rapt', i.e, prepared for total involvement in the manner of an actor/performer in rehearsal)" (Kershaw, personal communication, February 13, 2009). Movement-initiated writing practices emerge through what Kershaw would describe as the 'rapturor' position, wherein dancers are immersed in a given creative process and write from inside the work.

A series of dance projects lead this research, each of which emerges out of commitment to studio practice and to collaborative relationships with dancers and other artists. I formally began this research project simply by continuing with my current dance practice, and began noting how I was using writing as a choreographer and in my ongoing studio practices. I then began exploring ways to extend my understanding of these practices through engaging with specific strands of theory in performance research and philosophy. I continued my dancerly investigation of ideas into the design of artist books. As my studio practices unfolded, specific projects developed into performances and new projects manifested as previous ones were left to rest. By participating in dance laboratory situations as they arose, five specific dance projects became the core practice-led element of this study. The narrative structure of a writer's journal recurs throughout this thesis as a means to make methodologies for writing transparent. By articulating my reflective process through rehearsing and performing to writing, editing and binding and often back to dancing, these chapters acknowledge writing as a performance in itself, which occurs out of specific circumstances.

The practice-led component of this research follows studio-based dance projects into the design of artist books. The five artist books that emerge in this study make up *the library of moving words*. The library consists of 1) *the kinesthetic archive project*, 2) *moving letters: a workshop with simone forti in Logomotion*, 3) *Camper: The Little peeling Cottage*, 4) *immersed* and 5) *Insomnia Poems*. Each one is an experiment that works in the folds between documentation, performance writing, scores, rehearsal plans, and writing towards refinement of dance ideas. Each explores different technical and stylistic modalities of writing, transliteration, page design and binding through a translation of specific choreographic processes. Alongside *the library of moving words* are seven thesis chapters (one that corresponds to each artist book project plus introduction and conclusion chapters) bound into this book that you are holding. These chapters contextualize the processes that led to each of the books, the specific relationships between dancing and pages that the book enacts, and practitioner-theoretical connections that identify specific ways in which given chapters link with contemporary discourse in performance studies. Each chapter and its corresponding book presents a practitioner-theoretical example of pages invented, folded and held together by instances of choreographic questioning.

The library that houses the book works that make up this research takes material form in a set of custom-made wooden drawers designed to hold this series of interconnected choreographic projects.⁴ It forms an organizing schema that emphasizes interconnected parts of a whole,

⁴ The version of *the library of moving words* presented for examination embraces the *movement* inherent in the project by squirming out of the wooden display drawers (as the cost of shipping of these drawers proved prohibitive) into cardboard boxes, with images of the project's presentation in the wooden

separate works within a larger body. One of the definitions the *Collins English Dictionary* lists for the term 'library' is as "a collection of books published as a series" (Collins, 2007, p.684). Just as display/archival drawers in galleries, museums and libraries offer a series of outwardly plain spaces that must be opened in order to enter a process of discovery, each drawer is designed as a point of opening, the beginning of a tactile exploration. The books are presented as independent parts of an interconnected series that invite readers to lift an artist book out of a space-within-a-space and bring it into being through the kinesthetic act of reading.

drawers presented in the following pages of this thesis in order to give examiners a sense of the different 'moving libraries' the *library of moving words* might be housed in.

Figure 1 **Display drawers (designed by Greg Dyer and Alys Longley)**



Figure 2 Books in display drawers



Figure 3 Books in display drawers



2.0 the kinesthetic archive project

The page performs the process: choreographing journal notes

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

this book is :

an attempt

a following

a tracking

a listening

an attending

an articulation

a partial archive of movement

an experiment in documentation

an interactive object

activated by touch and sight

a refined presentation of selected journal notes

a form of translation

a form of transliteration

an event

a response

the product of two years of sustained dance practice

this book is not :

a representation

a description

*a duck or animal (or other obvious thing that it is not
such as an umbrella or cake)*

a substitution for dancing

involved in killing or otherwise maiming any of the dance

ideas that initiated it

The kinesthetic archive project was the first of the five projects that make up this research. Over the first year of research the terrain of this study emerged in dialogue with a series of studio

experiments, including a solo that I named *kinesthetic archive*. This solo was performed in a number of different contexts – in the candidature proposal for this study, in a series of conferences, and as part of a larger theatre piece with dancer Val Smith. Naming my performance solo *kinesthetic archive* seemed to be a clear way of juxtaposing a sense of muscle memory or proprioception, sensory documentation and ‘official’ documentation. At this point I was interested in the embodied knowledge of dancers, how this could inform written research, and how written research could be unsettled and moved by it. I wondered, “Am I an official document, sitting here, holding thousands of dances in my cells, reactivating them by remembering?” Dance practitioners sustain the knowledge of dance, renewing dances by their redevelopment into new works, by teaching ideas to continuing generations of dancers and sharing memories in conversation. The experiential stuff of memory feeds the cultural survival of performative concepts in ways that written and photographic documents struggle to convey.

In creating the *kinesthetic archive* solo I was interested in unsettling the authority of text as it was juxtaposed with the ambiguous, proprioceptive affect of particular movement phrases. The solo work was a performance lecture, merging poetic, academic and colloquial speech and projected text with movement phrases and a sound score. *The kinesthetic archive book* presents fragments of extracts from an ongoing dance practice, without attempting to contextualize or frame the dance practices performed through each page of writing and design. Kinesthetic and sensory modes of movement practice are attended to in the writing and page design and travel through the abstract and affective modes of the book – the texture or grain of particular vowels, the spatial choreography of letters attached to or floating on surfaces.

2.1 The term kinesthetic archive

The notion of the kinesthetic or of kinesthesia is one of the key tropes in the development of western thought around contemporary dance. It refers to processes of proprioception that underpin awareness of one’s own movement, and also relates to the experience of attending to the moved gestures of another. This term gained currency in dance making, reviewing and practice through the work of John Martin, whose influential writing defined modern dance in terms of the “contagion of bodily movement, which makes the onlooker feel sympathetically in his own musculature the exertions he sees in somebody else’s musculature” (Martin, cited in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.22). Martin posits that it is through this “contagion” that “the dancer is able to convey through movement the most intangible emotional experience” (Martin, cited in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.22). The kinesthetic here is associated with feeling and the communication of the textually intangible, abstract and sensory.

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

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

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

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

Foster is interested in the importance of Condillac's philosophy in conceptualizing an understanding of the role of embodiment and touch in relation to consciousness and language. This interest is framed by the implications of this philosophy in the context of colonial politics. Condillac published his *Treatise on the Sensations* in 1754. Foster describes how in this text, the philosopher "sets up the conditions under which the self is separated from the sense of the body and actualizes as a being that has a body" (Foster, 2005, p86). Foster discerns in Condillac's text a colonizing project in which sensory foreignness comes to be governed by a centralized body of power.

The fact that colonizers could imagine themselves both inside the colonized body and also observing it established their omniscience and authorized their actions. But how might a colonizing presence experience its own corporeality? In what ways and according to what patterns is power internalized physically within the body? And how is the body trained in order to wield power? (Foster, 2005, p.87)

Foster connects the work of Condillac to that of his contemporary Raoul Auger Feuillet whose method of dance notation was adopted widely throughout northern Europe and England. Feuillet is attributed with defining the term choreography as, in Foster's words, "the writing down of dances" (Foster, 2005, p.87). She likens the work of both Condillac and Feuillet to that of the Swedish botanist Linneaus and his followers, drawing on the work of historian Mary Louise Pratt to discuss how these botanists "provide an intellectual rationale for imperial conquest (by) ... cleansing the world's cultures of any signification that did not conform to the taxonomy they utilized" (Foster, 2005, p.86). Foster discusses eighteenth century dance notation as achieving a similarly imperialist project with human movement: "Feuillet notation subtends any movement's significance by referencing only its direction, timing, and the spatial orientation of the body performing it. The body's movement is reduced to a set of possibilities to elevate and lower, to trace a semi-circle or line, etc." (Foster, 2005, p.88). Foster draws attention to the assumption made by Feuillet and his contemporaries that embodied realization of dances was not necessary for the passing on of the dance. Dances could be passed on via notation, writing carrying movement via precise description.

The dancer enacts a feedback loop between step and written symbols that objectifies the movement so that even as one is performing the step one is aware of its proper features. The notation thereby takes the dancing out of the body, and away from body-to-body contact, and places it in circulation within a codified symbolic system. (Foster, 2005, p.88)

She argues that both Condillac and Feuillet, in systematizing and disassembling embodied perception and embodied movement, "each affirm the centrality of a center and its governance over a periphery" (Foster, 2005, p. 88). A key issue here is the relationship between notation and embodiment. Is notating a dance necessarily a form of colonizing it? Does the act of notation imply a kind of centralized governance over the marginal art of dancing? Or might there be forms of notation, (or as I posit in this thesis, movement-initiated writing) that promote the proliferation and exchange of dances, while recognizing and affirming the kinesthetic affect of movement? Dance academic Laurence Louppe gives an evocative description of such notation in her introduction to the book *Traces of Dance* (Louppe, 1994).

Traces of Dance catalogues an exhibition of the idiosyncratic forms of dance notation invented by choreographers as they generate dance work. Rather than presenting examples of notation as a way of colonizing or governing danced concepts, the examples of notation catalogued in this book present notation as a way of carrying highly specific ways of considering movement to the page. Louppe evocatively describes these forms of notation:

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

Is *the kinesthetic archive* project a colonizing one? It may be considered to be, as it moves from the terrain of touch and kinesthesia to the terrain of the page. However, as I will discuss later in this chapter, the mode of movement-initiated writing that I explore in *the kinesthetic archive book* does not create a set system of language, instead, like many of the examples of choreographic notation exhibited in the *Trances of Dance* book, it aims to allow gestures of writing and drawing to crease and rupture the systematizing tendencies of grammar, within an improvisatory and somatic approach to studio practice. In *the kinesthetic archive project*, I am using the term *kinesthetic* to refer to movement with a somatic sensibility, in a more general sense, in order to encompass not only somatic sensations but also relationships between somatic, spatial, choreographic and artistic awarenesses connected to particular movement qualities.

The writings of Susan Leigh Foster and Laurence Louppe emphasize that kinesthetic empathy and forms of dance notation are in no way benign, but reflect wider political assumptions – particularly in the degree to which dance is made to conform to an overarching system or whether there is space for a dance to, in its specificity, create, rewrite and possibly interrupt a given notation system. Later in this chapter many of these issues will resurface in a discussion of translation in movement-initiated writing.

The second half of the twentieth century saw an increase in the attention given to proprioception (embodied perception that is not visually bound) by dance practitioners. Parallel developments in post modern dance, the development of improvisation as a performance form and the growth of practices such as Ideokinesis, Pilates, Feldenkrais, Body Mind Centering and Contact Improvisation strongly influenced trends in theatre dance practice. Books such as James Gibson's *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems* (Gibson, 1966) and the studies of Hubert Godard (Dobbels and Rabant, 1996) in embodied

consciousness have also affected the way interior gesture and felt sensing are valued in research domains within the arts and sciences. More recently, philosophers have begun to explore proprioception and kinaesthesia in post-structuralist terms.

Philosopher José Gil's article *Paradoxical Body* connects together the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Gilles Deleuze to discuss the spatiality of the body and the notion that skin is the point of openness to the world at the same time as it is the 'container' of the body; interior and exterior are co-existent.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The terms ‘kinesthetic’ and ‘archive’ are rich with problems, they sit at the cross-roads of binary assumptions as though to divide the document from the cellular, sensation from information, the ephemeral from the official. I chose to title this work *the kinesthetic archive project* in an effort to blur the boundaries between the document and the transitional, to create transitional documents, to create text that performs its emergence out of bodily practice.

If an archive is an historicizing document of past events, it could be that a sense of linear time is embedded in this term. Does the term archive imply a (problematic) binary between past and future? Does it imply that the archive and its contents are somehow separate from the performance event?

Brian Massumi’s concept of ‘incorporeal materialism’ (Massumi, 2002) discusses embodiment in terms of the centrality of sensation to knowledge and being. He argues that in order to perceive the formative role transition plays, we must recognize the virtual aspects of corporeality, which exist in relation to continuous motion rather than fixed positions.

When a body is in motion, it does not coincide with itself. It coincides with its own transition: its own variation. The range of variations it can be implicated in is not present in any given movement, much less in any position it passes through. In motion, a body is an immediate, unfolding

relation to its own nonpresent potential to vary. (Massumi, 2002, p.4)

Massumi's discussion of transition and embodiment also factors in perceptions of time. Drawing on Bergson, Spinoza and Deleuze (among others) Massumi argues that in order to avoid philosophies of positioning, which fix potential into grid-like systems (thus removing transition from critical consideration), past and future need to be recognized as being folded into each other:

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

Perhaps, following Massumi, the phrase *kinesthetic archive* could refer to the co-extensiveness of past and future, with the term archive gesturing to how the past inhabits embodiment and sensory perception, and the term kinesthetic, the present that creases moments and perceptions into thought. Each page of the *kinesthetic archive book* is considered as documenting/performing a “smudged becoming” state of dance practice. Processes of transformation might also be referred to in terms of the discourse of translation, whereby ideas move between languages or forms.

2.2 Translating spaces

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

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

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

Translation implies working in a border space where ideas travel beyond their originary language, culture or discipline. Translators and translation theorists are familiar with and articulate in defining the technical and critical complications embedded in notions of

'remaining true' to an idea while changing and transforming it, or of deliberately allowing that work to mutate as part of a creative practice. Debates circulate among translators concerning the inventive role of this practice: Is the role of the translator to serve, to invent, to stay true, or to make new? Is it somewhere between this set of possibilities? Translation theorist Lawrence Venuti discusses the "ways in which translation redefines authorship in literature and law, creates identities receptive to cultural difference ... (and) requires different approaches to teaching literature and to doing philosophy" (Venuti, 1998, p. 3). He argues that translators, as creative artists working in the interface between cultures, deserve a great deal more credit for their work than they are currently given. In his book *The Scandals of Translation* Venuti writes that,

Translation is stigmatized as a form of writing, discouraged by copyright law, depreciated by the academy, exploited by publishers and corporations, governments and religious organizations. Translation is treated so disadvantageously, I want to suggest, partly because it occasions revelations that question the authority of dominant cultural values and institutions.
(Venuti, 1998, p.1)

Venuti's work in the field of translation studies has brought into critical consideration the vital role of the translation as a highly complex form of writing. With *the kinesthetic archive book I* also want to highlight the role of the reader as translator, as she creates the sense of each page, just as you do, when you read this book. As Venuti (and many others) attest, translation is a practice that is intrinsically ethical and political, as at the heart of any theory of translation is a methodology for giving, taking and mutating perhaps some of the most valuable, treasured and fragile forms of human creation – culturally specific ways of thinking/understanding the world. Margaret Werry's fascinating discussion of the performance of translation in the early colonization of New Zealand highlights the profoundly ethical and performative dimensions of exchanging not only language, but also status, identity and understanding. Werry's research is situated in a nexus between anthropology, critical theory and performance making. In her article *Translate, Translocate, Perform*, (2007) Werry examines the development of tourism and the commercialization of culture during the early colonization of New Zealand. This period was rich with performances of shifting identity, wherein multiple and divergent meanings proliferated in the space of translation. In this context and according to Werry:

the translator is a performer who navigates and shapes the textured, often treacherous terrain of power between worlds in motion. Rethinking translation in this way, with an eye to spaces of dissent, duplicity and digression produced in performance, to both the conditions *and the price of*

passage, limns an alternative understanding of communication and community. (Werry, 2007, p.136)

Such an approach to translation is also evident in the work of poet Jerome Rothenberg, whose translations of poems from an extensive range of cultures, languages and historical periods plays in the differential between response and invention. Rothenberg writes of his inclination “to think of translation – whether tight or loose – as itself a form of composition” (Rothenberg, 2004, p.74). He names his process ‘total translation,’ as rather than focusing on producing equivalent words in one culture from another, he aims to create new poems that use the movement between languages as a linguistic and conceptual pivot. Poet Charles Bernstein writes in the prologue to Rothenberg’s book *Writing Through*:

Rothenberg shows that translation can be a goad to invent new forms, structures, expressions, textures and sounds in the (new) poem being written. Translation is not a secondary activity to be subsumed under the name of its antecedent but an active working in the present. (Bernstein, 2004, p.xiv)

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

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

The project *Shattered Anatomies: Traces of the Body in Performance* (Heathfield et al, 1997) activates the ethical dimensions of translating ideas between dance and text and other forms of documentation. *Shattered Anatomies* describes itself as “a maverick intervention into the debates on the status and imaging of the body in Western culture and the historical preservation of transient performances” (Heathfield, 1997). This “document” is presented as a box filled with objects, photographs, critical texts and artist books. The contents vary widely, from a mini-display case containing a kiss made of jam and glass, to what is ostensibly a clothes pattern using the shapes of bodices, sleeves and collars to outline performance concepts. Opening the box is a process of discovery, and the process of examining, considering, reading and making ‘sense’ of its contents could not occur quickly – the interconnected mesh between these artifacts is highly provocative, ambiguous, and clearly creates a kind of live exchange between reader/participant/audience and maker/writer/provocateur. In *Event-Text*, his introduction to *Shattered Anatomies*, Adrian Heathfield presents a list of reasons why performance makers might resist the translation of concepts embedded in their work into textual form:

a distrust of commodification; a commitment to undermine the dominant orders of the text; an interest in intense physicality and sensory impression; ... a defiance of institutionalization in all of its forms; and most commonly, a concentration on the interactive dynamics of the performer-spectator relation and a correspondent tendency towards the valorization of the event. Many of these elements pose acute problems for the smooth incorporation of the performance into historical record. (Heathfield, 1997, para.1)

Here Heathfield conflates text with commodity, dominance, disembodied intellect, institutionalization, and passive readership. Heathfield tends to align text with acts of colonization and dominance and align performance with interactive dynamics and physicality. He reflects on key issues around practices of performance through a series of questions:

What issues are at stake in the translation of live art into dead records?
What forms of documentation and critical writing are appropriate to these ephemeral events? ...Why might the performing body and the performance event so trouble the traditions and forms of textual publication?... How can the event-hood of performance be defined? What is the body’s presence

and role within the ontology of the event? ... What happens to the spatial, temporal and inter-subjective dynamics of performance as it is reconfigured in the document or in critical theory? (Heathfield, 1997, para. 1)

While these questions provoke key issues around the notion of archiving kinesthetic sensations and performative actions, they also raise problematic assumptions. The notion of 'live art and dead records' is a clear example of a binarizing of documentation against performance practice, and of demonizing writing as 'killing' the very thing that sets performance apart from other disciplines. As I will discuss in other sections of this thesis, writing and documentation may also be considered as integral to performance making and the machinery of its production. Paula Caspão (2007) provides us with a sharp critique of discourses that specifically define ontologies of dance as being limited to live witnessed moments. Caspão argues that theories of performance that refuse to accept secondary or mediated sources as artistic events support discourse that polarizes artistic modalities. She writes that "such distinctions limit the field of operating possibilities, when it comes to dance and performance theory" (p.143):

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

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

In his practice-led PhD research *Indelible* Simon Ellis (Ellis 2005) draws on the philosophy of

Henri Bergson to discuss time and memory as inventive practices, elucidating how the concept of documentation might play a performative role in actively creating dance work, in an ongoing way:

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

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

Consideration of the ethics of translation opens space for a critical investigation of the specific practices utilized to move ideas between forms or languages, between dancing and writing. *The kinesthetic archive book* entailed a series of translations. Each translation is also a translation of a translation of a translation, from rehearsal planning, to communicating between dancers, to dancers exchanging and developing movement, to the page. In *the kinesthetic archive book* the translation is also stylistic, in choosing whether to use standard print, choosing a font or handwritten text, in working specifically at the level of the tone of page surfaces; each of these elements might be considered a translation of meanings. The political and ethical dimensions of *the kinesthetic archive book* lie in its determination to value affect over linear description. As Caspão writes, "Affect functions as a “critical point” insofar as it can dismantle legitimate orders of discourse as well as definite relations between words, bodies, minds, actions, and

objects" (Caspão, 2008, p.144).

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

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

Throughout the different modalities of *the kinesthetic archive*, I aimed to create spaces where felt meanings, silent voices, subtext and intuition were recognized for their formative status in performance research. Somatic methods of bodywork are by their nature 'first person' – thus they *cannot* be described or shared and are, in a sense, silent and untranslatable. However, such states are hugely generative of performance concepts and well worth exploring in terms of their bearing upon performance research. The attempts to translate somatic and process based dance states into another form via *the kinesthetic archive project* is motivated by the critical imperative of opening space in dance writing for the importance of sensory affect.

Ethnographer Deidre Sklar discusses how recognizing kinesthesia within dance anthropology is both important and challenging as anthropology has "traditionally ignored kinesthesia" (Sklar, 2000, p. 70). Sklar's article, *On Dance Ethnography*, examines the issue of "translating somatic knowledge into words" (Sklar, 2000. p.70), through attending to such details as the spaces of movement, specific rhythms and qualities, knowledge shared in gestures and spatial relationships. Sklar suggests how aesthetic elements of writing might convey such kinesthetic affect:

Writing is an aesthetic *embrace* that invites sensuous opening, almost as if words need to be irresistible, to partner bodily experience at all its levels of intensity, intimacy, and multiplicity. (Sklar, 2000, p. 73, author's emphasis)

Sklar describes how such writing emerges. Her ethnographic dance writing draws on child psychologist Daniel Stern's conceptualization of vitality affects in discussing how somatic knowledge is passed between people. Sklar describes how she follows the pathways of rhythms and senses of space and presence to locate textual pathways. She describes vitality affects as "kinetic qualities, the dynamics of energy inherent in all activity, dynamics like rushing, smoothing, jabbing, or squeezing" (Sklar, 2001, p.185) and outlines how such felt perceptions of experience form the basis for meaning. Sklar draws on Stern (1985) to discuss how infants, in particular, gather together vitality affects as a formative basis for feelings and understandings of events.

Philosopher Claire Petitmengin discusses the importance of vitality affects as underpinning meaning and communication. Vitality affects are identified with a pre-verbal realm and what might be termed a feeling of meaning. Interestingly for my study, Petitmengin (2007) and Stern (1985) describe this feeling in terms such as 'form', 'intensity', 'movement' and 'rhythm'. Petitmengin identifies such affects in "the specific dynamic which emerges from the form, gradient, thickness and rhythm of handwriting, very different from one person to another" (Petitmengin, 2007, p. 65). Here Petitmengin's describes the "rhythmic and gestural character" (p.65) of felt meanings, which are highly idiosyncratic and precise, like a signature. She emphasizes how the felt dimension of cognition is in play within artistic experience; "it could be described as a sort of interior landscape, or as a particular taste, and if you do not have any felt meaning, you will not be able to say anything meaningful or coherent" (p. 58). For Petitmengin the interior, somatic sense of pre-verbal felt meaning provides source material for new ideas to gestate and come to fruition. She highlights the delicacy of this process, and the necessity of allowing the sense to emerge into expression:

What becomes of the felt meaning once the right words have been found to express it? ... Expression not only makes it more precise, but makes it evolve, enabling us to discover new aspects of it ... The quality of the situation, the problem, the idea or the interior landscape associated with it, undergoes a metamorphosis. (Petitmengin, 2007, p.74)

Petitmengin's concept of felt meanings relates strongly to my study in three key ways. Firstly, her discussion of felt meanings as being fuzzy, blurry, or amorphous while at the same time having a highly specific tone, rhythm or dynamic relates to my experience of researching a somatic approach to embodiment. Secondly, Petitmengin makes it clear that in order to develop understanding or articulation of a felt meaning, one must turn attention from "the 'what' to the 'how'" (p. 60). This current study utilizes this same approach in order to approach movement-initiated writing from a process-oriented perspective. Thirdly, Petitmengin defines

the realm of felt meanings as one that has profound implications for philosophy, pedagogy and creative practices (perhaps particularly where these areas meet, such as practice-led research). She recommends that we focus on the interior gestures that “free up or make space more fluid” (p.79) in order to access our ideas with greater depth and understanding.

Attention to and expression of an internal felt sense of dance is also evident in practices such as Authentic Movement, which have been significant in my studio practice. Authentic Movement was developed by Mary Starks Whitehouse as a form of dance therapy in the mid twentieth century and was strongly influenced by Jungian psychiatry (Whitehouse, 1999). A core element of this practice is the relationship between a mover and a witness. The mover moves ‘authentically’ for a specific period of time, with their eyes closed. The witness is committed to ensuring the mover is safe. In the 1970s dance therapist Janet Adler, a student of Mary Starks Whitehouse, further developed and refined Authentic Movement practice, which has become a relatively common method in creative as well as therapeutic dance forms.

The outer form of this work is simple: one person moves in the presence of another... The witness, especially in the beginning, carries a larger responsibility for consciousness ... she is witnessing, listening, bringing a specific quality of attention or presence to the experience of the mover. The mover works with eyes closed in order to expand her experience of listening to the deeper levels of her kinesthetic reality. Her task is to respond to a sensation, to an inner impulse, to energy coming from the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious. (Adler, 1999, p.142)

As Authentic Movement is an improvisation practice in which the dancer works eyes closed, this practice immediately prioritizes proprioceptive sensing and activates sensory modes such as smell, sense of temperature and space, and kinesthetic sensations. Another key element of this practice is writing or drawing responses to one’s own sense of movement and responding to the experience of witnessing the movement of another. Personen (2008) describes Authentic Movement as focusing on “meaning arising from the inside of the dancer: meaning that may not be possible to define with words, meaning that may be similar to a feeling or an atmosphere, that may touch the viewer’s unconscious mind” (Personen, 2008, p. 92). The pages of *the kinesthetic archive project* attempt to follow through the felt meanings evoked by dance practices into the pages of books so that drawn or written gestures on pages conjure vitality affects linked to the felt sense of dance.

2.3 Writing as drawing

In an analysis of drawing as a form of process art, art theorist Cornelia Butler emphasizes that, “matter is *volatized* in drawing, not hypostasized” (Butler, 1999, p.32, author’s emphasis). This distinction between the potential of drawing to hypostasize or volatize, to fix reality or to make it flighty is highly relevant when one attempts to translate movement qualities to the page. The methodology for generating movement-initiated writing in this project draws on a notion of writing as a form of drawing. Through the process of editing I found that I was placing more and more emphasis on handwriting and drawing in final versions of pages; it was through handwritten journals that this writing came into being, from dance studios, to journaling, to editing, to book-design, to printing.

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

Art theorist Emma Dexter writes “Drawing is a feeling, an attitude that is betrayed in its handling as much as in the materials used” (Dexter, 2005, p.6). As I went through the journals I also photographed drawings and handwriting examples, keeping a digital file alongside the handwritten one. Handwritten passages have a very different resonance and quality to typed pages. Dexter draws on Heidegger’s notion of ‘handling’ to discuss the way in which the materials and the intention by which an art practice is approached define the understanding that a given practice comes to engender. In the case of *the kinesthetic archive book*, the act of handwriting as a form of drawing became key to my sense of the emergence of writing. Handwriting-as-drawing intensified the sense of the performance of the page and of dance concepts as they travel to readers.

The writing notebooks of Hélène Cixous (Cixous, 2004) is a book which testifies to the specificity of affect that can be translated through handwriting. This book prints pages of Cixous’ journals, with typewritten edits and handwritten pages on facing pages. Seeing the rhythms of shape and form that animate the first drafts of Cixous’ hand written journals allows the reader an intimate insight into her writing process. In an interview with Susan Sellers, Cixous describes the importance of handwriting to her creative process:

Handwriting is important. All this is handwritten, and I can't get around that, because I recognize different levels of... rightness, for instance, of the work, or of refining, etc., ... according to the physical aspect of my own handwriting, and I need that. It makes for different voices, because all those notes speak in different voices, and I recognize them by sight from the look they have, from my own handwriting, because it's all different, all the time. (Cixous, 2004, p.118)

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

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

2.4 How closely can this text engage with the movement of its reading?

How closely can this text engage with movement of its being read, as though moving close to the reader, as though offering a limb for the beginning of a Contact Improvisation duet?

Can you feel the state of your breathing shift as this writing addresses you directly, as if locating you in your particular space? As you yield to or resist the gestures of these words, let's take a moment to take in the kind of relationships we have going on here, let's read this performance of reading as though it's a choreography, beginning with the space. Uniform paper stock, uniform fonts, uniform headers and footers and numbers. Run your fingers over the surface of this paper, what is the tactile information your porous skin is breathing up, as it

feeds the grain of this paper into your nervous system? Does the sensation of this paper shift the performance of this text?

I would like to draw your attention to these texts on these pages: to the use of the font 'Bell MT', of margins, to suggest you read the spaces between lines, to read these letters as shapes rather than codes. Density of ink. Porousness of paper. Density of paper. Porousness of ink. The way the cadence of the words play against each other. The way the writing uses repetition and creates specific musicality out of grammar to pull you away from and towards itself. Partnering. Performance Writing. Somehow attending to the points where meanings shift, "writing becomes itself, becomes its own means and ends, recovering to itself the force of action... after turning itself inside out, writing turns again only to discover the pleasure and power of turning, of making not sense or meaning per se but making *writing* perform" (Pollock, 1998, p.75).

In her article *Performing Writing* (Pollock, 1998) Della Pollock clearly articulates performance writing as a kind of doing, rather than a particular linguistic style, a writing that is "always drawing its energy from a critical difference, from the possibility that it may always be otherwise than what it seems" (Pollock, 1998, p. 97). She identifies six key elements of performance writing throughout her article; that it is evocative, metonymic, subjective, nervous, citational, and consequential. In this research project I am interested in applying Pollock's theories about writing and mobility to the everyday logics of dance making. Part two of this chapter will discuss specific instances of dance practice that led to particular pages of *the kinesthetic archive project*, and the ways that writing fed choreographic processes through the development of the project.

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

The bodily and tactile knowledges that enable such immediate practical decisions reside beneath the threshold of consciousness/perception and as

such are unrepresentable. They are placed beyond the limits of the practitioner's own discursive knowledges such that they are difficult to speak of / reflect upon. (Clarke, 2004, para. 32)

Central to the entire *kinesthetic archive project* is the attempt to allow concepts embedded in practice to fold into artist's pages. This often means that writing is allowed to follow, as Clarke puts it, the ideas "that reside beneath the threshold of consciousness/perception". This research does, however, challenge Clarke's argument that bodily and tactile knowledges are "unrepresentable" in its attempt to allow such knowledges to emerge in the sites of pages, albeit in unpredictable and possibly less-than-easily-legible forms. The process of generating the texts that make up this book-work involved trusting in and becoming familiar with writing from a sense of the unrepresentable. A general rule in this writing was 'don't presume to know what you will write before you start, allow your writing to be disjunctive, unclear, to have messy grammar, to use the page space, to merge with drawing'. The following part of this chapter will discuss specific pages from *the kinesthetic archive book* in terms of the following methodologies for practice-led writing: the 'solo in duet form' structure; feeding choreographic structures; writing the somatic; a magpie approach to writing; notes from site specific workshop; watching dance in a new way through the attention of the writing task; the list as choreographic score; freewriting.

2.5 Chapter Two, part two

Solo in Duet Form, p. 4-23

Pages 4-23 of the *kinesthetic archive book* were created and/or developed with Val Smith, via a rehearsal process we identify as the *Solo in Duet Form*. Our studio practice has continued over ten years and a strong sense of shared knowledge and unspoken understanding permeates our work together. In this structure, we were both choreographing solos on our selves, but we consistently rehearsed together, warming up together, working separately on our piece, and meeting to show each other our work and give critical feedback before warming down together. The *Solo in Duet Form* warm up usually begins with somatic body-work, into Contact Improvisation and open duet improvisation followed by writing. After this writing we often work solo for up to two hours, before meeting back and sharing our work. As I watch Val's movement, I often write and draw my thoughts, and I weave her feedback into my movement via journal entries. It is this writing that forms Section One of the *kinesthetic archive book*. This kind of automatic writing and drawing functions through the openness of its form, through an insistence on writing into the unknown. Philosopher Rebecca Solnit, in her book *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* (Solnit, 2006) discusses the importance of the unknown in philosophy and creative practice, in response to the question of the pre-Socratic philosopher Meno:

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

The *Solo in Duet Form* practice that Val and I developed over many years provided a way in which we could support each other to find that unknown thing, and a pivotal device for the 'finding' (and then developing) part of our entering into the unknown, has always been our journaling processes. In particular, page 14 of *the kinesthetic archive book, Wednesday May 10 2006 4:36 pm* presents a rumination on improvisation. We deliberately go into a space without a particular score or intention, and begin with waiting, with listening intently to the particular moment. There is a sense of phenomenological description here, of bracketing the etiquettes of the world out in order to attend to one moment in its particularity. This page echoes the way in which my consciousness shifts with physical sensation in performance improvisation. This text is written in the second person, a writer describing herself as if through another's eyes – "You are waiting like a fisherman, for a call from beneath the sea of your skin". This is an authorial technique echoing a performance that negotiates concurrent awarenesses; the awareness of sensation and feeling from inside the body, and the awareness of how her phrase is being read by another. This evocation of a performer's dual attention is clear in the line,

“Intently listening, listening intently. You are this and that and the other thing, pale and how your hair moves when you shift the momentum of your neck”. The ‘listening intently’ referred to here refers to attention that shifts from the dancer describing herself as an object or thing with an external focus (‘how your hair moves’) to a somatic focus (‘when you shift the momentum of your neck’). This transition occurs in very few words, just as a dancer moves between states of attention with fluidity.

This shifting from the somatic sense to the sense of being witnessed is inherent throughout the *Solo in Duet Form* structure. Sharing the rehearsal space (whether towards solo or shared research or performance outcomes) also allowed us to recognize crucial moments in each other’s work – often just as one of us was at the point of throwing material away and beginning again, the other would recognize a valuable point of development and help her partner gain the confidence needed to see the material through.

Feeding choreographic structures, p. 24–32

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

Writing is a form of watching for you, a method for attending to movement vocabulary in space and time, you often find after watching a section of movement you’re left quite unable to say what you remembered, but if you scrawl notes or write directly after observing an improvisation or movement phrase somehow the images, tones, or spatial elements of work flood the paper. These methods of ‘documentation’ then become feedback notes, materials to share with

collaborators and navigation points as the structure of the work develops. They are integral in your ability to communicate with collaborators and to lead one rehearsal into the next.

The texts *Amounts of Leaving* (page 26) and *She Measures the Weight of Her Own Breath* (p.31) for example, were written as a kind of feedback that helped to define the quality and spacing of choreographic phrases, as well as refining the intentions of the dancers. The poem *Held here and here and here* (p.27) emerged through writing while generating improvisation phrases. I used writing as a way to distinguish between different improvisation states and to create scores for them. This poem then became the name of a specific section which composers Claire and Quasi could distinguish. This specific poem was used in the score of the work, as we recorded one of the dancers speaking the poem and Claire composed her voice as one instrument within a textured score (see track 1 of cd).

The text *Missing* (p.25) emerged from writing that attempted to clarify the intentions of different phrases, as a tool towards heightening performance states. In the end it became a formative part of the work as it generated a motif out of imagery – shedding skin and transforming into something other. This was especially helpful for communicating with the two composers. This concept of transforming out of your own skin became a key theme through the costuming, choreography, music and lighting. A central compositional motif that weaved through the score was titled “Wrapping and Unwrapping” (see track 2 of cd). The poetic, evocative nature of words is central in my ability to communicate with composers and designers in a shared language. Often movement, when it is in early rehearsal, is not the best starting point for a composer or designer to work from, but a very specific image, a disjunctive metaphor, or a line of poetry will often become a key that allows artists working in different media to develop a cohesion between concepts, while interpreting the writing in the idiosyncratic manner of their specific disciplinary practice. Val and I named a very slow, contemplative phrase “The Desert”, and this name alone was enough for Claire to begin composing one of the earliest pieces of the work (See track 3 of cd).

The poem *Circle* (p. 28-29) was written after we had finished *Suture*, when composer Claire asked me if I had any poems that would work for a choral piece – so I wrote with a deliberate focus on the way words sound – on images that might work with repetition, and be able to be interconnected in different ways. This poem was not specifically written out of dance practice, but it was written out of a collaboration created through choreographic practice. This poem nods to a practice that cultivates the ability to be able to respond in one artistic form to the demands of another. Response between the diverse logics of different artistic modes is central to my understanding of performance writing.

Writing the somatic, p. 33-40

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

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

Reflecting upon the challenge of writing the somatic makes me want to subtitle the section: 'Notes on Impossibility and Failure'. In their discussion of a documentation performance project consisting of live events, Ric Allsopp and Scott DeLahunta (1996) discuss "a persistent disjunction in our attempts to integrate the body as a coherent site of representation and presence ... (due to) an increasing separation between 'a theorized body' and an 'experienced body' where the theorized body – is represented, generated, located, presented and absented – is privileged over the inherent experience of the body and its systems" (Allsopp and deLahunta, 1996, p. 6).

Here, DeLahunta and Allsopp refer to the difficulty of articulating a project that treats the body as an integrated, experiential site, in a written culture that tends toward separating the experienced from the theorized body. As feminist philosopher Elizabeth Grosz (1994) has observed, theorizing somatic experience within critical theory is highly challenging. In *Parables for the Virtual* philosopher Brian Massumi (2002) similarly writes on the difficulty of valuing sensory information in a post-structuralist critical framework. At the time of writing this thesis, the body of dance research intent on working from and articulating a somatic ontology is growing exponentially,⁵ yet the task of somehow carrying the rich, sensate experiential of intensive somatic workshopping into words remains a somewhat elusive task. I have responded to this task by running with a partial, fragmentary, biased, abstract approach to writing these workshops. Out of books full of notes I present a glimpse of texts in the *kinesthetic archive book* that carry my sense of the logic of the work, while hopefully remaining abstract enough for the reader to find their own sense in them.

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

The poem *dwelling space* (page 47) is a poetic response to Carol Brown's article (Brown, 2002) of the same name. It is an experiment with finding models for reading and responding to dance writing. In writing this text, I asked myself, what might be the best way to notate my reading in dance research – to write down key quotes and ideas in a linear discussion of how it relates to one's current thinking, or something else? I was wondering, how else might dance writers integrate their reading with their creative practice? *Dwelling space* offers an example. Reading Brown's article, I listed terms (either randomly or in terms of key words) and then used those terms to create a piece of experimental writing. The idea was to respond to Brown's research *generatively* – to generate new logics and terms using another's language and concepts as a starting point.

Pages 47-52 of *the kinesthetic archive book* reflects works in which I focused on a sense of porosity. Reading specific authors, seeing performances, or participating in or teaching dance classes I allowed the style of a vocabulary to wash through writing. *After Hone Tuwhare's Rain* on page 44, for example, clearly engages with the poetic structure that defines well known New Zealand poet Hone Tuwhare's work *Rain*. This is a poem about the senses' intimate knowledge of rain, and reads as a kind of love poem to the rain. The rhythmic structure and vocabulary of Tuwhare's poem also resound through my writing, which emerged on reflection of a dance rehearsal. The following poem on page 45 which I have titled *After Yann Martel's*

⁵ An example of the growth of somatic research in performance studies can be evidenced by the recently released *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices*

The Life of Pi (Martel, 2001) engages with Martel's novel. Here the novel creates the thematic concept of the poem, but the rhythm and structure of the poem arose through dance practice. These three poems (*Dwelling Space: Carol Brown, After Hone Tuwhare's Rain, After Yann Martel's The Life of Pi*) all provide examples where an approach to writing is found in relation to the vocabulary, structure, syntax and concepts of specific texts, allowing new structures for movement-initiated writing to be found with experimentation with written style and form.

Notes from Site Specific Workshop, p. 48.

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

intimate, unpolished works for which an outside audience is either unanticipated or an afterthought. The journal's primary purpose is to serve as a place for its author to sort ideas and observations...In the end, journals may show more fully than any finished piece what it has meant to be us.
(New, 2005, p.18)

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

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

Another way of extending the reach of dance writing is through creating provocations that activate the imaginative role inherent in watching movement unfold. On page 50 of the *kinesthetic archive book*, 'Watching Emma Strapps' is a text written as I observed a choreographic workshop that focused on dancing and writing. This workshop was led by dancer practitioner Rosalind Crisp and academic and somatic practitioner Isabelle Ginot (Crisp and Ginot, 2007). I joined the technique class in the morning and observed the intensive workshop in the afternoon. Crisp's spoken instructions in technique class were all about transition and the pouring of weight, resistance from or pouring into the floor. Rather than describing positions she intended us to find, Crisp articulated the relationship between masses and specific pathways of weight. She described the movement phrases we worked with as "one long transition," (Crisp, 2007) a constantly shifting play of weight. The class lasted two hours and focused specifically on the bones of the pelvis in relation to the extremities of the skeleton.

After the class a few of us stayed and watched the dancers and choreographers working. Just before the dancers began moving Ginot approached us where we watched and offered us a choice of three watching/writing tasks that were typical of the work the dancers had been engaging with over the week.

1. Watch all the beginnings in the work
2. Imagine you keep one hand on a specific point on a dancer's body, feeling how the person is moving through the immediate information of (imagined) touch.
3. Watch the impossible body – whatever that means.

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

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

The list as choreographic score

A pragmatic approach to combining dance into writing in the development of co-extensive creative scores involves writing lists. Dotted throughout the *kinesthetic archive book* are text fragments, written in list form, which create rhizomatic connections with dance improvisation. As well as the text *Watching Emma Strapps* (p. 50) which was written from the exercise described above, on page 20 of *the kinesthetic archive book* is another list that emerged from writing as part of a duet studio practice Emma Strapps and I shared. Writing in the form of a list allows the writer to write a page of beginnings in which word fragments find forms that move on as fast as the movement does. It allows the writer to notice something and take note of it, let the idea go, and follow attention that moves continuously. Lists provide formal cohesion, as attention streams with movement. The list connects ideas together arbitrarily and contingently, creating space outside of the pressure of formal writing to create common-sense connections between lines. The movement phrase attended to is the conceptual string that runs through the entire list, and in my writing I often find themes, images or phrases re-emerging in relation to my attention in the movement. For example on page 37 is a list that I wrote from Scott Smith's workshop. Although the text moves tangentially in response to a particular dancer's movement, a particular tone and quality pervades the list as a whole. For me this can be a lot more useful than writing in sentences that require formal attention and coherence. Lists can offer a sense of disjunction, and collect beginnings or flashes of attention together into a (partially) coherent series. Using list-writing as a methodology involves giving secondary attention to style and lay-out – for me these elements were considered in later drafts, outside of the dance studio.

The list-work *Watching Emma Strapps Dancing* became the key structural element of *the kinesthetic archive project* solo performance. I used each item on the list as a starting point for generating a tightly choreographed movement phrase. The performance of *the kinesthetic archive project* solo involved a power point presentation with a separate slide for each of the phrases on the list. As the piece progressed, I allowed the numbering and sequencing of movement and words to get out of sync, so that the relationship between movement and text was tense and uncomfortable, and the audience were unsure if they could trust me as a performer. Performing untrustworthiness in the way projected text, spoken text and movement related to each other created the dynamic that was key to the work.

Freewriting

A formative influence in the development of our dance-based journaling strategies has been Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones* (Goldberg, 1986). As Judith Guest writes in her forward, the value of *Writing Down The Bones* is in how it creates a sense of “giving people permission to think the thoughts that come, and to write them down and make sense of them in any way they wish” (Guest, 1986, p. xiii).

Throughout all elements of this thesis, freewriting is the technique I have used for locating a writing voice to articulate specific concepts. Freewriting involves writing into the unknown without concern for the ‘rules’ of writing such as grammar and punctuation, encouraging ideas to move quickly, randomly and unexpectedly. In dance practice, I have found free writing allows many elements of practice to register in a single page. Such fluidity and mobility is central to allowing a non-linear, non-representational approach to writing to manifest in this research.

In order to allow the sense of free writing and journaling to define the style of *the kinesthetic archive book*, I have deliberately allowed certain spelling mistakes to stand uncorrected, as their pages are scanned directly from journals. This includes page 24, where “choreographing the body recieves loss” should read “receives loss”, and page 30, where “repitition” should read “repetition”. The deliberate inclusion of errors in this book aims to reinforce the sense of freewriting as a writing practice that allows attention to move away from the rulebook of correct writing, to focus on moving affective states toward pages.

2.6 Conclusion of Chapter Two: *kinesthetic archive*

It is easy to lose sight of the fact that writers do not write to *impart* knowledge to others; rather, they write to *inform* themselves (Guest, 1986 p. xiii)

Each of the pages of *the kinesthetic archive book* unfolded from an exploration into conditions and atmospheres specific to the vagaries of an ongoing practice in dance. This artist book is basically a catalogue of examples of such page works, many of which fed directly back into my choreographic practice. In particular *Watching Emma Strapps Dance* (page 50) became a structural device for the *kinesthetic archive* solo. The poems written out of the *Suture* rehearsal process (pages 24 to 31) were recorded and woven into the fabric of the composition of the electronic score, as well as being core structural elements in the refinement of movement phrases. *Rehearsal Text* (page 49) was written as rehearsal preparation for a somatic approach

to choreography.

The pages of *the kinesthetic archive project* present a series of texts laboriously gleaned out of multiple journals, harvested together through designing and binding in order to transport particular dance logics into a new site of performance. The usefulness of this approach to feeding dance practice lies in valuing small details, notes, drawings, memories, images, readings and conversations and allowing these things to enter into new sites of emergence. Embodied perceptions mutate into texts, drawings, and the design of pages in a delicate, often abstract way that is strongly informed by poetic structure.

Poet Bill Manhire has also been influential on my attempt to approach writing in a way that is highly specific and very precisely structured, yet abstract, spacious and playful in its tone. In a book that discusses his collaborations with painter Ralph Hotere, writer Gregory O'Brien describes Manhire's conception of poetry "as a catalyst or an agent for diversification, rather than a message bearing, authoritarian structure" (O'Brien, 1997, p.30). This conceptualization of poetry as 'agent for diversification' marries very well with my project, where the displacement of ideas between forms (dance, writing, binding, philosophy) mutates a framework of ideas produced in one form into alternative trajectories.

The dance work of Simone Forti is another case wherein ideas are displaced and extended between forms. In Forti's work this occurs by interweaving practices drawn from somatic movement practice, dance improvisation, creative writing, and improvising with text. Chapter Three of this thesis, *Moving Letters: A Workshop with Simone Forti in Logomotion*, will explore Forti's work in relation to Gilles Deleuze's concept of the minor literature, with particular attention paid to ways in which Forti's moving/speaking improvisations push language to a threshold via the logic of movement.

3.0 moving letters: Researching a workshop in Logomotion with Simone Forti

“I have found that we think differently when we are in motion. And that is the thinking I am trying to access.” (Forti, 2006, workshop discussion)

It is by now 10pm at Palazzo di Sette in the Italian town of Orvieto, where Simone Forti is about to perform a solo improvisation. We expected her to perform closer to 8pm but the media conference in which she was guest of honor went overtime, as did the performances previous to hers, and time has gotten later and later. Forti is unfazed and relaxed, waits for the stage to clear, and then enters it, without ceremony. She begins her performances by making a bird sound, a sound kind of like ‘fuuuuccck’- and begins a performance monologue that seamlessly brings together the lives of the pigeons living around the city and her feelings about reading the political news in the day's paper, moving continuously as she does so, the movement leading her into unpredictable shapes of thought and language.

Throughout her dance career Simone Forti has constantly drawn material out of the ‘thinking differently’ she finds in motion. Her performances and books exemplify a practice of writing and speaking out of the felt sense of movement that has emerged from decades of practice in performance.

My aim in this chapter is to discuss Simone Forti's work as a dance practitioner in relation to the following questions/issues:

- How might Forti's practice of Logomotion be considered a methodology for movement-initiated writing?
- What are the implications for critical discourse generated by Forti's dance work, which interrelates movement, language and thought? In particular I will discuss Forti's work as a form of minor literature (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, 1987).
- Methodologies for moving Forti's work from the site of the dance studio to that of the artist book, with specific reference to poet David Antin.

This chapter interconnects with the artist book *moving letters* which takes each of the six days of Forti's teaching as source material for a poetic document that attempts to render in readable form specific elements of the logic embedded in Forti's practice of *Logomotion*.

My intention is for readers to bring *moving letters* into conversation with this chapter, as each presents a different approach to Forti's artistry in contextual, critical and performative modes. One of the principles central to Forti's work in *Logomotion* is that of moving between many imaginative sites throughout a performance, and linking these sites together through a stream of speech. The format of this chapter also transits between different environments and modes of engagement with the reader, stylistically borrowing writing structures drawn from film script, interview, critical essay, and journal. You might think of this chapter as a kind of tour. Using the vehicle of a narrative we will move between two sites at the ZIP Dance Festival in Orvieto, Italy, and a desk in Mt Eden, Auckland, New Zealand, where I sit with my notes, my computer, photocopies of articles and books that link to Forti's practice, all of the draft versions of the *moving letters* book, and the poetry books that influence the formatting and design of these accordion books.

In moving between these three sites, I hope to convey a sense of Forti's practice and some of the philosophical implications of her work. I particularly hope that this chapter will begin to articulate ways in which Forti's work reflects an ontology of transition and process, and to present, through discussion of the *moving letters* book, some ideas for carrying the transitional nature of Forti's dancing into performance writing. The source material of this chapter is drawn from Forti's strategies for improvising with dancing, speaking, and writing as they emerge out of each other and become inextricable.

Extracts from journal notes are also an important part of this chapter. In my attempt to provide some kind of access to the moving logic and dynamic of Forti's work, I have integrated reflective writing alongside critical contextualization and analysis. The partiality of my voice as writer and dancer reflecting on Forti's practitioner knowledge is inherent in the italicized notes.

We'll move between two sites at the ZIP Festival; Palazzo Caravajal where Forti's workshop in *Logomotion* was held and Palazzo di Sette where I was invited to participate in a documentary interview with Forti and film maker Andy Wood. This chapter cuts between one environment where Forti shares her dance practice with an international group of dancers, another where Forti reflects on her work for a film documentary and the writer's space where the account you read is pieced together in relation to the specific concerns of this research project.

3.1 Introducing Forti's workshop

we begin in a circle and simone introduces herself she discusses a shift in the dance community that she has witnessed and participated in over the last forty – fifty years dancers have moved from seeing their bodies as objects to be disciplined and trained to seeing their bodies as sources of wisdom to learn and begin from she speaks of her work and how it brings together dancing and speaking

*“when i move i know something
when i move as i speak i know more”*

Simone Forti is internationally recognized for her influential role in what has become known as an originary moment in post modern dance, the era of the Judson Church performances where performance artists instigated a radical questioning of dance's vocabulary, structure, relationship to culture, and conceptual integration with a wide range of artforms and intellectual disciplines. Sally Banes (Banes, 1987) discusses this period in dance history as leading the way for post modernism in dance, especially in terms of a clear rejection of the codes and hierarchies of modernism. “By breaking the rules of historical modern dance, and even those of the avante-garde of the fifties...the post-modern choreographers found new ways to foreground the medium of dance rather than its meaning...The dances by early post-modern choreographers were not cool analyses of forms but urgent reconsiderations of the medium” (Banes, 1987, p.xvi).

Rachel Fensham also discusses Forti's work in historical context as part of a group of female dance practitioners including Deborah Hay and Yvonne Rainer, who from the 1960s onwards “began to experiment with, and reject, previous choreographic conventions” (Fensham, 1993, p. 24). In doing so they have worked with strategies for de-training dancers and experimenting with the structures possible in performance. According to Fensham:

dancers use various strategies, most requiring close attention to the internal workings of the body, time and patience. These operations ‘within themselves’ require an instructional language which operates not simply to deconstruct, that is, to undo habit, rigidity and expectation but serves also as a re-finding, a re-placing, a re-ordering of a (new) body.
(Fensham, 1993, p.25)

The kind of body that Forti's dance practice calls into articulation is one that begins with careful, focused listening and sensing. It is a dance practice that is consistently democratic, that calls in space for the unpredictable, while attending to the structures necessary to allow the work to maintain focus and clarity. Participating in Forti's workshop, one can't help but have a strong sense of her artistic lineage and her role in shaping contemporary performance. In her teaching, Forti refers to the historical and personal lineage of movement exercises, offering spinal warm-ups learned from Anna Halprin in the 1960s, leading us through 'The Huddle' (which she has re-named 'The Mountain') a movement sculpture drawn and described in her 1974 book *Handbook in Motion* (Forti, 1974). She also introduces somatic exercises drawn from somatic pioneer Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen and warm-ups of her own devising such as the crescent roll which was widely used as a warm-up technique in the development of Contact Improvisation. It is clear that her teaching has been distilled over many years of studio practice, teaching, performing and publishing.

Fensham draws parallels between the theoretical moves of philosophers Elizabeth Grosz and Luce Irigaray and the work of dance makers such as Forti, who through long-term movement research have created a series of methods that might be considered to exemplify a somatic ontology. Fensham suggests that the work of these dance artists has powerful implications for philosophy and gender studies in writing through and from a feminine body. Forti's studio practice offers a pragmatic model for working with experiences of everyday life through an improvisation practice that prioritizes flux, transition and process. As Sally Banes writes; "Forti is a dancer who is emblematic of a moment in cultural history when a new naturalism daily seeks to uncover the secrets of the body and of various ecologies. She is a polemicist of a generation that investigates the border between nature and culture with curiosity and awe, and which promises comfort with each return to the basic" (Banes, 1987, p.37).

Forti has participated in the development of a somatic approach to dance that involves responding to sensation, rather than ascribing to a formal ideal of what a dance might be. Her work prioritizes interior process over exterior shape and the articulation of ideas in process over generalisable or predictable endpoints or positions. Her approach to dance has been consistently collaborative and reflective of democratic modes of decision-making.

Forti describes her workshop process:

The heart of the workshop is developing ease between moving and speaking... This pragmatic can lend itself to any area of subject matter, or range poetically through varied images, memories, or speculations. By speaking and moving at once, spontaneously following our impulses

and responding to the resulting dynamics and images, we integrate various aspects of our knowing and give expression to a fuller spectrum of our world. (Forti, 2006, cited in Zip)

To me this work seems very natural. And yet it is subtle. It is not illustration. It is not mime. It is not even linear thinking. And in a way that is the key. A shift of frame of mind. I have found that we think differently when we are in motion. And that is the thinking I am trying to access. (Forti, 2003, p.63)

The ‘thinking differently’ that motion manifests has strong implications for philosophy. If, following Fensham, we were to examine Forti’s work as a philosophical practice, it is clear that it has much to offer critical theory in terms of elucidating an ontology of transition, sensation and becoming. In this chapter, I aim to articulate relationships between Forti’s work and the critical thinking of post-structuralist philosophers Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari and Brian Massumi. I will also discuss the work of talk-poet David Antin and his influence on the *moving letters* artist book. I will argue that Antin’s and Forti’s work generates a performative/linguistic style that corresponds to the concept of a minor literature (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, 1987).

3.2 Virtuality and mobility

Colebrook draws on Gilles Deleuze to define the virtual as, “a power of variation and becoming, a power to create anew without prior reference or ground” (Colebrook, 2002, p.106) and the incorporeal as, “a power of bodies that goes beyond what bodies actually are” (Colebrook, 2002, p.110). Massumi defines the virtual as “that which is maximally abstract yet real, whose reality is that of potential-pure relationality, the interval of change, the in-itself of transformation” (Massumi, 2002, p.58). The concept of the virtual includes the way that new possibilities are triggered in relationship to corporeal states and to the perpetual transition that is a condition of existence. Massumi’s writing revolves around the notion that states of transition and flux are core to developing post-structuralist philosophies that are sensitive to the human capacity for change, renewal and multiplicity. His insistence that “passage precedes construction” (Massumi, 2002, p.8) is exemplified in the creative practices of both Forti and talk-poet David Antin who utilizes an improvisatory, performance-based style of poetic invention.

CUT

let's take an imaginative rest, let's take a breath, gazing out the window from a desk in
Auckland City,

let's think about the way ideas have their own momentum, let's think about practices that
allow the momentum of ideas to unfold and develop in arcs of torsion, narrative and poetic
invention

CUT

to dance workshop, Palazzo Caravajal

*it is a jogging exercise we fall into our weight a sense of our
mass and then as we work in partners a sense of our
shared mass Our bodies tune to gravity and momentum
opening to the space to length warmth ease listening
timing Simone gives instructions for jogging*

You are one mass together

Change partners many times

Feel your mass along the space

Feel the momentum move you

You are moved

You get half the ticket for free if

you can release into the space

and let momentum do the work for you

*These are short experiments with space and momentum working
with a partner and sensing the dynamic of streaming through
space and time as two in this very simple form Forti
slowly allows it to become more complex so that the final
version of the exercise involves improvised duets moving down the
space and in and out of the floor in all manner of forms*

and

CUT

again to a desk in Auckland

our eyes arrive at a book of coloured folds, each one is printed matter, part the reinvention of speech, part documentation written from a dancer's point of view, part poem, part experiment in letter, color, form and fold.

(how is the light falling on the page as you read this?)

as for the book its an assembling of pieces that have come together in my
mind as a kind of open work structure I hope to offer as provisional
housing for a number of elusive bright colored migratory meanings
(antin, 2005, p.x)

Readers of the *moving letters* book are presented with a palimpsest created by pages made from transparent architectural film. The colored shapes of letters layered beneath echo into each word that presents itself to readers. Fingerprints show through paper – your skin enters the field of the page, just as the sensation of touch registers to the nerves. Something about layering and folding down, a set of creases merging. Something about speech, about an unpredictable unfolding of movement and sound, about how to shepherd the spoken to the page into combinations drawn from twenty six letters as they collaborate with a specific set of materials.

In the *moving letters* artist book, each day of Forti's workshop is presented as a separate accordion book. Folds stand in for gaps in time, spaces between one task and another: the presentation of a day's work as a single page emphasises the connectedness of tasks. The repetition of design over the six 'pages' reflects the way a single pathway of concepts progresses through the book as a whole.

In these books the angle, size, font, spacing, color of phrases and the relationship between each of these elements against each other, all form a response to the non-linear logics of Forti's processes. The shape of a dancer's day unfolds with the layering of movement tasks upon each other. The intelligence of one task is developed and extended into the structure of the next, with Forti deftly moving the dancers from simple warm-ups to complex performance structures, from the clarity of following instructions to the seeming randomness of open improvisations. In reading these books you are reading one woman's participant-based reflection on another woman's dance workshop method. It's all partial. There is a play between sound recording, memory, and immediate handwritten transcription in a journal.

Every second is rich with listening and exchange – twenty six dancers translating tasks into physical, relational and linguistic vocabularies of pattern and organization. So how do I make do with this language of typography and printing to somehow evoke the logic of Forti's workshop?

The pathway travels from direct experience to the devices of MP3 recorder and notebook. I record fragments of Forti's teaching in sound and in my own words and over time I edit this down to two main elements; the *moving letters* artist book and the reflective notes included in this chapter. The starting point for *moving letters* is Forti's speech, the present tense of instruction with its need for clarity and focus. I am attempting to create a pathway for speech to be read. In order to do so I have drawn on the "talk poems" of poet and art critic David Antin, particularly the ways in which his work emphasizes a) the importance of process, contingency, liveness and an improvisatory mode of poetic construction b) Antin's technical and stylistic devices for moving from the spoken and improvised to the printed page and c) the difference between speaking and writing stylistically and in terms of human exchange. Let's go through it step by step. It's the best way for me to explain the ways in which Antin's work provided me with ideas for moving between the spoken phrases of performance research and the page space.

3.3 An improvisatory mode of poetic construction

Art theorist and poet David Antin has been an influential figure in U.S poetry since the 1960's. His poetry, which he describes as 'talk poems' merge the fields of poetry, philosophy and performance art. His method for creating these works is to talk for a pre-set period of time on a theme that he will have decided upon in advance. He chooses to work with an improvisatory approach in order to express the atmosphere of the process of thinking in all of its divergent, associative, repetitive travel. As he writes in his poem *talking at bierancourt*;

if im going to be a poet I want to be a poet who explores mind as the medium
of his poetry not mind as a static thing but the act of thinking and the
closest I can come to the act of thinking is the act of talking and thinking at
the same time the closest I can come to my thinking is by talking my self
through it talking my way through my thinking thinking my way through
my talking (Antin, 2005, p.50)

Literary theorist Marjorie Perloff discusses Antin's work in relationship to the contingent poetics of John Cage. She writes, in relationship to their work, that "the very notion of the poem as 'preconceived object' as a set of words arranged on the page according to plan, needs to be reassessed" (Perloff, 1981, p.287). Like Forti's dancing/speaking improvisations (which are discussed later in this chapter) Antin's work insists on performing the process through which ideas come into being. At the same time, he is reserved about describing his work as improvisation. In the introduction to his book *i never knew what time it was* he writes that he has:

come to distrust what other people think it means the idea of starting
from a blank slate nobody starts from a blank slate not charlie parker
nor homer nor ludwig wittgenstein started from a blank slate each in his
different way going over a considered ground that became a new
ground as they considered it again (antin, 2005, p.ix)

In the process of performing, ideas can meet each other in fresh ways, not necessarily being invented, but being given alternative contexts and pathways of sense. This is very clear in Forti's work, as through repetition and sensorial pathways of sound, known ideas explode with unexpected meaning. Perloff describes the way that Antin's poetics shift with the contingency of each moment: "An Antin story often weaves in and out of the expository discourse in which it is embedded; or again, it may fragment in mid-air, in keeping with Antin's distrust of

memory and perception as guides to what has actually ‘happened’” (Perloff, 1981, p.330).

One of the distinctive features of Antin’s written poems is his play with the space between words in order to accentuate the spoken rhythms of his poetics in the performance of reading. Spaces between words create a sense of breathing and rhythm, and Antin’s choice to use only lower case letters without any punctuation accentuates the flow of language from one idea to the next, the sense that these ideas flow out of each other without a contained sense of beginning and end. Antin uses spaces to indicate apostrophes, commas and full stops, and these spaces change depending on the length of the pause, so that his writing is emphasized as a spatial practice:

to ensure that these texts preserve their traces as talk ive tried to distinguish them from printed prose by dispensing with its nonfunctional markers regular capitalization most punctuation marks and right and left justification which i see as merely marking propriety and making a dubious claim to right thinking and right writing (antin, 2005, p.x)

In developing the *moving letters* books and the italicized extracts of journal notes in this chapter I have drawn upon Antin’s style of writing, with the spaces between words providing a sense of the rhythm, tone and movement quality inherent in spoken language. Resistance to punctuation and grammar strikes me as a democratizing of language, a way of formatting words so that readers might create their own sense of the rhythm of lines and the progression of one phrase into another. While Antin’s work employs standard use of horizontal lines and standard font, in the *moving letters* book I was also influenced by authors such as Charles Bernstein (1999), Susan Howe (1989), Steve MacCaffery (1991), Michelle Legott (1994) and Johanna Drucker (1996), all of whom actively experiment with the formatting of words on pages, the size and style of font and various shapes and atmospheres possible in the aesthetics of the page.

3.4 Between speaking and writing

What is happening as I write this? I am typing via a keyboard to the flat screen of a computer and my process is a very different one to speaking to you directly, when we would be meeting, reading each other’s facing and tones, where we would interrupt each other and the train of our thinking would develop through pathways of response or listening. Here, in the terrain of the written, I am constantly ordering my words so that an idea in its singularity or even in its ambiguity, might reach you with some semblance of clarity. The work of Forti and Antin takes the atmospheres of speech as a key feature of their published writing. The contingent tone of

the spoken, as a form of language where responsiveness and exchange is central, shifts the work of language: “it is characteristic of speech to be fragmented and associative rather than to have precise beginnings and endings” (Perloff, 1981, p. 304). The fragmented, associative pathways of Forti’s and Antin’s work combine the everyday life of language with the poetic and the performative. Written articulation of both Forti’s and Antin’s work carries a strong sense of the specific conditions of practice through which the writing emerged.

Philosopher Michael de Certeau discusses methodologies for tracing human exchange in the context of everyday life. In his writing he draws attention to the gap between the written language of intellectuals and researchers, and the verbal exchanges of people in their ordinary lives. He describes the difference between “*discourses*, the data that can most easily be grasped, recorded, transported, and examined in secure places” and “the speech *act* (which...) cannot be parted from its circumstances” (de Certeau, 1984, p.20, author’s emphasis). Enunciation is a key term here. Certeau privileges the act of speaking: “it effects an appropriation, or reappropriation of language by its speakers, it establishes a *present* relative to a time and place; and it posits a *contract with the other* in a network of places and relations” (de Certeau, 1984, p. xiii). In *Introducing Unnatural Acts* (1997) Susan Leigh Foster discusses how de Certeau’s insight “extends to all bodily articulation, whether spoken or moved, the same capacity to enunciate. The acts of walking or cooking, like speaking, all operate within the fields of a language-like system; individual bodies vitalize that system⁶ through their own implementation of it” (Foster, 1997, p.6). Simone Forti’s bringing together of multiple registers of enunciation through her improvisation practice is a tactic for creating “momentary disruptions to the coercive power of strategic structures” (Foster, 1997, p.6). Forti destabilizes language and disrupts known and safe passages of verbal sense.

Performance theorist Andrew Quick also discusses de Certeau’s work in terms of its potential for interrupting the normalizing power of discourse. Quick presents the notion of ‘troubling practices’:

troubling practices expose the limit of certain discursive operations, and secondly, they point to a relation within the scene of performance (since they are articulated through it) between performer and spectator and across the imbricated space marked by the activities of watching and performing, that demands an understanding of (and consequently a new way of writing) the event itself. (Quick, 1997, para. 3)

⁶ The system Foster refers to here is the “panoptic power of the state, so elegantly exposed by Foucault” (Foster, 1997, p.6).

The writing/performance work of Antin and Forti may clearly be considered within the domain of such 'troubling' practices, as through their work language is made unsteady, spatial, and enunciative.

and

CUT

the camera is on. Simone, Andy and I are sitting in an alcove inside the stone walls of Palazzo di Sette, discussing the history of Simone's practice for a documentary Andy is making on Simone's work.

Simone: when you're improvising performance hopefully there's a sense of urgency that kicks in that really gets the juices going, it gets the imagination going, it gets the perception going, hopefully your sense of composition, so that you're aware of the arc of the performance but you're very in touch with your impulses, you make selection as you go and yet you're very aware of the process at the same time. Sometimes those juices don't flow, it doesn't happen you use your craft, sometimes its bad and you strike out. I have choreographed very little and when I do choreograph, I'll often have a set of bits of vocabulary that I improvise with,

Alys: I think *The Huddle* is some kind of choreography improvisation, you know it's that very clear stage image with a very, an amazing quality of indeterminacy in terms of how the form will evolve

Simone: and what I like in *The Huddle* is, yes it has a very simple score, you improvise how you are gonna do the score, which is climbing over the mass of people, but it's, it's all you can do to just climb up and get over the top and down the other side. So there's not a lot of the aesthetic choices which leaves you free to just experience having to pull your weight, the shifting of the people under you that are organizing themselves to hold the weight and someone observing can really see the body moving. At about the time I did that piece which was back in 1960 essentially I was looking at the photographs of Muybridge. He was just taking photographs of people, naked, like a man naked chopping wood! Just chopping wood, and then he was doing like fancier things, like having a woman like pick up a whole bucket of water and dump it on her head,

Alys: and he took a lot of images

Simone: and this was before movies. So that you could just see the lift of the weight of the axe and how the body adjusted and how the body, and then the going over to drop the axe and then the bounce of the axe and how the body took that bounce in. It was more beautiful than any kind of beautiful thing, and that's what good about Contact Improvisation, is that there's no time to be beautiful. It's not, this kind of delicate form or I like this line, you go for it, and as you're watching you get to see reflexes in action.

CUT

to Palazzo Caravajal, we are part way through the morning warmup

*we are working in trios between moving and speaking
our three words are*

derma-skin-pele-peau

radiche-root

assemblago-assembly

*in connecting disparate terms like the word assembly
and the word skin we connect disparate ideas find
edges of the maps these words contain we feel move
through muscle in on push and ride pathways of
sound and concept as a trio we are working in close
proximity with Contact Improvisation working as a
shared movement logic as our trio finds its point of
closure we reach for our pens and i write*

roots arriving at water

water upon the skin

cinema film is a skin

and also receives light

and light feeds to the roots to make them grow

without touch the skin folds isolation to the body

you know that a child needs touch to grow

so the skin is a root for assembling our being

together

CUT

to documentary interview, Palazzo di Sette

Simone: In America movement improvisation – it wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been for jazz, it takes on a completely different vocabulary, a different style. You build a vocabulary that you can use and that's constantly evolving. But it's the same for every artist, a painter works with a vocabulary and from canvas to canvas is evolving that vocabulary, and every once and a while you go agghhh! That vocabulary you don't remember why you started with it, it's become by rote almost, then you have to go looking and find a new paradigm, and it's the ones who go and out and find what's needed next.

Alys: How do you find what's needed next?

Simone: Well it's a good question because, like, do you keep going or do you stop or, um, it comes up, I think it comes up for everybody and um, you can despair, you can start reading a lot of things, sometimes you look to a new medium, maybe, start reading up on agriculture or something, just to start fresh, or

Alys: reignite your curiosity. I feel like, the curiosity of the performer, if they're really curious about what it is they're working on, I'm curious with them

Simone: yes

Alys: so when you see an improviser who's really curious about how the concepts will evolve, it really catches you

Simone: and also the sensations of movement, if they're into their sensations you get into their sensations with them, you experience it through them, and also their curiosity about how the form will evolve as you're saying, yeah

Alys: Does the Tai Chi and the bodywork stretches, in the morning, do you use them to teach us to learn to wait, and allow something to happen? I feel like there's an openness of the body,

that the warm-ups teach patience and openness.

Simone: okay, yeah, and also kinesthetic awareness, that you take time to sense your sensations and then 'cause that's a big part of what you're responding to, umm, and it becomes a loop where you sense your sensations, you respond to them you get different sensations you respond to them, and also of course you're making choices.

CUT

time for a short rest, perhaps a cup of tea, maybe a stretch
we are back at the desk space

3.5 Logomotion as a minor literature

Deleuze and Guattari's (1986, 1987) concept of a minor literature provides a way of analyzing Forti's work in terms of the conceptual spaces it opens up, in relation to dance, literature, philosophy and other disciplines. Deleuzian concepts have deservedly gained popular currency in performance studies literature, yet the notion of the minor literature is rarely utilized in this field. Issues of how best to translate studio-based knowledge into academic form are a central issue in practice-led research (Clarke, 2003; Ellis, 2005; Melrose 2002, 2006; Reason, 2003; Wright, 2002). It follows that a concept such as the minor literature deserves consideration as a conceptual tool for pushing language into affective relationship with worlds of studio practice.

Forti has published three books, each of which translates dance process into textual form. She focusses on the perceptual spaces that emerge through the work rather than detailed descriptions of finished pieces. The logics of Forti's somatic and improvisatory practices saturates her book works. Forti's pages and performances can be seen as a minor literature, wherein "language has its own affective power, above and beyond meaning" (Colebrook, 2002, p.114). Claire Colebrook writes of the distinction Deleuze and Guattari make between minoritarian and majoritarian literatures, noting that work is 'majoritarian' when it is "based upon an identity and demands recognition rather than constitution, of that identity" (Colebrook, 2002, p.117). The identity of the minor, on the other hand, is always in process and can never be fixed. The minor relates to cultures that are of lesser power, of lower status,

that must transgress the rules of the major in order to come into existence. It is straightforward to see how Forti's work may be defined as minor in these terms. Performance improvisation has never had the same support or place in the 'canon' of dance as set choreography. Forti's preferred methods of movement research – improvisation, performance art, and somatics – are often seen as an experimental alternative to modern dance technique. Forti's work refuses to be fixed, instead each of her performances are improvised within a specific logic, or set of relationships.

Forti's work sits alongside that of dance thinkers such as Deborah Hay, Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen and Steve Paxton in offering alternatives to performative discourses structured around representation and position. She has made a substantial contribution to dance that has actively created ways of exploring "a body that is re-organised according to a hierarchy of function and not of sexual difference, and activated by an inner listening to the body where there is always movement" (Fensham, 1993, p.29). The hierarchy of function that Fensham mentions is one that shifts constantly depending on the supports required by a body in motion, and wherein the point of initiation could be any cellular structure in the body. The work of Forti, Hay and Paxton resists bodily hierarchies that privilege verticality and sight. Instead these practitioners develop the sense of a body with multiple orientations and endless possibility for shift and renewal.

The subject, the performer, ceases to be aggregator of bodily coordination and action. Instead the body of re-presentation is made multiple; it exists beyond the limits of objective comprehension, every cell dancing the given images of movement. (Fensham, 1993, p.33)

A distinctive element of the dance practices developed by artists such as Forti, Hay and Paxton is their resistance to dance as visual spectacle. Instead, the kinesthetic and haptic senses are privileged as modalities to develop pathways of sensing, moving or response. Elizabeth Dempster's article *Re-visioning the body* (Dempster, 1993) highlights the vital importance of such practices in Western culture, wherein the cadaver provides a primary source of medical knowledge via the autopsy, and a "radical discontinuity between the knower and the known, between the subject and the object" (p.17) informs epistemology. Dempster draws attention to the implications of privileging visual information over haptic, kinesthetic, auditory, or olfactory sensing, and highlights the way in which this privileging reinforces a separation of self and other. She posits that, in contrast, dance practices such as Contact Improvisation, which emphasize touch or kinesthetic sensing emphasize the coextensiveness of self and world, and writes that:

one of the enduring legacies of the modern dance tradition and an important part of its continuing vitality is its commitment to a process of reevaluation and rebalancing of the sensory order of our own culture. Modern dance artists have systematically explored and re-evaluated the sensory modalities at work in dance and in so doing have contributed to a developing critique of the hegemony of vision in Western aesthetics and more broadly, in Western culture. (Dempster, 1993, p.12)

I am suggesting that the ocularcentric tendency of Western culture might be considered to be in the realm of the majoritarian, with the haptic and kinesthetic senses forming a minor mode of sense perception. In their book *Kafka – Toward A Minor Literature* Deleuze and Guattari distinguish characterizing elements of a ‘minor literature’. Firstly, the minor is written in the language of the major but deterritorializes it – that is, it opens possibilities for meaning through shifts in vocabulary and structure. Secondly, the minor is inextricably political. Thirdly, the minor prioritizes a collective, enunciative approach to language (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.16-17).

CUT

back to the dancers at Palazzo Caravajal who are developing structures for improvisation performance

*democratic collective decision making informs the rhythms of
simone’s workshop in choosing words to work with in
improvisation simone initiates a voting procedure that ensures
every dancer’s ideas are given voice in structuring
performances we sit in a circle and keep sharing ideas until
everyone has spoken and agreed as a group on the best way to
work simone remains open to new ideas and is happy to
allow her practice to evolve with the input of the participants
in voting for words we consider words for their meaning their
musicality for association we consider spaces between many
translations working in english italian spanish greek finnish
and german we concentrate on words as physical entities that*

When a given dance practice works toward virtuosity and a specific ideal of correctness or technical expertise, that practice is acting with the authority of the major – training dancers to replicate a code of conduct and aesthetic. Classical ballet is a clear example of the major in dance. Historically, ballet dancers have represented the state (Albright, 1997, Foster, 1996). They have exemplified definitions of virtuosity and elitism, acting as ‘gatekeepers’ to participation in dance. In her chapter *Moving Across Difference* dance performer and scholar Ann Copper Albright discusses ways in which stereotypical images of beauty, perfection, grace, desire and transcendence have come to stand for the image of the dancer in the West:

Although the “look” of dancers has indeed changed with the political, economic, intellectual, and aesthetic revolutions of the past 150 years of Western culture, the idealized image of the ballerina as well as the voyeurism implicit in the gaze of the balletomane still subtly inform most people’s vision of professional dancing. (Albright, 1997, p. 57)

The minor on the other hand is unpredictable with a tendency to upset the hierarchies enforced by the major. Forti’s performances provide a clear example of this as she speaks mostly in English, yet the English she speaks is made strange through its inextricability from the development of her movement practice. It might also be considered that Forti makes strange the figure of the dancer, as she continues to perform solo in international dance festivals, well past the age of seventy, in a profession that is well known for being ageist.⁷

Forti shares her independence from the formal and conceptual stereotypes that form the majoritarian in dance with the participants in her workshop. I noticed that some dancers found it unsettling to have their ‘acceptability markers’ displaced – in Forti’s workshop attention was not given to technical virtuosity, but to the following of curiosity in a site where verbal language meets movement exploration. In refusing to tell dancers how to move when they perform through the technique of *Logomotion*, and insisting instead that they begin with ordinary details and personal preoccupations, Forti ensures that each dancer works through her improvisation frameworks in a different way. This can be seen as a practice of de-training, of encouraging dancers to find movement vocabulary outside of set technique-orientated movement styles, and of the development of a minor literature in dance practice. Petrus de Kock writes; “the minorized traces of a language decompose the formalized structures and hierarchies of a major language” (2003, p.183). Forti’s work decomposes traditional

⁷ Carol Brown (1999b) describes the “regulatory type” of the dancer as “*upright (straight) lean, compact, youthful, able-bodied, and feminine (male and female)*.”

assumptions of dance and provides alternative structures and movement concepts.

Forti's work is a constant play between the virtual and incorporeal and the ordinary and the immediate. Her dance work spans the worlds of poetry, memory, geography, affect and connection immanent inside a sound or a thread of sounds. While engaging with these often abstract qualities, Forti grounds her performances in specifics such as the details of the performance space, her relationship with the audience and her physical sensations.

In performance, Forti places herself in a relation of becoming with the newspaper, with her garden, with figures of speech⁸. Her audiences witness a porosity between her self and the information she processes as she makes our location as audience multiple – we are at Palazzo di Sette, in Forti's garden, in the streets of Los Angeles, on the rooftops with a family of pigeons, in the U.S congress. Her practice weaves the tangible world of the performance space into virtual spaces of possibility and imagining, drawing new ideas out of the spaces between singularities. We could read her improvisation practice as a series of becomings, sourced in the spaces where ideas meet, between movement memory and specific words, between the tone of a space and the page of a newspaper, between a political climate and the weather in her garden.

3.6 Making sense delirious

Deleuze's (1997) book *Critique et Clinique* develops on earlier work with Felix Guattari on minor literatures (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, 1987). In this book, Deleuze discusses style in art as a way of creating new possibilities of life. The role of minor literature is to 'make language stammer' and to 'create a foreign language within language'.

Writers, as Proust says, invent a new language within language, a foreign language as it were. They bring to light new grammatical or syntactic powers. They force language outside its customary furrows, they make it delirious.

⁸ The term 'becoming' is drawn from Deleuze and Guattari's *a thousand plateaus* (1987). It is a term that connotes transformation into something other than that which is fixed and singular. This otherness is always multiple and always a process. In the introduction to *Parables for the Virtual* (2002) Brian Massumi discusses the need for critical theory to recognize such processual slippage as a central point of mediation and movement of concepts and positions. He writes that "this movement slip gives new urgency to questions of ontology, of ontological difference, inextricably linked to concepts of potential and process and, by extension, event – in a way that bumps "being" straight into becoming" (Massumi, 2002, p.5).

(Deleuze, 1998, p.lv)

In this way writers create a new kind of sense. “Sense is not just the collection of words of a language, nor is it the bodies named; it is the way we think or approach those bodies” (Colebrook, 2002, p.111). For Deleuze, the work of writers James Joyce and Lewis Carroll is exemplary of the minor:

In poetry and nonsense literature we do not just see language as description, we see language’s power to transform itself through sense. When Carroll, for example, combines two part words into a portmanteau word, he does not simply add two meanings; a new sense is produced. (Colebrook, 2002, p.112)

The following passages from Forti’s book *Oh Tongue*, reflect Forti’s process in improvising with random words, and the way in which language stammers and becomes new through her process.

Three words, drawn at random from the dictionary, like throwing three stones into a pond, writing the cross patterns of waves that spread out:
Grass of Parnassus – smooth bog herbs..... Retort – so named for its bent shape..... Tuscarora – One of the tribes of Iroquois Indians...

Bog. Bog grass. Bog white flowers. Arctic or temperate. Formerly living in the Northeastern corner of North Carolina. Northeast. As a concept. The North East. The North Star. Retort as torto, bent, tortura, torture, bend, to bend. To bend the juice of the grass in a bent tube of glass. To tort. To retort, to bounce back the ball, the direction (Forti, 2003a, p.49)

In her prose piece *Soft is Fast* (2003a), Forti takes three words randomly from the dictionary and from each of them draws a line of flight, a body of images, words, sounds. These lines draw out and multiply in the intersections where concept, sound and gesture renew and invigorate each other. Her work engenders the art of composing, in real time improvisation, these multiplying worlds of story and image, creating refrains, returning to particular textures and patterns, identifying singularities and creating space around them so that her audience/reader can make sense of the work, can make her work make sense. She is writing at the edge of knowing. “Write about what you know about? How about barely knowing. You can barely know. Write about what you barely know about” (Forti, 2003, p.50). Through her writing and improvisations, Forti pushes language past the limitations of meanings to allow the tone and shape of the word to inform her imaginative response to it. Forti’s work incorporates a free

indirect style, also utilized by stream of consciousness authors such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. “Free indirect style repeats the nonsense or noise of everyday language, showing how language circulates as affect” (Colebrook, 2002, p.113). When writing, speaking and dancing practices are interwoven, the affect of language resonates into the sensorial chambers of the body. A shift in pronunciation opens up Forti’s sensory perception and her experience of her body, just as a shift in movement dynamic will change the quality of enunciation.

Tuscarora. I try a variation on pronunciation. I smell a different smell I’ve never smelled before. The words, my breath different, hair, flesh, feet.
(Forti, 2003, p.51)

CUT

to Palazzo Caravajal

It is the fourth day of the workshop. In partners we have walked the city for an hour, allowing our senses to take in shapes and smells, the everyday world of this place. On returning to the studio, we free write for a set period of time, after which we choose a short passage to share with our partner &

I think about how an image or word holds whole worlds of resonance. Choosing an extract means you have a very specific, layered starting point that is rich with all the subtext of the longer piece to begin the improvisation.

Forti’s next instruction after we read our work aloud to our partner was to perform duets to the class. Our duets were timed to be four minutes long. The improvisations that followed had a strong base and a clear focus, a sense of being underpinned by the spaces of the city. In the experience of being listened to we find even more layers to the work; small moments we might have forgotten hold inestimable detail. We began the day with bringing the perceptual openness of improvising to the act of walking the city, and noticing its details, and we end the

day with dancing our stories of that walk, fleshing out the moments our words began to elucidate.

You can turn to those things, you have those things, sometimes it's good to start from there, but then if some other thing comes back to you, you go with what, with what inspires you, you go with what you remember and it's, again a work of memory but then you might have some new thoughts, from say, from the conversation you had maybe that continues, you don't have to only stay with what you already said, or what you already were thinking about, you bring new things, um, this time you're working together, and you're equal, you can put in, you can initiate things, you can support each other, we'll see what happens. We'll do, and then we'll see what we did. So, it's a work of listening to each other, not just with the ears but kind of having a sense of what you're doing together, um, again, it doesn't have to be boom you right away have something, it can take awhile, you can just start moving together and then wait for some idea to come to one or to the other and then working with that.

Participant: So moving and speaking

Simone: Yep

Participant: The phrases, I can use hers or I just stay with mine?

Simone: For one thing you pretty much had experiences together. And we don't have to stay with what we wrote, the writing helped us, it's kind of a warm-up, and also the underlining, helps us, but we don't have to stay with that. For instance, I heard what my partner wrote and the things he underlined and it made me remember, 'Oh yes that'. I remembered those moments those experiences, and I'm sure when I underlined he remembered, 'oh yes that' so we can go to these, but maybe then we'll remember something else.

CUT

to my desk in Auckland

3.7 Words as physical entities

What happens when we bring our moving into our speaking?

In movement, words become physical entities that shift the body and its bounds. Movement being created becomes layered with the words that emerge with it, which opens potential for movement phrases to take on new layers of meaning, which in turn can proliferate the range of choices made available in an improvisation.

A particular combination of words might excavate layers of imagery or story embedded in movement. Points of reference carried by a particular word in a specific enunciative moment might be interrupted or re-examined in terms of the sound produced and the intensity presented by that sound. In working through this practice, dance technique is strongly interrupted by the cadence of the everyday, of wondering and wandering. Although technique is still embedded in movement, it seems that habitual patterns are disrupted when brought into conversation with the language of speech. Learning to work through Forti's practice of *Logomotion* was like working with two different modalities of time concurrently and bringing them together, which required a morphing of structures, principles and rhythms of thought. So just as Forti's methods for bringing movement into speech create a kind of minorization of language, bringing speech into movement might be considered to minorize the major forms and strategies of dance practice.

*and we discussed how in moving with a word
you feel both its literal meaning and its cadence it s a sensation,
a point of departure*

*and together we move in order to research
the implications of the names we give to
actions and to experiences and to things*

*In italian the word for skin is 'derma' a Goddess,
the mother of all skins
the ontological skin*

*you say of working in one language and not another
"it's not the meaning. They mean the same but they mean so so differently
associations and feelings"*

*derma, skin, pele, peau, we speak
italian, english, greek, french, german, finnish, we speak
across our languages*

*and
our bodies speak too with weight and energy and listening and
timing and space and touch*

*Touch In Italian the word for support is 'spala'
the same word*

as the word for shoulderblade

*we feel as far beyond literal meaning
as we can and space is active
an alphabet of choices*

*imagine the difference in what this word means if I am standing near
to you or far away and whether your accent pronounces far softly
or sharply creates space inside the word itself*

*and we understand space
as a sensation in the body in the body of the imagination*

*and an implication is a change in what we, this group of dancers,
perceive in language itself
from what you suppose your words to be everything unfixes*

*a point of departure de partenza everything
becomes a point of support a shoulderblade on which this whole world of
names might just be precariously balanced*

CUT

to Auckland

Philosopher Petrus De Kock writes of creating a minor literature that “she should be able to engineer growth points in the major language by putting it to strange and minor uses, by deterritorialising it” (De Kock, 2003, p.181). Such a deterritorialisation might occur when text from a specific or majoritarian context is repeated and made open to new meanings and possibilities. In Forti’s dance and text improvisations she takes a phrase and teases it apart, finds its separate components, its layers, its tonal and muscular properties, makes abstract systems from it, strings them delicately together in space and time. There are strong political as well as artistic implications embedded in Forti’s work, from her direct discussion of political events to the democratic processes that underpin her teaching style. Forti’s work strongly reflects the idea that “there can be no division between social practices and literature. This is specifically true for the minor literature” (De Kock, 2003, p.165).

CUT

to the interview at palazzo di sette

Andy: I know this is a kind of blunt question but, do you see your work as political?

Simone: Do I see my work as political? The political interests me. Ah, I’m almost embarrassed

at how, it just interests me, I get enthusiastic about it. Also, if I'm anxious and I can't sleep I'll get the newspaper that I brought that day, and just the softness of the paper, just reading these histories of evolving problems, they're so interesting.

Is then the work that I do then political? I think also yes. I think that for instance in the workshops, we have an experience and we talk about it. And it's not just me, I think this is part of the culture of dance improvisation, part of the culture of Contact Improvisation. And each person, speaks their mind, someone says, 'I really had a hard time with this, someone else says, 'it worked for me. I found this and that.' At one point people would have said, 'oh no how can you think that it worked great'. Now we listen to each other, we've learnt to listen to each other, and I'm part of that culture, and bringing that culture along, and I think that's political. And now I'm gonna perform this evening, and yes, we go out not knowing what we're gonna do and trusting. I also demand of myself that there's a thread. So it's more, I think, it's more like the Beat Poets so yes, you're rolling with it, but you also have a thread of subject matter, and you expect an arc, of the event. So as preparation I write for 20 minutes and then I don't necessarily use this but it gives me a sense of what's on my mind. Do you have time to hear this?

Andy: Yeah, yeah

Simone: Okay, so I wrote

'Writ of habeas corpus

tribunale'

which I'm probably going to write on my hand because I forget, 'tribunale' and I forget 'writ of habeas corpus'

Alys: Where do those words come from?

Simone: The newspaper. Okay

(cut to Alys's study)

Forti's work with the newspaper begins with what must be one of the most majoritarian texts available, the news, and all of the stylistic traits of truth, fact, current events, and an objective stance that is embedded in the newsprint media.

Through her improvisations Forti takes key phrases and terms from the 'factual' text of the newspaper and pushes these sentences to a threshold. As she performs we witness a practice wherein "the dismemberment that writing achieves is the opening of radical other possibilities" (de Kock, 2003, p.185). In Forti's case this dismemberment is corporeal as well as textual, as sentences are pulled apart into their syllabic rhythms and sounds and placed in relationship with movement, space, and the unpredictable stories Forti weaves as she improvises performance text.

Through repetition and the play of voice, words become other and can be read in a new context. Their grammar can be seen as a style: words can be understood as sound and movement. Forti discusses the process of working with the news as improvisation in movement terms: "Being a dancer I see and understand things through movement. I even see the news as pressures, wedges, and balance shifts, and anyway, so much of the language of the news media is in terms of physical dynamics; the dollar in free fall, Lebanon as a slippery slope, Iran sending human waves against the invading Iraqi army, and so on" (Forti, 2003b, p.4). Her method of reading the news uses the logic of dancing to understand large scale international events; "Here gesture takes on the whole body...I figure the whole of it out in space, trying to sketch all the information out in physical space, to see what my body knowledge of it is" (Forti, 2003b, p.3). The phrases of the major literature (in the form of the news) are dismantled into vowel sounds and reassembled into the collective assemblage of Forti's voice, physical structure, muscular tone, vocal and bodily rhythm, and are placed in relationship with the audience. The meaning of a short phrase from the newspaper becomes multiple, becomes unrecognizable, becomes foreign, becomes food for improvisation and its unpredictable tangents.

CUT

To Palazzo di Sette where Simone has her book open to read as a warm-up for improvisation performance

The pigeons, mist, sudden rain. Warm autumn, the birds take advantage of shower. Lift wing to wet wing placed like armpit fluff feathers. Beak, working between feathers, fluff, maybe fleas. The writ of Habeas Corpus. Why does that mean the right to see evidence against you or what does it mean? It means law. It means process of law. Protection of law. Rain. I could see

the drops. The justice department is completely different from the system of federal courts, it is more politicized. America, and the revolution from England. The words, I pledge my life, my fortune and sacred honour. But, but now what, a sense of history, to understand something of what came before, how the nation was made. Is it always a difficult birth? Certainly America's birth was catastrophic for the indigenous. I find myself wondering if pigeon families have generations of rights to certain roofs which catch more sun. They fly together in great swoops, are they families? Colonies? I can almost feel the feathers the steamy warmth of that one preening, fluffed up. It was worse when the congress gave their blessings to the President's unconstitutional actions. For Christ's sake are we so afraid? No we aren't afraid of death we prove that every day on the freeways. The congress folks are afraid for their careers. Haliburton. How is that how, how? Leave that thought, my feeling. I was frightened when the Senate agreed that the court system, even the Supreme Court couldn't do anything, couldn't touch the breaking down of the right of Habeas Corpus. Don't they trust the courts? Don't they fucking trust the courts? I understand Bush. He doesn't believe in the balance of the branches of government, but the Senate! The Congress! the People! It takes a long time for the people to realise. Hospitals are closing, people with jobs are sleeping in the street. The voting machines. This moment of US history, a sense of history, the sense of separation of powers, that's what gathers us as a nation. Like Tito gathered Yugoslavia the constitution gathers the Americans from all over the world with languages, colors of skin, yes. I have not really felt it in my skin, in my bones. I always forget about slavery. I forget. I forget. And yes, the constitution was written by men of wealth and power, still, a pax constitutional, the pax Americana is disintegrating. To be the one to force the pax. The pax constitutional in the U.S is breaking down.

(pause)

Andy: And with that I'd say let's call it a day.

Simone: (laughs) Let's call it a day.

Andy: Thank-you Simone that was amazing. It made the hairs on my arm go,

all, (shows the hair on his arm)

Simone: yeah,

Alys: yeah. Thanks

(Cut to Simone performing at 10pm, downstairs at Palazzo di Sette)

To begin her solo, Forti unfolds the newspapers she has under her arm and spreads them onto the floor. History and records are visibly beneath her feet, they are neither fact nor fiction in detailing movements of power. Among all of the chaos of this day she is a quiet centre, listening, present, aware, allowing information to gather in her body. Many of us are moved to tears by Forti's performance, suddenly unable to be numbed to the human implications of a phrase like, "People with jobs are sleeping in the streets." She finishes and she suddenly interrupts our applause because she'd like to do a "Piccolo dance for Fabio", an old friend from the sixties who showed up that afternoon. A small dance to recognise the past. She allows us to enter a small bank of memories with her, the movement of forty years ago which is thoroughly alive here wrapped in the weave of how things became what they did, and also reinvented in this very particular present.

4.0 Camper: The Little peeling Cottage

“I am interested in expressing the metamorphoses of forms into new bodies” (Pablo Picasso, 2008).

10.04 am Friday 25 July 2008

It's been almost a year since we performed, but with the process of artist book design the logic of our work is still present in the folds of my day. After Val and I finished performing I revised and reflected on journal notes, on audience feedback, I collated and edited writing made during the work and I've since made three artists books from texts we generated. The studio process that we worked with still feels very much alive in me, still feels like it is creating itself and continuing, that it is feeding back into my current dance process.

10.11 am Friday 25 July 2008

I think I stole this writing process of exactitude with dates and times from Simon Ellis and his work *4 Acts of Violence Leading up to Now* (Ellis 2004). It was a live piece in which a television had some video footage. Were they staged as diary entries? I can't really remember, but I do remember rehearsal processes being integrated into the material of a showing, so there was this sense of time and places being imbricated in each other, a sense of the ability to be in many time-zones at once, a sense of present memory. As I write this I am aware that you are reading this from another time, another place. My current and your current. I'm thinking about precise details of date and time, the naming of moments, linking us via the materiality of our writing and reading. The gestures whereby ideas are called into being. Then and now and then.

10.20 am Friday 25 July 2008

In this contextualization of the book work *Camper: The Little peeling Cottage* I will discuss a studio process leading from rehearsals to a series of performances, and the specific dynamics of tightly scored performance improvisation. A core element of this process was that it was site specific and audience interactive. I will describe how the site specific nature of rehearsals and performances were interwoven with writing processes and then merged into the creation of a site specific artists book.

This chapter engages with the following key issues: how the development of a site-based performance came to initiate a site-based book; theorizing the every day; documentation as

performance. Like other chapters it explores how dance ideas can continue into the practice of formatting, designing, and producing artists books, so that the conceptual intentions of a specific dance practice merge into an interface between writer and reader.

4.1 *The Little peeling Cottage* rehearsal process

1:42 pm 25 July 2008

The light of this day has changed. The air conditioning (well in this case air warming) is noisy. I am less awake than I was earlier.

Rehearsals for *The Little peeling Cottage* emerged as part of rehearsals for a full-length work named *Camper*. The piece began because Valerie wanted us to make a work together before she moved overseas, and I can never dismiss an opportunity to work with Val. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, Val and I have been dancing together for nearly ten years. *Camper* was our eighth full-length work together, but notably, the first for which we shared choreography and artistic direction – usually, one of us dances for the other.

We decided we wanted to make a work in an unconventional space. I was reading a lot of Guillermo Gomez Pena's work at the time (Gomez Pena, 2005) and was interested in audience interaction. We decided on a playful structure that allowed the piece to shift and change with every performance, to move between choreography, improvisation and audience participation. We created a 'menu' of eight choreographic choices, plus two beginnings and two endings, with the plan that audiences could only see four choices and one beginning/ ending per show. With this in mind we designed our performance to be twenty minutes long, with the expectation we would have small audiences and that the work would change considerably with every performance in terms of what material was performed, the order it was in and the way sections transitioned. We decided to share choreographic responsibility with each of us choreographing a beginning, an ending, and four 'menu choices'. *The Little peeling Cottage* was created as one of the four five minute works that I choreographed within this larger piece.

The Little peeling Cottage is a very specifically structured and refined improvisation score. Through repetition of the same improvisation score throughout six months of rehearsals and a two-month performance period, this work has deeply shaped my practice of movement-initiated writing.

12:34 pm 28 July, 2008

Coffee changes the way the blood sits in the veins, makes the blood scratchy and jumpy. Over the weekend there was this crazy storm, and there's another one coming! But for now, after a rainy morning, the sun is shining. Today my job is to get specific about the score of the *peeling cottage* piece, to detail how the score worked, and the way that writing was enabled, created and in direct relationship with movement practice through this specific process.

So we'll start with the first rehearsal of the piece.

We are in the Kenneth Myers Center, on Shortland Street in Auckland City. It's a big studio with a black dance floor that we both resent (the wood reflected the light better and energized the space. The dance floor is a drain). Val and I have warmed up with body-work (massage into Contact Improvisation), and now it's my turn to lead our choreographic process.

We both have journals at the side of the space. I pick mine up. I ask Val to improvise on the theme, 'What is on my mind right now'. This is a pretty open improvisation that can move between text and movement as Val chooses. I will call 'end' after seven minutes. As she moves, I write. I write down the words that she says, 'I like it, but the roof', and follow her movement with whatever words and drawn shapes end up on the page. We are engaging with the sensorium of listening. There are many kinds of listening/ attending going on here. Val is attending to somatic sensations, imaginative worlds, the space she is in and possibly a sense of emerging compositional structure. I am attending to her movement. One of the ways that my listening is enacted is in my pencil scratching alongside her movement. It is a tangential listening, partial, untrustworthy, an outcome of concentrating attention as cellularly⁹ and completely as possible, an experiment in allowing words to unfold. My understanding of cellular attention is as a kind of listening that radiates through my entire physical structure. It is quite different to attending to movement primarily through visual attention. Instead, when working this way I attend to Val's heartbeat through my own heartbeat, to her breath with my breath – I aim for my organs, muscles, nervous system, fascia, skeleton, to engage with her movement.

After seven minutes, I call 'end' and Val allows her movement to find its ending.

The next thing is for Val to rest while I read her the writing that emerged in response to her solo (her body porous to the qualities of tone, pitch, cadence, image). Before my reading we

⁹My sense of cellular attention is drawn from the work of Deborah Hay who articulates her practice of attending to the trillions of cells that compose her being in her book *My Body the Buddhist* (Hay 2000)

It is possible that these three poems reflect different time structures and degrees of focus present in the dances that initiated them; the first piece of writing is much more spread out than the other two, with a sense of space between different ideas. The second text has a clearer focus on position in architectural space, with a much more continuous line structure. The third has similar line structure to the second with a far greater sense of flow and connection between sentences.

Threads of writing become evident in Val's movement as particular words or phrases influence her movement choices. In this repetition the relation between body and architecture became a key focus of both movement and writing as the structure continued. "The space between her head and the roof" was a repeated motif in movement and in words.

We begin days or weeks later with the last piece of writing, so the written 'documentation' of the work lengthens, a snake shedding its tail. The snake is the dancing, the shed skins are the texts; it is just like Andr  Lepecki said, "all documentation leaves a stiff body" (Lepecki, 2004, p.133). Except these skins are not stiff, they become malleable as they fuel further dances, forming rhizomes for new inventions, generators of memory that bear the traces and stains of movement.

4.2 Writing as a form of listening

The poetic texts that emerged through this dance process are more like distillations of listening than an attempt to document or to freeze an ephemeral moment, written as carriers for the development of performance concepts. Movement is not described or critiqued but evoked in a collaborative, rhizomatic sense.

Sat 8 September, Freiberg Square

#1

Soft top of hair brushes
every smooth lining of time

Your ear is a device for
listening, hearing colours and
all unexpected shapes

#2

Circles that find room inside every
Space you walk through

#1

Shoulder turns the engine of the
heart sideways so the elbow

is clear as glass you reach
into your family tree and
find an anatomy of window cleaners.
Soft top of fore-arm
Wrench the knots out of the branches

#2

Falling out the smallest spaces
where the toes can find the
sun you are an
archway.

An archway with eyes that
can blink

Shadows of jumping spiders blinking with you

In order to write inside the flow of movement the writing is conceptualized as a practice of invention that requires the same kind of attention and technical commitment as dancing. The ‘muscles’ of attending and listening are also translating muscles, constantly interpreting, bridging or intensifying the space between self and other. As Miranda Tufnell writes, “Writing continues the imaginative journey begun in moving, or watching a partner move, dancing the dance on in language... Words and phrases sourced in this way continue to build upon the imaginative field of the moving” (Tufnell, 2004 p.63).

New York based performance maker Michelle Minnick describes the way that writing informs her studio process: “This writing, which marks the first steps on what will be a long journey, becomes a part of the dramaturgical process, another way of listening” (Minnick, 2003, p.102). Minnick’s article *Attending: A Dramaturgy of the Flesh* discusses a process that moved between poetic translation, theatre, dance, and dramaturgical collaboration. In this article Minnick describes a rehearsal process in which she worked with a composer/choreographer and a dramaturg in order to create a performance work based on the poems of Russian poet Marina Tsvetaeva. Minnick describes how her process of translation worked between the Russian and English languages, from the pages of text to the rehearsal room, through time periods and through the wringing emotional worlds conjured in Tsvetaeva’s work. Processes of listening, translation and the play between embodiment and language thread throughout her process:

Words, if they live at all, if they can be considered (attended to) as objects, as forms in space, live in a space of passage between one cultural meaning to the next ... Words have flesh, are tactile, can be skin for touching. Words have a voice that precedes us, a voice which gives our mouths its shape in making sense out of sound... The words remain alive, carrying perhaps their originary power, but also a power that always recreates itself anew, finding a new body inside my throat, a new dance in the air between me and whoever is there to hear me. (Minnick, 2003, p.107)

While Minnick and her team worked with poems that had a strong historical lineage, in *The Little peeling Cottage* project we were working with writing new poems in response to dance. However, the way in which Minnick describes movement between the written page and the performance space brings up similarities between the two projects. In the following Minnick also writes about the relationship between written and spoken poetic vocabularies:

In rehearsal, I scribble Marina's poems on the chalkboard first, familiarizing myself with her Russian language, then taking it in my mouth, into my throat, into my belly, finally moving with it through my whole body, I dance these poems, speak them, sing them, choke them, cry them, scream them weep them whisper them chant them chew them into materiality. I feel them emanate from and resonate in different parts of my body—the hard “g” sound of (grust), sadness catches first in my bowels, then in my throat. (Minnick, 2003, p. 111)

It must be noted that the distillation of my attention to Val's movement through words, was, in rehearsal or performance, always communicated through speech. In our studio process, writing was shared primarily through voice. The qualities of sound, tone, pitch, cadence, the spacing between words, the quality of my attention carried inside the containers of the letters as they move through diaphragm, throat, the resonating chamber of the mouth, through the air as sound, to meet the canals of the ear. The pathways of hair and of fluid inside Val's skull all were moved in this process. My voice was heard in relation to the environmental effects of the specific time. Val listened to the vocalizations of words, and this was how the development of *The Little peeling Cottage* progressed. The performance of text played with the abstract force of language to allow multiple potential meanings to arise out of tropes such as disjunctive metaphor and imagery.

For Alexander practitioner and dancer Eva Karczag, speech is an integral part of the kinesthetic exchange between herself and the dancers she works with. Like Minnick, Karczag considers her words as modalities of touch. “My words are...constant touches that keep shifting your attention into new places so you're constantly engaged, you're constantly being stimulated” (Karczag, 1996, p. 51). Although *The Little peeling Cottage* draws upon both spoken and written modes of language, the writing itself is very much a handcrafted, paper bound practice. The physical practice of drawing the letters and the flow of shapes forming handwriting were inextricable from my sense of choreographic writing. This practice emphasized a tuning of kinesthetic attention that manifested in handwriting careering over pages as my eyes followed Val's dancing. The malleability and improvisatory nature of speech

pervaded the shapes of letters, which made ‘documentation’ offshoots that were navigation points as the structure of our work developed. These text-skins were integral in creating lines of communication and keeping the specificity and cadence of the work in line and tune over multiple times, spaces, and even seasons. Because we could refer to our performance writing at any given point in our process, the written texts became touch pads for memory, a few words would flood a present rehearsal with the tone of work from weeks past.¹⁰ In a rehearsal dated 8/8/07, the theme of the roof and of weight reenters the text;

The roof of a pillow
The weight of your head into hands

Reading back on this even now (on the 14 March 2010) I can feel the roof of the caravan close over our heads, the way the domestic paraphernalia of kitchen and bed manifested in every frame of our tiny performance space.

4.3 Between remembering, responding and inventing

The theory of constructed memory says that memory isn’t necessarily fixed at the time of an experience. It is a creative and dynamic process in which the recollection of past events is a condition of present circumstances; where you are and what you are doing when you remember. It is the generation of a new memory each time something is recalled. (DeLahunta and Shaw, 2006, p. 62)

This dance piece evolved in the space between remembering, responding and inventing. The specificity of the score dictated a precise structure within which we constantly reinvented the work. The conditions for dancing and writing remained constant, but the content changed with every rehearsal and performance. Each time we reentered *The Little peeling Cottage* the work was re-imagined, I picked up the text-skin generated in the last incarnation of our work, and we opened and entered it through spoken reading, through attentive listening. This work was constantly reentered and renewed in each rehearsal and performance. Like memory it lived in a time zone of its own, its minutes stitched together by dance process, translated into the present. As Michael de Certeau puts it, memory “responds more that it records” (de Certeau, 1984, p.88).

Like Forti’s moving/speaking/writing work, the written element of *The Little peeling Cottage* evolved from a liminal space of listening and response. The slippage between forms generated

¹⁰ *Camper* was rehearsed through Autumn and into Winter, and performed in Spring (the last series of performance texts in *Camper: The Little peeling Cottage* are titled *Spring Fling*).

an entry point for creative development. The method that emerged through *The Little peeling Cottage* process fed the invention and development of ideas at the site where they emerged, opening out the possibility that such ideas may form unpredictable openings across disciplines and spaces. The key element of this particular methodology is the way in which the document and the dance work it emerged from were co-created as performance, in collaboration with the audiences for which they were made. Audiences of *The Little peeling Cottage* watched the dance work along with its poetic response develop and condense over two reiterations of the performance score. The full body of texts created over the rehearsal and performance period of *The Little peeling Cottage* is included in Appendix A of this thesis for readers who are interested in examining the full range of writings that emerged from this project. The texts are in chronological order so as to reveal the way in which they developed in relation to different settings of rehearsal and performance.

4.4 Performance

11.20am July 29, 2008

The new storm has arrived, and the world outside this office window is grey. Tomorrow the rain will be accompanied by extreme wind. The surfers will head to Piha beach. I'm wondering if I've mentioned the caravan yet, and I don't think I have. It's a year now since we were rehearsing *Camper* and this weather is reminding me of our spring storm performances.

There is so much back-story to this story. *Camper* was created for a 20 foot caravan with the audience sitting around a table at one end and the movement pieces happening at the other end, in the 'bedroom' space of the partition-free van. Why a caravan? Well as Val and I discussed the evolving work, we agreed we did not want to go through the politics, production issues and sense of separation from the world inherent in making a work for a theatre. So we discussed our ideal performance space. We wanted the work to be available to non-traditional audiences, for passers-by to be invited into it, for it to merge with public spaces. We thought an empty shop front facing the street could be perfect, and then we considered the bureaucracy of councils and leases. We thought it would be cool to make work in a house, and invite the audiences in as guests. Then Val proposed that we find a caravan. A caravan can be moved around from place to place, has an intimate performance space, creates a sense that the audience are directly involved in the invention of the work, and if we found a caravan, we would have access to our performance/ rehearsal space for a long period of time.

We began rehearsing in the caravan (that was parked in my driveway) about two months before performances began. As our process developed in the caravan, the site specific nature of the work became central. In site specific work, there is a porousness between space, performance, and audience. The space can invent the performance; the audience or pedestrians in the space may become the performers and sometimes a key element in the work is simply framing or drawing attention to what is already there, allowing the audience to experience this site from the perspective of a new experiential frame. Petra Kuppers draws attention to the implications of reframing urban spaces in site specific performance:

The space of performance is not neutral: not only does performance imbue a space with new meanings and create new contracts, but performance also works within the existing contract that govern any given space prior to its colonization by the performer. (Kuppers, 2003, p.41)

In performance, our caravan moved around a multitude of city spaces. We parked in the middle of a busy urban square, surrounded by shops, skateboarders, and cafes; by a beach with the sand on one side and the boardwalk on the other; outside the main theatre for the duration of a large dance festival and at two country fairs next to candy floss machines and vegetable stalls. In each case, the negotiation between public, the specific landscape (especially the views out the windows that made up our 'set') and our performance material was formed in relation to the variables of time, space, and audience.

The improvisation occurred in an intimate performance space. And on this night in particular there is a spring storm, complete with howling rain, thunder and lightning. As we perform lightning flashes through windows, we have to yell to be heard over the rain on the metal roof. It is 'cosy' but the weather literally moves the walls. For *The Little peeling Cottage* I sit and write amongst the audience; they can hear my pen tracing the paper. Next to me an audience member (one of eight, as that is the limit our 'theatre' can sensibly contain) reads over my shoulder as I write, but my eyes move in the in between of dancer and page.

4.5 Site specific Tactics

In working in urban/wild landscapes dance makes a new sense. The dance dialogue between self, other and environment has an inherent logic and implications beyond the metaphorical in terms of how we relate to others and the environments we move through and live in. (Bieringa, 2006, p.3)

11.31am Wednesday 30 July 2008

It's still so wintry and stormy. Today I'm working from home, white sky, white duvet cover, white curtains, white iMac, white daffodils growing in the garden, brave and early. Peppermint tea. I am thinking about dancing with Olive Bieringa in Wellington, about blind unison trios and tuning scores.

Our practices in *Camper* can be traced to our experiences workshopping with the *BodyCartography Project* (Olive's company with co-director and dancer Otto Ramstead). The tools we use for site specific practice, our focus on tuning in to each other, to the audience, to the environment, the somatic practices we use for warm ups, all of these things are influenced by Bieringa and Ramstead's work, which in turn is influenced by Lisa Nelson's movement research.¹¹ .

In *The Little peeling Cottage* performances the distinctive spaces of the campervan became integral in the choreography. Val would always take the same position in the space, seated on a ledge, each time she listened to the text. I would retrieve my book from the same place, use the same pen, sit wherever there was space in the audience to write and concentrate on the active environment outside the windows on each side of the van, the tone of the room shifting with the mood of the audience. Reading back on the poetic texts generated in this work it is easy to trace the specifics of these environmental influences.

24 July 07

#1

Pencil drawn by a children's
illustrator the kind of child's book that
adults like
she's changing her mind, erasing and
redrawing,
soft lead of pencil,
chiaroscuro,
shadows, ordinary things created and
move around
grey scale
specific lines give the piano a
character, objective and particular, a
pencil drawn,
moved to a
chair, a jersey drawn beside it,
the drawing of the work shifts we are
in a sunny studio all afternoon with
this artist as she rearranges
the shading and order of this
little world continuously.

¹¹ Nelson's work with the dance improvisation group *d a n c e l a b* explores relationships between sensory states, kinesthetic responses and the visual. Nelson has developed tuning scores for improvisational performance. These scores explore embodied processes of decision making and response, engaging different modes of sensory attention, listening and composition.

#2

Opening attention to allow in the shape of
the room.
The corner space where wall meets wall
where bone meets blade and circle and the
square below the ribs, finding it in yourself
translating this space internally and in shape
and tone
Slow. Rest. Wait. Watch.
Slow. Watch. Wait. Rest
Tone of black dance floor of high roof
of red chair. Registers. Design of
chair and of limbs.
Transmutations of support.

The above poems strongly reflect the studio environment where we rehearsed. Later in our rehearsals and performances the shape of the caravan and of the landscape situating it enter into *The Little peeling Cottage* writing. The performance that the following piece of writing emerged out of was one where the caravan was parked between a beach and a road:

Friday 7 September

#1

small table long as the lines on the road
holding two moons and taking them like 2
dogs on a walk through the universe

the hardness and softness of
sand with water and without it

Longing for another city

Our performances of *Camper* remind me of Michel de Certeau's discussion of tactics in his book *The Practice of Everyday Life* (de Certeau, 1984). De Certeau writes of tactics that they "alternatively exacerbate and disrupt our logics" (p. xvi). Here he refers to the logic of negotiating the city and its power structures. We install our caravan in public places and set up a mini-theatre there, inviting strangers in for a cup of tea, and dancing for them. The installation of the work within the established space of the city and the porosity between inside and outside means that although this work occurs within everyday spaces and actions, it at the same time unsettles that everyday with its unusual unpredictability. There is also an unsettling of language through the tactics of this dance performance. There is a strong sense of immediacy and of a non-linear language where everyday logic is disrupted and a new sense is created through juxtaposition and disjunction. Our performances of *The Little peeling Cottage* continue our rehearsal practice into a witnessed event. De Certeau writes that "to practice space is thus to repeat the joyful and silent experience of childhood; it is, in a place, to be other and to move towards the other (de Certeau, 1984, p.110). The event we create is a spatial, enunciative and improvisatory play. Although *The Little peeling Cottage* performance score does follow rules, at the same time it finds new options within them; it subverts the expectations of its set-up at the same time as it follows that set up, and it recycles words and grammatical

forms while at the same time exacerbating the inherent instability of language through enunciation.

4.6 Spatial play: from caravan-theatre to artist pages

4.24 pm Thursday 31 July, 2008

Post-storm weather. Calmer. Less wind. Occasional rain, yet not torrential rain like last night, not so much that flood-inducing rain, just normal, everyday grey rain.

Today I want to connect this chapter to the book-work that accompanies it. The whole of this project has unfolded out of everyday practices, with one thing leading to another. Its development into book form occurred when, as I always do, I checked the 'free books' trolley in the library foyer. On this day there were a pile of old geography books, all of which seemed to have been printed in the 1960s. I picked up a pile of about ten of them for no other reason than that I liked their aesthetic, the age of their pages and font of their typeface, their connection with land-based research, their presentation of a past generation of thinking about the earth. This pile of books sat on my bookshelf, and every now and then I would look over at them and wonder of what use, if any, they might eventually be.

I spent a few months printing out the texts of *The Little peeling Cottage* piece, playing with possible bindings, formats, layouts, wondering how best to bring the logic of our process into play, and I can't remember the day when I decided that these found books are sites in themselves. Each of these old geography books offered a small container or world, that could potentially be treated as a site, a site that offers a set of rules that I could follow, intensify or disrupt, pages in which I could install an unexpected intervention. I realized that I was thinking of a 'site specific book work', an artist book that utilised the tools and logics of the site specific art practitioner with the only real difference being scale.

In the tradition of artist books, it is common practice to reuse an existing book as part of the creation of a new work's specific form. As Helen Cole notes,

Altered books use an existing book and change its form or content to create a new work. Often the original book informs the content of the new. Sometimes part of the book is used to contribute its accepted meaning in a new context.
(Cole, 2008, p.5)

This trajectory of practice is exemplified in works such as Tom Blue's *Children's Britannica* (Blue, 2006). Blue slices into old children's encyclopedias to create lattice works through all pages and covers, creating architectural designs – evoking window shutters or mosques – in cultural artifacts. Jonathon Tse's (Tse 1998) work *Portrait of an Australian* uses the formal aesthetics of the passport to create a work that plays on issues around immigration and belonging. Artist Ann Hamilton has produced a range of altered books through her career. She has selected a body of books, and repeated a very specific series of actions or interventions which disrupt and complicate perceptions of what it means to engage with the work of a book. Joan Simon writes: “each book serves practically and conceptually as an overall ‘corpus’ – a body of information, a given container or figure – that is used in its entirety just as she [Hamilton] also addresses the body and its sheltering clothing and architecture” (Simon, 2006, p.3).

Hamilton's work engages language in its various forms – spoken, written, or read – and in relation to the bodily processes that create and complicate the smooth surfaces of pages. Earlier in this chapter I discussed how performance artists such as Eva Karczag and Michelle Minnick engage language as an embodied, somatic element of dance practice. Art-theorist Neville Wakefield discusses the way that Hamilton's work simultaneously brings our attention to the coexistence of language and embodiment while also drawing attention to the ‘somatophobic’ potential of text to interfere with embodied or somatic modalities of knowledge.¹²

Language originates from the mouth. It comes from within, obeying the speed of the body, the dexterity of hand and the formation of the palette. But whereas the voice, the organic form of language, has the power to connect bodies at the site of their juncture with the outside world – ears and mouths – language as an abstract and totalizing system enacts a kind of conceptual violence apart from the body. (Wakefield, 1994, p.25)

The score for movement-initiated writing that underpins *The Little peeling Cottage* project flirts with “the abstract and totalizing system” that Wakefield alludes to. I am not sure though that the writing harvested from this dance process is “apart from the body”. The pens I use feel like an extension of my structure and a condition of my work. Tracing the shapes of letters across paper, I can easily feel the pressure of fingers into the device of the pen, the fluid circling of wrist bones, to elbow, to shoulder, gently communicating with ribs, to the tides of cerebrospinal fluid washing the nervous system, up and down the spine, sacrum to brain, brain to

¹² Here I am reiterating Elizabeth Grosz, who writes that, “philosophy has established itself on the basis of a profound somatophobia” (Grosz, 1994, p.5).

sacrum. Obviously once there are words on paper they become separate from the kinesthetic process that produced them, and as they are typed up (a kinesthetic action) and formatted, handwriting becomes conditioned by generic spacing as it is made uniform; the separation of this writing from its bodily action and production is exacerbated. However, in this project I endeavored to perform the bodily engagement of mark making on paper in a way that resists Wakefield's conceptualization of writing as a kind of violence against the supposedly 'organic' nature of voiced language.

This is why in creating the *The Little peeling Cottage* book, I emphasized material, artistic practices with the intention to translate residues of gesture into the affective registers of texture, surface, fold and line. In his article *Enskinning between extended voice and movement: somatics, touch, contact and the camera* Yvon Bonenfant discusses how he developed a performance project that moved from somatic workshopping, to filmmaking, to performance writing, with each element of the project sensitive to the intimate communicative potential of skin. He uses the term 'enskinning' as a way to discuss how the sensation of touch might travel into writing, sound, or the experience of watching the filmed translation of his process.

Bonenfant discusses how, in his project, writing is a means of –

immersing the reader in an informed poetic engagement with process, with an intense subjectivity, and with documented moments of re-enskinning. I therefore choose a style of writing that shifts between different poetic registers, attempting to bring the reader into a process using metaphor, description, musical wordplay, and poetic suggestion, and to 'narrate' stages in the making process that were somehow meaningful to me as an immersed creative practitioner. (Bonenfant, 2009, p.68)

My methods of experimentation with transposing the *The Little peeling Cottage* performance process into a performance of writing echo Bonenfant's in many ways. *The Little peeling Cottage* books ask their readers to collaborate in a performance that requires a kinesthetic thoughtfulness in the motion of turning pages and in consideration of the relationships between texture, materials and text. Just as making these books was very much an embodied practice, such an emphasis on the physicality of reading supports my interest in transferring the kinesthetic affect of an interdisciplinary performance duet to one between book artists and between artist book and reader.

Through our studio practice, Val and I created a body of movement-initiated writing that weaves between different poetic registers, each of them initiated by different modes of our

work, from bodywork, to Contact Improvisation, to our site specific performance improvisations. Our rehearsals were led by touch and listening. Throughout the process I edited seven months' worth of notes from our work into a series of sixty-one separate texts. Another process of attending and collaboration occurred as I grafted these texts into a found book to create a site specific artist book.

Working alone on *The Little peeling Cottage* artist book, I felt that somehow my method for producing this new performance-as-book might better engage with the distinctive modalities of listening, response and constraint that defined the strict scores of response developed in the duet that initiates it. Like the original performance process, the site specific book work should also evolve as a duet. I asked artist Rachelle Pedersen, with whom I frequently collaborate, if she would be interested in 'partnering' me to create performative spaces of listening and response in page form. Each page of the *Little peeling Cottage book* would involve experimentation with specific artistic processes, materials and modes of interaction in relation to poetic texts written in rehearsal or performance, in response to Val's movement. Rachelle and I began by each taking a set of *The Little peeling Cottage* texts and a found book, and experimenting with as many different potentials as we could for grafting the two together.

The five found books have very similar bindings. All are cloth bound with case board covers. The first is titled *Waikawa Marina: Environmental Impact Audit*. It presents a report made by the New Zealand Commission for the Environment on the potential impacts of building a new marina at Waikawa Bay, Marlborough, New Zealand. The second book is also part of the Waikawa Marina project, from the Commission for the Environment. This book contains submissions from concerned parties, detailing their positions on the project. The submissions are in letter form, often handwritten or typed on a typewriter and copied into the book. The various vintage typewritten fonts and handwriting styles give this book its distinctive feel. The third book is titled *Meteorological Data, 1950-1976*. It is authored by D.S Rickard of the Winchmore Irrigation Research Station, and the majority of its pages provide tables that present information such as maximum and minimum rainfalls, temperatures of air and earth and the like. The fourth book is a report by Cawthron Technical Institute, commissioned by Golden Bay Dolomite Ltd, and provides an environmental impact assessment for new roading proposals. The final of the books that form the site of the *Camper: Little peeling Cottage* artist book series is another environmental impact audit from the New Zealand Commission for the Environment. It is titled *Trap Nets in New Zealand*. While each of these books is relatively similar in its binding, vintage, paper stock and lay-out, the different functions of their pages provided unique elements for Rachelle and I to engage with each time we situated *The Little peeling Cottage* material within its pages. The following images track our first individual explorations.

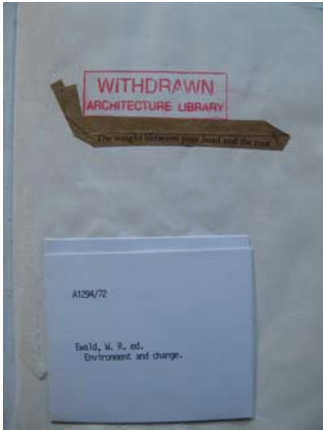


Figure Four: The weight Between your head and the roof



Figure Five: Somatic Architecture



Figure Six: Folding Caravan

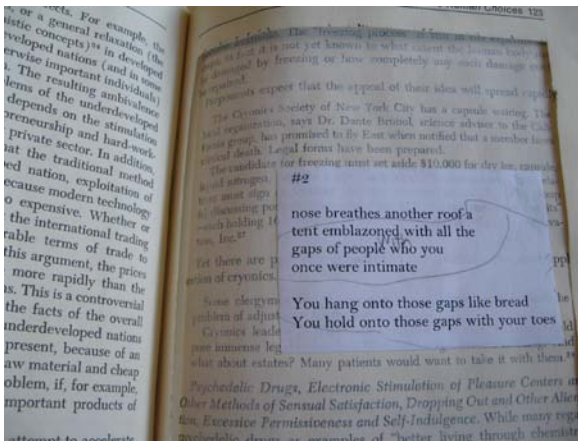


Figure Seven: Hanging on/ Holding on

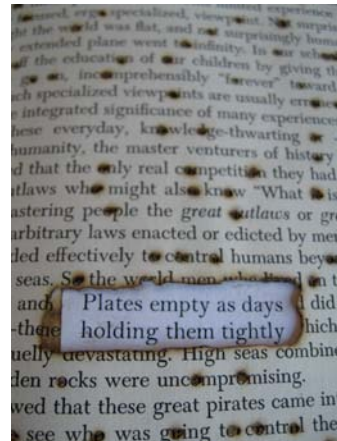


Figure Eight: Plates empty as Days



Figure Nine: Inside the caravan through the window pages

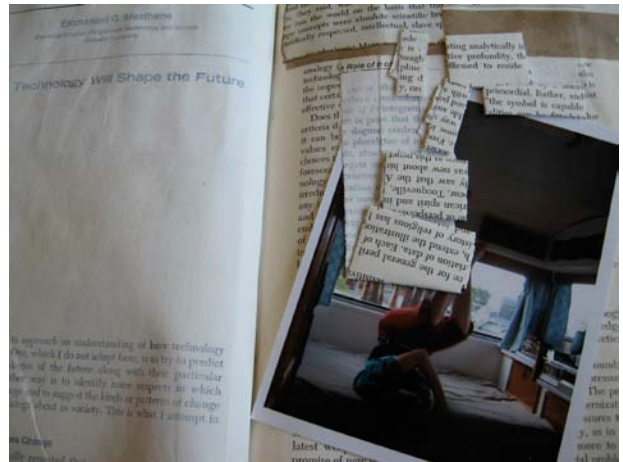


Figure Ten: Inside the caravan/ held by torn

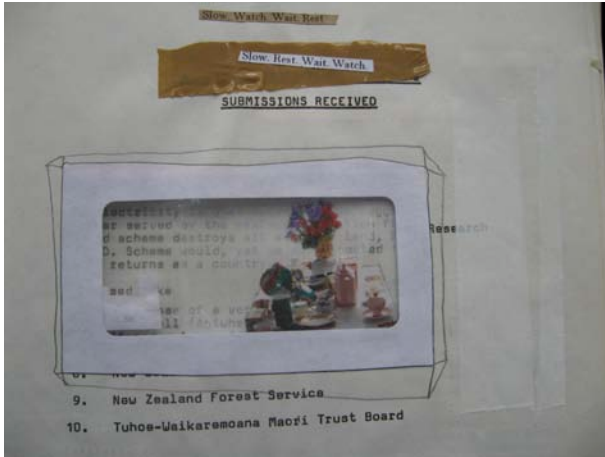


Figure Eleven: Slow. Rest. Wait. Watch



Figure Twelve: Divided in half

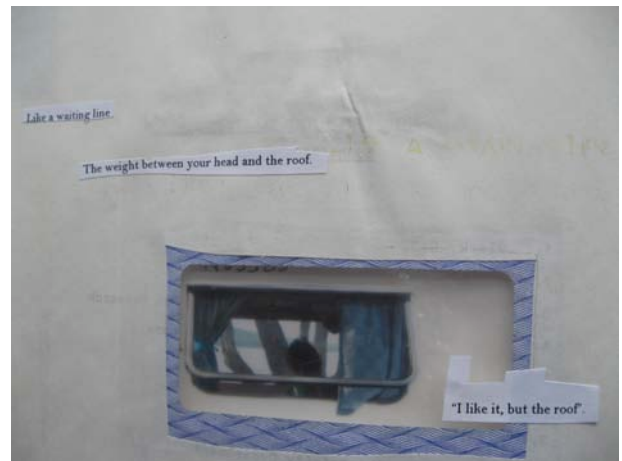


Figure Thirteen: The weight between your head and the roof

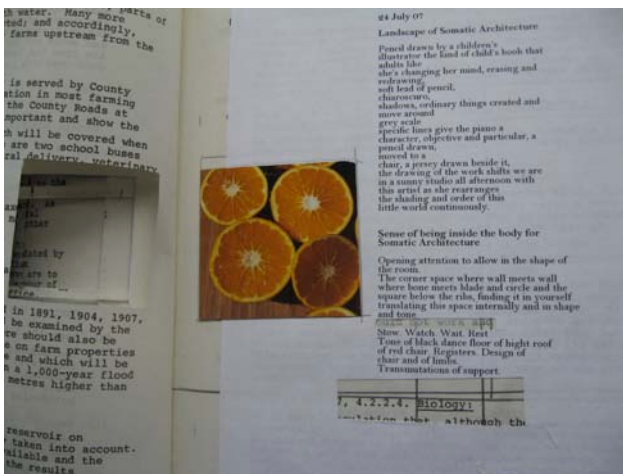


Figure Fourteen: Somatic Architecture #2

We then worked to develop scores for collaboration, by setting specific constraints on particular approaches to the page and to each other's work that we could employ in different sections of *The Little peeling Cottage* book. We decided to organize the found books into three main sections – the beginning and end would be the shortest sections and the middle the longest – plus a fourth section in which readers participate in creating the work. Our focus was on setting scores of initiation and response rather than aiming for a specific look. We divided the sixty-one texts into sections, so that the same texts would be used in the same part of each of the five artist books. For each section, we decided in advance on the materials and processes that would be used, and what order we would take in terms of initiating and following. We drew on a range of material processes, some of which include:

1. folding
2. framing
3. stitching
4. puncturing
5. toasting
6. gluing
7. overwriting
8. inserting
9. layering
10. concealing
11. slicing
12. appropriating
13. patterning
14. searing
15. melting
16. painting
17. implanting
18. fattening
19. ripping
20. reducing
21. cutting
22. drawing
23. angling
24. fanning
25. containing
26. scrolling
27. threading

28. erasing
29. matching
30. coating¹³

We conceptualized our collaboration thus: one person chooses text and somehow attaches it through the series of pages in the given section. The next person then contributes artist book techniques from the list above and might add more text. The first person then works with what the other added, and reworks the page, for a specific number of additions per section.

Central to this methodology for both performance improvisation and artist book design was the use of highly structured scores that dictated modes of response between partners in a kind of duet form. By specifying in advance how long dance improvisations would be, how many reiterations of a score would occur, or what materials would be used in specific sections of the artist book, by whom, in relation to which design elements, this score set clear artistic limitations to define the parameters of the work. Within these parameters a cycle of remembering, responding, inventing and structuring artistic vocabulary over time defined both dance and artist book processes. The pages of movement-initiated writing that we grafted into the found text could be used differently with each book – rather than use all the texts, we decided to only use the texts, or segments of text that felt appropriate to the site constituted by a specific geography book's particular pages. Each of *The Little peeling Cottage* books, therefore, contains different variations on the original body of writing. In this way the writing is recreated by the site of the found book, emphasizing the mobility of the poetic texts.

The specific constraints that Rachelle and I worked with in the different sections of the book are listed below. Each time we began a section we divided a sheet of A4 paper into the appropriate number of sections and threw a coin onto the paper – the section on which the coin landed determined which score we used. In the *Camper* performances, the audiences chose which item from the menu they would have performed for them. For the books, the chance operations of the coin toss replaced audience choice.

¹³ We came to this list of actions through referring to the methods of influential book artists, and through trial and error with the materials available to us. Rachelle's career as a textile artist and fashion designer informed the choices made. Artists Carole Shephard and Elizabeth Sarjeant run workshops in book design that I attended as research for this project. Shephard and Sarjeant influenced my use of engraving, folding, distressing paper, layering paint and varnishes, sewing, puncturing and stitching pages. In one weekend workshop with Shephard and Sarjeant we created eight different kinds of books, each utilizing different creative methodologies that inform the entire *Library of Moving Words*.¹³

The Little peeling Cottage Score

<p>Menu 1</p> <p>a. Porridge, Cream Cheese and a cup of tea Alys looks at page, chooses text. Attaches <i>Rachelle choose tea stain or drawing in response and might choose to add more text</i> Alys responds with tea stain, drawing or burning <i>Rachelle responds with tea stain, drawing or burning</i></p> <p>b. tea, coffee, biscuit, milo Rachelle looks at page, chooses text or photography, attaches <i>Alys choose gesso or stitching and might choose to add new text</i> Rachelle responds in gesso or stitching <i>Alys responds in gesso or stitching</i></p>	<p>Menu 2</p> <p>a. blip pop Alys chooses and adds text <i>Rachelle creates 3D element from found material</i> Alys adds to this element <i>Rachelle adds text</i> Alys initiates 3D element with paint <i>Rachelle adds to it</i> Alys freestyle <i>Rachelle freestyle</i></p> <p>b. somatic architecture Rachelle trace shapes already on page with index finger Rachelle eyes closed somatic drawing Alys trace shapes already on page with index finger <i>Alys eyes closed somatic drawing</i> Continue in this order til Rachelle says ‘end’</p> <p>c. little peeling cottage Alys chooses paint or found object <i>Rachelle makes a THING with what she chooses</i> Alys peels away at it however she wants to and adds text Rachelle also peels Alys adds to it Rachelle peels that</p>
<p>Menu 3</p> <p>a. Pamela Peep Rachelle looks at page and chooses a way to fold it <i>Alys inserts/layers text</i> Rachelle burns a section <i>Alys varnishes a section</i> Rachelle chooses text <i>Alys refolds or tears</i></p> <p>b. Matt Monologue Rachelle inserts an image <i>Alys layers in a text</i> Rachelle layers in SOMETHING FURRY AND TACTILE <i>Alys responds in pencil or thread</i> Rachelle does same</p> <p>c. Shaking Lisa Both shake for three minutes <i>Rachelle shakey draw</i> Alys choose text and position in <i>Rachelle shakey draw</i> Alys possibly add more text and add a paint or varnish <i>Rachelle add paint or varnish</i></p>	<p>Menu 4 Ending</p> <p>Reader carefully empties Camper Kit provided onto a flat clean surface</p> <p>They then choose whether to add text, or create an intervention in the paper through the use of folding, cutting, tearing, painting, erasing drawing.</p> <p>Each new reader responds ONCE to the page as it has been layered by the reader before them and the process continues forEVER</p> <p>Note, if a reader goes to use a material for the camper kit and it is dysfunctional (eg mechanical pencil is out of lead, paint has dried up) they are welcome to use their own materials or add to the camper kit as required.</p>
<p>Note There is also an “Introduction” to the book. After the 3 menus are complete we choose what we consider key aesthetic elements that emerged in the process of making the book, and extend these to the first 4 pages of the book.</p>	

4.7 Material gestures of listening and response

14 October 2009

Weather: Springtime, between bright sun and rain

In order to translate the logic of a studio practice in dance improvisation into the terrain of this artist book, we've remade the menus that set out the structure for the *Camper* show, this time in relation to sections of dance writing made through rehearsals and performances.

We throw a coin to begin our first collaborative book. It lands on "tea, coffee, biscuit, milo". This score limits the materials to be used to gesso, stitching, text, photographs from performances and a glue stick. The score dictates that Rachelle begins by attaching text, I respond with gesso or stitching, and may attach more text, then Rachelle responds with gesso or stitching, then I respond through gesso or stitching. We sit together in her studio, with the books in-between us, usually working for half-days at a time. To make the best use of our time, we are usually working on two or three books in a day, passing them back and forth. It takes time for paints and varnishes to set, which is when we'll begin working with a new book or section, so that the various books constantly cycle between us.

Rachelle's starting point is the found book itself, the field of spaces created by 1960s typewritten submissions on the development of a new marina, held together by a simple cardboard and cloth glue binding. She looks at the layout of stamped letterheads, the spaces between paragraphs, the fields of empty page and lines of text and selects fragments of the dance-initiated writing. She grafts these fragments into the pages, sometimes cutting through numerous layers of pages so the text is framed by layers of empty space. When she's done she gives the book to me.

Choreographically, Rachelle has created starting points for further work – spatial structures, motifs – and she has outlined ways in which the forms of pages and ideas from *The Little peeling Cottage* will bleed together. Her stitching, cutting, grafting, folding and drawing brings the flat space of pages into a three dimensional play, it brings texture and color to black and white surfaces, it emphasizes spatial fields within pages. I consider these actions choreographic – they emphasize a spatial thinking and open spaces of emergence within the site of the book.

Rachelle saw the *Camper* performance a number of times, she has collaborated with me in past projects (see the *Suture* section of *the kinesthetic archive book*) and she is acutely aware of the relationship between dance and design in these books. Each time a particular text from *The*

Little peeling Cottage is selected in relation to a page space a continuation of a duet eventuates. It feels like a similar practice to when, in our performances, Val would dance and I would write in response. When Val began her solo dances, she began with a text from the last rehearsal, with our environment, with her interaction with the audience, and with the sensory information available to her. I would then be writing from the world of her movement. Here, Rachelle, a textile artist, works with a text, with the given circumstances of page and material, and draws these together in developing spaces. I then work to bring these logics closer to each other.

I take the gesso and attend to an almost empty page. With a paintbrush I paint out almost every word on one of the pages, leaving only a few that hinge the page space between its original context and our duet work – words to do with ecology, space, community and articulating ideas are brought to the surface through the use of texture. With each page in the section I apply the gesso in relation to the pages and the added texts, and I also add a couple of images, figures cut from photographs of Val performing phrases created in response to the texts Rachelle chose to fix upon this page.

I pass the book back to Rachelle. When later she hands it back to me it's like receiving a Christmas present. What elements from the pages will she have heightened or developed? She had chosen to use stitching, and using red, green and black embroidery thread she's created connections across pages, framing particular elements of pages, without erasing anything she has created dimensions of space, color and texture that extend the design and movement of the page.

It's up to me to complete the section. As we both know the structure before we begin we have a clear sense of our responsibility in terms of initiation and response – it's not up to either one of us to generate the aesthetic or design of pages, it's in degrees of response, of working with what's there that the vocabulary of the page is found. It seems clear to me that a couple of the pages are done, and do not need any more work, whereas some others are in need of finishing. This dialogic approach to collaboration requires that we are sensitive to leaving space around our ideas, space for the unexpected to arise between our different approaches. I complete the section by applying heavy layers of gesso to one of the pages, so that the thick, textured paint takes hours to dry. As I do so I'm imagining future readers running their fingers over the rise and fall of this texture. When I'm done it's time to start the next section, so we write the various menu choices on a piece of paper, and hold a coin ready to fall on the next operations for our creative practice.

Pablo Picasso's interest in "the metamorphoses of forms into new bodies" (Picasso, cited in Brisbane Public Art Gallery, 2008) gestures to the translation of concepts, materials, languages and movements that form a central point of development in, I think, any kind of artistic practice. Such metamorphosis is strongly emphasized in *The Little peeling Cottage* project, wherein choreographic ideas moved between dance, written and spoken language, and mixed media art practice.

The Little peeling Cottage project is a project that aims to create space for artists and artistic modes (dance, writing, painting, drawing, sculpture) to respond to and extend each other. The particular methodology for movement-initiated writing that emerged in this process involves a kind of condensation of movement ideas through the reiteration of a duet score – from movement improvisation to performance writing, to highly structured call-and-response scores between two book artists. Site specific practice was also a defining aspect of this project as it moved between two sites – the caravan and the found geography book. The series of one-off artist books that form the research outcome of this project highlight physical actions of the book artist-as-performance-writer as she sculpts a dance of reading for future audiences. The book becomes a body, a tactile, lively, spatial form.

The final chapter of the *Environment and Change* book that became the first version of *The Little peeling Cottage* book was titled; "An Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth" (Buckminster Fuller, 1968 p. 341). It brings to the foreground the following text; "Live meetings catalyze swift... interest... Live meetings often become pivotal in our lives" (Buckminster Fuller, 1968 p. 341), which uncannily parallels the philosophy that underpins the ethics of rehearsals, performances and book design for *The Little peeling Cottage*.

You might read the artist book *Camper: The Little peeling Cottage* as a site specific performance. You might notice the slight smell of burning or paint that reaches beyond the closed object of the book to create a sensory, olfactory body. The pages of this book are collaged together from original pages, inserted pages, found materials and photographs. The pages merge into each other through methods of collage that retract certain facets of the book's layout while manipulating, adding to and heightening others. Whereas the *moving letters* book (from the previous chapter) was designed with attention to specific logics perceived as being inherent to Forti's work *The Little peeling Cottage* book translates the principles of site specific compositional process into its method of artist book performance.

5.0 immersed Chapter

Particular styles of writing enable specific modes of reflection on dance practice. The following chapter presents a methodology for movement-initiated writing that focuses on a rehearsal process in its middle stages. Whereas *The Little peeling Cottage* and the *moving letters* artist books were both completed subsequent to a dance project, the *immersed* book concentrates on performance ideas that are incomplete and unstable.

This chapter uses shifts in authorial position as a tactic to allow space for different voices, sites, time zones and modes of analysis to inform each other. Shifting between the voices of ‘she’ and ‘I’, and between italicized and standard fonts allows me to slip more easily between studio-based, reflective, academic and poetic modes of discourse, each of which allow me to understand my process in a different way.

5.1 Proximity and distance

We’re working on a duet, exploring ‘Proximity and Distance’, ideas of absence and presence, engagement and disengagement. We’re looking at those moments when one is physically present but psychologically absent, or when someone has such a strong desire to be close to the other that they repel them.

If you open up the *immersed* book and turn to one of the covers, you will find a CD on which is printed the sound composition I created for the performance work that brought this chapter into being. Turn it on and you’ll be listening to two ‘world famous in New Zealand’ New Zealand voices: Kim Hill (radio host) and Michael Hill (jeweller). *The Hills*. There’s something else too in that title – the sense of an environment that has a strong presence in your vision, while still being relatively far away, the intimate distance of a landscape, of a radio voice, that sense of knowing someone without knowing them.

Mathew Goulish wrote a lecture in the shape of a bridge collapsing (Goulish, 2002). If this chapter had a shape it would be the shape of hills in the far distance, with all the foreground things before those hills included, but with your attention fixed on the hills beyond. There would be a sense that *The Hills* overshadow your life although you rarely see them. The incremental way that daily practices create modes of action and reaction. Figure and ground.

Also, the figure and ground of writing, the proximity and distance of this writing as it moves closer to you – with direct address – and further away in attempting to reveal the world of a particular

dance practice. Movement between different modes of address and between different locations in space and time is a central element of the daily writing practice that enables this research. Linguist Roman Jakobsen's discussion of "shifters" (Jakobsen, 1990) identifies the central role such shifting in address and voice plays in speech, language and literature.

The general meaning of the grammatical form called "shifter" is characterized by a reference to the given speech event in which the form appears. Thus the past tense is a shifter because it literally designates an event that precedes the given act of speech. (Jakobsen, 1990, p.175)

Shifters are grammatical forms that draw attention to the movement of perspective and location of narrators, by referencing the circumstances of narration, thus drawing a readers' or listeners' attention to multiple perspectives on an event. Jackobsen also writes on the way in which forms of writing allow multiple positions in space and time to occur concurrently:

Narrative... time can be unilinear as well as multi-linear, direct as well as reversed, continuous as well as discontinuous ... I believe it would be difficult to find another domain, except perhaps for music, where time is experienced with compatible acuity. (Jakobsen, 1990, p. 175)

In creating the narratives that form these thesis chapters the use of shifters enables me to reflect not only on particular rehearsal events, but on the performance of moving those events into writing as I prepare for others to bring their performances of reading into this system of meaning-making. Shifting between times and spaces in the research process allows me to narrate it from a range of critical positions. For example, the switch from first to second person address in the following part of this chapter allows me to examine my practice as if an outside perspective was possible, providing a semblance of distance between critical analysis and studio practice.

She's currently preoccupied with a choreographic process she had instigated with dancer Brent Harris. After a week's workshopping the project is now resting, with the intention she'll pick it up again when the opportunity arises. In their weeks work, the process evolved to produce the beginnings of a sound composition and a performance score, which she showed to a small audience. To begin their rehearsal process, they experimented with the cultivation of presence and absence. They created a simple pathway down the room, where the closer he came to the audience the more removed his presence, the further from the audience, the closer his presence. They then worked through a writing structure; they wrote up to 500 words on the memory of looking into the distance, and used their two written texts as structuring devices to create a duet

sequence. In performance they worked with how much of the memory of their text they could summon, with the lack of complete control over what they would remember being a key part of the score. They were performing the action of the effort of remembering.

1. Perform the action of the effort of remembering
2. The closer you are to them, the further your attention strays
3. As you move further away from them your desire to be close to them escalates
4. The cultivation of presence
5. The cultivation of absence
6. Durational sites

As she sits here at her kitchen bench, she still hasn't gotten any kind of grip on how to find a productive language to communicate her ideas. She has enjoyed generating a choreographic process that is unlike any of her previous work, yet the instability in doing so makes articulating directive choices difficult. How to communicate the line of logic she wants the dance to follow, without killing that logic by trying to set movement?

She's intrigued by the emergence of choices that evolved through the dance making, but in the flood of choices it's very hard to locate a specific strand or logic that binds the work together. It is like she is under a sea of ideas and she's too deep to find the surface or the sense. It is like the work has immersed her. She no longer knows which way is up.

Recalling her past works, a sense of familiarity floods in. Perhaps this overwhelming sense of being unable to contain or find sense in the work is a natural condition of the process. She decides that this processual indeterminacy is a state and a condition of her choreographic process that may generate a design logic for formal development.

5.2 A book named *immersed*

A book that begins with its cover. That begins with some cardboard rectangles covered by layers of butter paper, and layered again with thin fabric, a fabric not dissimilar to bandage gauze. If you run your fingers over the covers they'll tell you of a spidery, fine sensation of very thin threads held tight to covers with glue set to a tight sheen. It's just a cover, without pages or contents – two exterior surfaces held together by a spine, posing the question of what potential interior space might belong here.

Printed in black ink on the butter paper are two figures dancing, close ups of feet and arms, two dancers in dance space. There might be a sense of the distance between that studio then and this

moment now. There might be a sense of tension in translating a studio process to the object of these covers, this spine. There might be a sense of injury to the ontology of performance, the injury of trying to work the ephemeral into the leaves of pages. Is there a sense that this is a traitorous act?

Or might there be a sense that this book intensifies the performative interaction of reading? Or might it be both? Against and for performance simultaneously?

Rebecca Schneider discusses the performative, collaborative nature of documentation in her article *The Document Performance* (Schneider 2008). She considers documentary practices a form of performance which raise “tantalising questions about the duration of performance; about the limits or limitlessness of liveness; and about the trajectory of a scene playing and replaying across hands and eyes that encounter it *still* in circulation” (Schneider, 2008, p.18, author’s emphasis). Schneider’s article emphasises the way that ideas travel through the inventive processes of planning, rehearsal, performance, and documentation. The documentary art that collaborates with the embodied work becomes another engine of the performance, travelling through potentially unlimited durations, continuing the life of the performance.

Unlike public performance, where the refining and clarity of ideas is typically primary, in ongoing studio practice following the unexpected, inviting ambiguity, allowing failure and trusting through confusion and mess is of great importance. The generative power of failure in creative process has become a recognizable trope in performance over the last decade, with companies such as *Forced Entertainment* deliberately threading failure and misperformance into the fabric of their theatre work, to the point where the audience witnesses a work that falls to pieces. Tim Etchells and Kate McIntosh discussed this in a panel discussion (Burrows, 2007), where Etchells described his work with *Forced Entertainment*: “We contrive to set up a structure in which we are bound to fuck up, to fail, but what we are not sure of is at what point and how. We create the circumstances.” Kate McIntosh: “When I stop performing and I start coping, this is a place I got to like. Levels of what you’re good at and what you’re not. Where you’re not in a level of comfort and expertise. Knowing that I’m not doing it very well, but that some buttons are being pushed somewhere. Some sort of feedback loop. I’m not asking them to admire me anymore or have full trust in me anymore, there’s something else going on.”¹⁴

Failure and incompleteness have been significant in *the kinesthetic archive book* also, in which I worked with the sense that I was not aiming towards completed pages, instead the writing and design carried a sense of chance construction. Mathew Goulsh discusses the way that performance makers deal with failure as being a distinguishing feature of their performance paradigm. He discusses how he “began

¹⁴ This panel was curated by Jonathon Burrows for the event *Parallel Voices*, hosted by the Siobhan Davies Studio

to think that the key difference between major artists and minor artists lay in the ability not only to accept the accidental, but even to foreground it” (Goulish, 2004, p. 249). Such a space integrates the messiness, complexity and absurdity of language and communication into the texture of performances. As writer Sarah Jane Bailes writes of Goat Island’s work,

If representation is always already the enactment of a failed promise, then to commit to that failure is to begin to perceive this condition as productive. To dance poorly is to concretize hope while acknowledging the inefficiency of language(s). (Bailes, 2007, p.48)

Goulish established *The Institute of Failure* with Tim Etchells in 2002. The institute’s online component outlines its aims:

Situated on the ungraspable border between deadpan irony and high seriousness, *The Institute of Failure* dedicates itself to the documentation, study, and theorisation of failure as it occurs in all aspects of human endeavour ... (it) aims to map the face of contemporary failure in avowedly cross-disciplinary style, exploring areas such as architectural failures, relationships that fail, obsolete, dead or ‘failed’ media, sporting failures, the nature of ‘the catastrophe’ etc. (Institute of Failure, 2009, para. 1-3)

I am considering the examination of failure as a way of thinking around the edges of function, into the chaotic, processual nature of ideas that don’t fit, that lead to discomfort or catastrophe. Goulish writes that “failure produces transparency” (Goulish, 2002, para. 9), allowing insight into processes of cause and effect, and into the kinds of variables that will irrevocably and unpredictably change the course of an event.

With the *immersed* project, working with the intention of somehow articulating states of not knowing, instability and discomfort allowed unconventional pathways of choreographic and artist book development to unfold. Trusting the emergence of a work to be unexpected, I held the *immersed* book in my hands, and wondered, “What pages might follow if the starting point is this cover?” The *immersed* book works from the point where ideas are proliferating, but are yet to be contained, set, or structured.

May 26, 2007

3:54 pm

Weather: Grey, rainy

She's sitting at the kitchen table of her little house in Mt Eden, Auckland, staring at the half-finished book cover. She's wondering, what contents, what pages, does this cover summon? Something untidy, something imperfect, something perhaps used and reused, some way of invoking the way that ideas travel, often uncontrollably, nonsensically. So she starts to gather paper from her 'used paper' pile – and she starts to look at the papers she's ready to get rid of – the drafts, notes, meeting minutes, unused assessment criteria pages, old bibliographies. These sheets, when she thinks about it, reflect the ground of her research, the daily practices that surround the time she spends rehearsing, writing, reading and designing.

She's thinking of finished objects, dances and sentences as 'figure' and of the practice underpinning such things as the 'ground' of the work. She takes her old papers and cuts them into sections to form the ground, the insides of her book. As the papers are folded, lines written on the horizontal become vertical, translating abstract formal shapes from pragmatic communications.

The book sits on a shelf, untouched for a couple of weeks. At this stage it consists of a cover (two pieces of thick cardboard covered in printed butter paper and bandage-like gauze) and four sections of pages, folded into place. These parts are loose, nothing is stitched together. Eventually she returns to it, leafs through it, wondering, skin senses open to possibility.

If the ground of her choreographic research might be translated into the *immersed* book through the inclusion of her waste paper, what should the 'figure' of the book consist of?

She started with a choreographic process and a cover. She's thinking about how ideas proliferate and a sense of imminent failure that is arising out of not having a language to communicate the logic of the choreography she's working on to her collaborator.

Her aim: to generate a sense of this processual logic into page form.

She plays the score she put together for her performance with Brent, of her favourite radio voice, Kim Hill, speaking to the voice of Michael Hill, Jeweller, whose voice penetrated the television and radio waves throughout her childhood, advertising cut-price solitaire rings, silver and gold chains. She recorded Kim Hill's radio show (Saturday mornings, eight til noon) and remixed the voices to accentuate what she considered a wacky kind of beauty housed in the 'New Zealandness' of the vowel sounds. She was also interested in the way one voice responded to another, the train of enunciation

unfolding a conversation ahead of sense or meaning, the sounds and the sounded confirmations of listening.

5.3 An archive of imperatives

Choreographically, one of the ways that processual logic communicates is through studio tasks. Rhetorically, the imperative is perhaps the clearest and most used form of speech act in choreographic (and possibly dance) practice. The Collins Paperback Dictionary defines the word imperative thus: “1. extremely urgent; essential. 2. commanding or authoritative. 3. Grammar denoting the mood of a verb used in commands” (Collins, 2004, p.400). The language of instruction (regardless of how sensible or impossible/ ridiculous that instruction may be) is a form of language that allows dance practice to come into being.

I am fascinated by the rhetoric of choreographic tasks. I love the way that they at once command dancers to do something in a no-nonsense bossy way, while at the same time they often create space for an endless diversity of invention and play. The art of creating productive, unexpected and inventive material for performance research using choreographic tasks lies in devising imperatives that are at once highly specific, and open to a wide range of interpretations. Take the following tasks from Goat Island’s *Words of Advice to A Young Practitioner*:

Invent 7 ways to exit your chair

Stand with the smile of a sad person. Mark the place where your soul lives...

Dive a hundred times into a harbour.

Fall into the grip of another.

Perform a whirling dance to purge toxic spider venom...

Move in place as seven body parts step in the same spot at least twice before you can make a new footprint. Breathe only once every fourteen moves. (Goat Island, 2000, p.104-105)

Such imperatives are designed to be unpredictable, to surprise, to allow the singularity of each performer to reinvent what an artistic concept might become. We could consider imperatives in relation to the discussion of minor literatures in Chapter Three of this thesis, as a way in which the majoritarian structures of language are challenged by a proliferating, foreign way of assembling terms so that language, as Deleuze puts it “trembles from head to toe” (Deleuze, 1997, p.108). According to Bogue (2007) “Collective assemblages of enunciation induce ‘incorporeal transformations’ of bodies in that they transform elements and configurations of the world through speech acts” (p. 20). We might consider the list of imperatives from *Goat Island* (above) as a kind of

collective assemblage, as each one involves potential performers transforming their sense of the given terms in order to create specific actions.

Enunciation is referred to by Felix Guattari in his essay *Ritornellos and Existential Effects* (1996):

For too long, linguists have refused to face up to enunciation, having only wanted to take it into account as a breaking and entering into the structural woof of semantic-syntactic processes. In fact, enunciation is in no way a faraway suburb of language. It constitutes the active kernel of linguistic and semiotic creativity. (Guattari, 1996, p.164)

Guattari discusses enunciation in relation to the concept of the ritornello, a term that refers to the highly specific sensory affects triggered by particular experiences to create a “lay-out of sense productions beyond common sense” (Guattari, 1996, p.164). Attending to the ritornellos triggered by the enunciation of language allows explicit recognition of the role of affect, tone, cadence and context in the movement of ideas. In *The Little peeling Cottage* project discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis, speech became a choreographic tool as I read aloud phrases written in response to dance improvisation, with the spoken phrases becoming a starting point of further movement. Enunciation, in *The Little peeling Cottage* work, indeed created a sense ‘beyond common sense’ with writing functioning as a kind of improvisation.

As you read the following choreographic imperative written by Deborah Hay, you might imagine how the tone of her voice would shift your responses to the instruction, or how she might read her notes for the process before addressing the dancers, but change the instructions slightly at the moment of their enunciation, as she responds to the quality of attention the dancers bring:

Every performer is responsible for moving her two articles: the blanket and the candle. You move each article forward, in increments of space and time, in any combination, order, frequency, duration. You choose when, how, and where to move, while staying within the parameters of the group and the overall spatial pattern, more or less.

Work related activity with the blanket can be opening it, folding it, spreading it out, holding it up, wrapping it around, carrying it forward, or piling it up.

Work related activity with the candle can be carrying it forward, lifting it, lowering it, or moving it along the floor. (Hay, 2000, p.18)

Although these instructions are extremely specific, they also leave room for each group of dancers to generate unexpected and surprising ‘riffs’ on the movement theme that Hay has outlined. Irigaray writes that “Speech thus escapes the calculation that dominates our time” (2002, p.23) as does the language we bring to creative practice, as it invites in contingency and intuitive response. Choreographic imperatives both open and limit the field of a creative process.

If the ground of her choreographic research might be translated into the *immersed* book through the inclusion of her waste paper, perhaps a way in which to fold the logic (or illogic) of her choreographic process into the *immersed* book is to create an archive of imperatives, of the choreographic tasks that underpinned her collaboration with Brent.

Might you, the reader consider your own responses to the tasks, and might this lead you into dancing (whether that dance be visible or invisible, desk bound or airborne)?

5.4 A book made from outside in.

Not a book made with an idea that is written, refined, edited and printed, a cover made to reflect a train of ideas, a binding to make the journey of reading as straightforward as possible. Not this. Instead, a cover of a book made from found materials as an experiment. Pages constructed to reflect the concept of a cover, outside to inside, skin before internal organs, back to front.

By starting this book with its cover, and then from that cover making decisions about what the book itself might be, *immersed* makes a condition of its creative process the material, kinesthetic experience of the reading encounter. For me, a defining element of being part way through a choreographic process is when I am still seeking a way to guide my process of decision making. Before that basis for decision making has been made I am in an unfamiliar city without a map to tell me which corner to turn and I am with a group of dancers whose time I desperately don’t want (or can’t afford) to waste. As I layered together recycled pages, I realised I had created page spaces that lacked the clear navigation inherent in most books. I aimed to amplify that sense as I developed the book in order to highlight the feeling that, when you are inside a choreographic process, meaning and order often seem illegible and illusive.

John Hall (2004) asks, “What is it to read a page?” In his essay *Reading (il)legible pages*, Hall explores the notion of (il)legibility within the experience of a book and reading. He considers modes in which a reader might approach the page – as a book, a page, a text, a map, a sign, a frame, a transaction, a code. Hall discusses the notions of transfer and transaction implicit in the act of reading, and ways in

which the expectation of reading as a passive activity might be disrupted in the play between legibility and illegibility. Throughout this project the question keeps arising: can the tension arising from the impossibility of seamlessly writing dancing be used as a tool to heighten the experience of movement between writer and reader? In Forti's practice of *Logomotion*, the tension between moving, writing and speaking generate a performance form where meaning (felt or articulated) is formed out of disjunction – moving and speaking take on unpredictable resonance when interwoven. In the *Camper* project a non-linear improvisatory approach to movement-initiated writing (comparable to poet Jerome Rothenberg's (2004) notion of 'total translation') generated poetic phrases out of the untranslatable affects of movement. It might be that impossibility is a very constructive starting point for creative invention – as evidenced in Isabelle Ginot's dance-writing instruction to "write the impossible body" (Crisp and Ginot, 2007) or in Etchells' and Goulish's (2007) use of impossible tasks and failed attempts as a rehearsal tactic.

5.5 Unstable practices

Focussing on the processual instability of choreography I hope to present the tone of mid-process thinking – writing that emerges out of the arc of performance development. In these choreographic interactions with Brent, contingency and intuition were central to my process, as I knew the concepts I was exploring (proximity and distance) but was unsure how movement research into these states would manifest. It seems to me that allowing the illegibility of mid-process choreographic work to spill into the design of the *immersed* book might amplify the non-linear, multiple trajectories of thinking which play out in the dance studio and that this design decision might in turn create a reading experience that activates the reader's own experience of contingency and intuition. With the key texts of this work being choreographic imperatives, I aim for the book to open out an experience for the reader that encourages a sense of the muscles of creative practice and invention being worked in the reading process.

Paged writing is also *practised*, when it is read, and reconfigured by another reader in terms of her or his *intuition* as well as her or his intellectual grasp of it ... certain expert registers of writing mark out and enable their writers and readers to seem to engage, *schematically* – as though in reading, they are anticipating a performance to come, an event of experience which might be transferred from the close confines of the book to those of skilled performance making. Something is folded into this writing and can be unfolded into imaginary spaces ... Some writing, in other words, can make some readers seem to fly. (Melrose, 2002, p.5, authors' emphasis)

Although the *immersed* book is not the kind to make a reader seem to ‘fly’, in terms of its navigational pathways it may make readers feel like they are on a circular, rather than a linear pathway. When I showed the first version of this book to Brent, he said that he turned the book on 90 degree angles to read some of the writing, unwittingly turning the book upside down and accidentally reading back the way he had come. When I heard that, I knew I was onto something – he’d literally gotten lost, reading this book, just as I felt when I was choreographing his solo! This sense of the world turning around the book, turning round the world has been achieved spatially by installation artist Ann Hamilton.

Hamilton placed rotating motors under a section of a gallery so that “stepping onto the spinning floor, you shift from moving around the room to the room spinning around you”(Ann Hamilton cited in Simon, 2006, p.177). I am thinking here of a mode of engagement between writer and reader where a sense of the logic of the practice directly influences the design of the book. The book creases and folds in response to studio practice, and perhaps the reader of *immersed* may have a sense of folding the logic of the practice out, of participating in the choreographic process through imagining her or his own response to provocations and affective states engendered in the aesthetics of fonts and lines.

Hamilton’s work pushes language into a dynamic entanglement with movement and gesture and has greatly influenced how I conceptualise and work with the materiality of language. Bruce Ferguson describes the way that Hamilton’s installations reinvent the work of language and writing. He writes,

Not only should language not be trusted...but more simply, it cannot be trusted. Instead, there must be practices that have no assurances of meaning, practices that moonlight from the economy of language, acting as offerings of a necessary displacement; practices that generate catastrophes of meaning. (Ferguson, 1994, p.14)

Earlier in this thesis I discussed the improvisation practices of Simone Forti as a minor literature. The work of Ann Hamilton offers another kind of minor treatment of language, with Hamilton’s large scale installations presenting language in a spatial, material mode, constantly under erasure, suggested yet inaudible, abstract qualities heightened. Her work *tropos* for example, created a surreal environment combining sculptural, performance and sonic elements. Writer Dave Hickey describes this work thus:

Ann Hamilton’s *tropos* is situated in a third-floor warehouse approximately ninety-six feet wide by ninety-six feet long with a fifteen foot ceiling ... The entire concrete floor of the room has been repoured into an irregular prairie of slow dips and swells and its entire surface has been carpeted with a swirling layer of horsehair whose colour shifts in mottled gradations from black to sorrel to blonde ... your gaze is drawn diagonally across the room ... toward a young girl who sits facing away from us at a small table that is

incongruously perched on a gentle rise of surging horsehair... acrid smoke that blurs the atmosphere. It rises in a thin stream from the page of a book whose lines of text she is studiously burning away as she reads, phrase by phrase, with an electric instrument, thus filling the air with a palpable aura of disappearing language that is reinforced by a disembodied male voice floating in the smoke, constantly shifting locations, enunciating unintelligible phrases that fall in stately, homiletic periods ... (Hickey, 1995, p. 134)

tropos is a work that demonstrates how Hamilton treats language as texture – both in the sonic element of the work (a voice who is unable to enunciate words reading a poetic text, dramatising a failed intention toward speech) and in the literal burning of text from pages, so that a texture of ashy smoke pervades the space of the installation.

We might compare this treatment of language to Forti's wringing the sounds and tones out of words, treating her body as a tuning fork to wrench a multiplicity of emphases and meanings from what was previously a simple word. The artistic practices of Forti and Hamilton return writing, speech and language to bodily origins, and in doing so move language to a transitional and contingent state.

In creating *immersed* I was deeply influenced by the way the Hamilton and Forti destabilise writing and develop abstract performance, installation and book works that interweave embodiment with language. Many of Hamilton's site specific installations involve repetitive gestures that evolve to create or reconstruct specific objects, with books being a recurring source of creation and erasure. At the completion of the installation there is often a residue of these objects of which Joan Simon writes: "The newly recognised object serves as a trace of the temporal event, a relic, a condensation of the installations' tangible embodied history and memory...these objects, as Hamilton notes, 'have their own resonance' and 'consolidate the relationships that were part of the larger work'" (Simon, 2006, p.6). The *immersed* book might be seen to contain elements of a minor literature in the way that it refuses to provide the reader with a stable or fixed navigational route through pages and to the extent that traditional reading pathways are rejected in favour of a more circuitous reading route; the readers' movement toward and away from the page is choreographed into the text.

The development of the *immersed* book created a space of critical and creative reflection on a choreographic process. Development of this book then became the point of initiation for my contribution to the creation of a new performance work, *Almost Reaching You, Missing U* which was made in collaboration with performers Emma Willis, Mark Harvey and Brent Harris for the SHIFT programme at the Performance Studies international (PSi) conference in Zagreb, Croatia, in June 2009 (Longley et. al., 2010). At this conference I also gave a paper on the *immersed* artist book and its performance of dance ideas. Attending the various panels and paper presentations at the conference, the

subject of how writing might engage the affects of dance practice came up repeatedly, particularly in the work of academics such as Jenn Joy who discussed ways in which choreographic practice functions as “virtuosic performativity ... (and) a critique of labor intimately tied to structures and limitations of language” (Joy, 2009, p.42), Andrew Starner, who spoke of a “translation that calls forth embodiment” (Starner, 2009, p.27) and Danae Theodoridou, who spoke of the theatrical practice of performance writing (Theodoridou, 2009, p.53). My notes from attending these conference papers have been incorporated into the final pages of the *immersed* book – they gesture to the practitioner-theoretical work that informs my practice and to the travel of ideas through a wide range of sites, influences and performance developments.

5.6 Processual indeterminacy (reprise)

In each developed draft copy of the *immersed* book, the pages designed to be folded out increased in size. The first version was made from A4 size recycled copies of edited draft chapters of this research, with the choreographic imperatives layered over pages already layered with typed and handwritten text. It was an aesthetic drawn from the texture of work and practice – not in an articulate and produced final form but one with all the messiness and groping of work *on its way* to a completed form. The larger the pages of the *immersed* book became, the greater the intensification of scale became in the work. The play with scale is a key element in the performance of this work (which as a dance duet was titled *Proximity and Distance*). In order for readers to make out both large and small scale type they have to physically move toward and away from different texts, to dance through circuitous routes of text, possibly losing the trace of one line of thought as it merges with another.

Surely getting lost is one of the most important ways in which performance ideas develop, sometimes when something is lost, replacing it propels us toward a more interesting path, and other times the getting lost is what leads the ideas to form connections and relationships that may not otherwise have been found. However, for me, the feeling of getting lost most often leads to the feeling that failure is imminent, that I am unsure what I'm doing, that I'm constantly on the edge of letting the team down. Often, I have an overwhelming sense that I have folded out a bunch of interesting ideas that become totally unmanageable. I am immersed by them, unsure how to make decisions or to navigate through seas of ideas. *immersed* is a book that evokes, rather than describes a state of being lost. Multiple pathways are presented, there is no linear development through which to progress, only rhizomatic connections to be made.

The final draft of the *immersed* book emerged as one very large map-like page, folded many times. There's an anxiety that I connect with this kind of map, which is the process of maintaining the clean form as I attempt to put the map back together. To me it is a kind of allegory for running a rehearsal –

often in my work there are three or so dancers, a composer, a lighting designer – and there’s a responsibility to be honouring the time they have given. And yet, with experimentation, some ideas just do not work and time might seem wasted. Working with the idea of a map that needs to be folded out (with the anxiety of folding it back together built into its design) carries for me the dream of negotiating a pathway that all collaborators involved find rewarding, and the reality of the anxiety, slippage and failure lurking behind creative decision making.

The process of binding the *immersed* page and its folds was made in collaboration with designer Emma Cowan. With each development of the book, I would create cover papers and choose the weight of card the papers would be fixed to and Emma would glue and hand bind the elements of the book together. We balanced the murky aesthetic of the working pages by choosing endpapers that reflected light. The original cover consisted of a scanned photograph of the *Proximity and Distance* work with Brent and myself, covered in bandage gauze to gesture through a tactile means to the potential violence (and the recuperative promise) of language. This was scanned so that the gauze enfolding the cover was digitised. As the size of the book grew this image was enlarged. The photograph of us dancing was reincorporated into the work to become a very large format black and white print that forms one side of the map-like page that makes up the book.

Instead of a series of pages bound together, the final version of the *immersed* book contains one enormous page that needs to be folded out. The size of the page is so unwieldy, readers must place the book on the floor in order to open the page to its full size, and move around it at different angles to read the different groupings of words. The page literally calls readers into movement.

As this book was initiated by a choreographic project entitled *Proximity and Distance*, a play with scale is central to the logic of its design. A single sentence is written very large on the page of the work. Inside the shapes and along the forms of outsized letters are smaller words that form readable phrases. These sentences nestle up to the bodies of letters like moss to a tree. You can read them by moving around the paper in the direction the words run, which may be horizontally as they trail in the space between two e’s, or vertically as they run along the slope of an l, or the words might spiral inside an o. The only set navigational pathway for these phrases is the landscape of the large-scale letters. It is up to the reader to decide which layer they will start with and then move to.

The *immersed* book contains residues of the *Proximity and Distance* choreographic project in the form of choreographic imperatives that are attached to the surface of the page with the heat of an iron, using tape made for hemming clothes. The logic of our studio work is also evident in the book through a focus on contingent, emergent, intuitive decision making, such as beginning the book with the cover rather than the contents or concepts. This book has no correct front, back, up or down side. Readers are left to their own devices to draw a pathway of logic or meaning out of the material on offer, just as,

when we entered the studio for workshopping our *Proximity and Distance* work, we had an abundance of movement ideas, but I felt I lacked a language through which to articulate the structure necessary to organise the movement into a choreography.

Creating and contextualising the *immersed* book has helped me clarify what our studio process was attempting and (possibly) achieving, and I now have a strong sense of how Brent and I could go about the further researching and structuring of ideas. Central to this book and this chapter is the notion of processual indeterminacy, that is, that I am writing about a project that I am nowhere near completing, from the middle or the inside of the process, with none of the critical distance that I felt in writing about works or workshops that have completed their performance seasons or had the feedback of a final session. I will steer this chapter toward completion with a reflection on our *Proximity and Distance* work, in the hope that it will have your imagination circling back to a dance of close and far, close and far, close and far away:

Brent and I are in a dance studio treating presence as something you can turn up or down like a volume dial. Ten equals absolute attention to this precise moment, this moment's social and environmental contents, absolute dependence on this here now. Zero equals attention absolutely elsewhere, no desire or observation of here, no sense of own body, contents of transparent skin evaporated, less than hungry, empty, away. We play with the transition points between one-to-ten, we create movement scores for specific zones, I record myself walking away from the radio, recording the sound of the creation of distance. We finish the process feeling lost, drenched with possibility, sparse of structure.

And now it's June 2009 and she's reading over all the chapters of this thesis, reading this chapter alongside the one that follows it. As a reader the meaning you make of this is formed in relationship with very many other pages. Both the current chapter and the following one, Chapter Six, *Insomnia Poems*, discuss methods of movement-initiated writing in which instability, experimentation and play are key. Whereas in the *immersed* artist book, atmospheres of not-knowing mean that readers have to work harder in reading to find where meaning lies, in the *Insomnia Poems*, the play aspect of dance making becomes central. In the *Insomnia Poems* not-knowing is just part of the rules of a game.

6.0 Insomnia Poems and Rules of Play : On Devising Games and Inventing Game-Rules

22 february 1988, 4.30 pm

Uxbridge Leisure Centre Youth Drama Class, Howick, Auckland

Warm ups always begin with a game. I always liked the really competitive ones, that began with rounds where we all had a few chances, but pretty soon the kids with slower reflexes would be sitting round the edges of the room, some relieved, some bitterly disappointed. As a 10 year old, I didn't realize that the games I played were translating directly into my ability to be present, responsive, focused, energized and sensitive on stage, they were teaching me to work with others, to accept defeat, to move beyond the bounds of any set possible, or any set real, as I followed the specific and simple game-rules, I forgot what I could and couldn't do, and the line between reality and imagination became irrelevant, more important was achieving the task of the game. The games were usually defined by simple rules that corresponded to specific skill based or inventive actions. The skill often had something to do with speed, transformation and predicting patterns. Of course, games play a huge part in cultures worldwide, from social life, to work, to sport, to television, to childhood. The scale of the game might encompass the whole world and every action in our life, or we might consider the game to begin and end with the opening and closing of a board, the picking up and then putting away of the game pieces.

18 august 2008, 4.40pm, Rm 508, Building 421, 26 Symonds St.

Twenty years later, I'm sitting here remembering how much I would forget as I was utterly immersed in those games. This chapter, *Insomnia Poems and Rules of Play*, discusses a set of cards that I created as a way to generate structures for performance improvisation and choreography. What really strikes me about having made my own deck of cards is the possibilities for games that these cards hold. I'm imagining the ways that players might systematize rules around how many cards each, what order, what relationship with each other, what methods of translation from two static to three moving dimensions? Are there rules for swapping or winning or

Shuffling

Dealing

Sorting
Betting
Predicting
Competing
Playing
Winning
Cheating
Pick up
Put down
Losing
Passing
Gambling
Poker faces
Tricking
Rhythm
Order
Spatial Arrangement
Relationship with each other
Relationship with architecture
Dynamic
Technique
Unison
Contrast
Listening
Speaking
Timing

In this chapter I will consider the concepts of the game and of play in terms of performance practice, and then specifically in terms of my performance practice in initiating a duet workshopping process out of which I created a deck of cards, and some different approaches to using them in improvisation and choreography.

Play cannot be denied. You can deny, if you like, nearly all abstractions: justice, beauty, truth, goodness, mind, God. You can deny seriousness, but not play. (Huizinga, 1950, p. 3)

In his book *Homo Ludens* the anthropologist Johannes Huizinga defines the centrality of play in the development of human culture, stating that, “the great archetypal activities of human

society are all permeated with play at the start” (Huizinga, 1950, p. 4). According to Huizinga the centrality of play in vast aspects of culture nods to the importance of imagination in human behaviour: “We play and we know that we play, so we must be more than rational beings, for play is irrational” (Huizinga, 1950, p. 4).

Performance theorist Andrew Quick discusses the manner in which play destabilizes meaning, provokes transformations, generates something other than reality and challenges the limits of everyday. It is something we experience in order to reveal a world that is constructed out of “constant reinvention, constant flux” (Quick, 2004, p.144). “Play destructures,” (Quick, 2004, p. 160) and “interrupts those thought processes that normalize experience” (Quick, 2004, p.146) through role playing, chasing, turning ourselves and our worlds upside down. Play is the mode of work that allows artists to think laterally and follow unusual paths in practice and it is a fundamental element that stretches across this entire research project – as play goes hand in hand with experimentation, with trial and error. In developing these dance writing projects it was necessary to play with dance processes, different materials, collaborators, modes of editing and of folding pages together. This chapter engages most directly with formalized structures of play, in particular with card games and the rules that make up structures of interaction between players. Discussion of structures of interaction between players leads to a consideration of artist book as game and to the ways in which game rules both limit and create potential for movement to emerge within particular conceptual fields. The *Insomnia Poems* project presents dance writing as a form of game, ready to be played by multiple dancers simultaneously in the studio. Whereas the four other projects that make up *the library of moving words* experiment with various book forms (standard, accordion, altered, map), the *Insomnia Poems* instead take a non-bound form in order to allow a group of dancers to work independently, yet in different spaces, with ‘pages’ from the same series, in order to generate improvisational or choreographic structures. The mobility inherent in the cards is central to their design concept.

According to game theorist MacKenzie Wark, the world itself might be considered as one enormous game, of which we have no choice but to participate. “Games are not representations of this world. They are more like allegories of a world made over as gamespace. They encode the abstract principles upon which decisions about the realness of this or that world are now decided” (Wark, 2007, p.20). Wark defines society as a constant game, within which computer games function as pure abstraction of the competitions and cycles of the outside world. *Forced Entertainment’s* performances exemplify the practice of inventing games as a way to distill characters, lived events, emotive states and the mythologies of contemporary culture. Their work offers contemporary examples of performance that blurs the edges between reality and game space and the company’s work is often described as the invention of a very intricate

game, a game in which the world of the city is abstracted into a system that creates itself anew with each performance. This results in the sense that the work is a live event being witnessed, rather than a piece of entertainment being passively observed.

Think of it that every performance is somehow a task or a game... And think that each game has its rules, its strategies, its known moves and also its edges. We talked a lot about 'the edges of the game' the strategies so risky or extreme that they threaten to collapse the game, breaking the mould. We often said that each game (or task) has an inbuilt pull to its own edges. How far (up, down, sideways, backwards) can this thing go? (Etchells, 2002a, para. 6)

The audience are players in the game that is the work, and the way in which the rules of the game are invented is through intense attention to the world itself, to the codes of streets, the media, the pub, the school – and again, all of these environments can be considered specific games, with specific rules and specific definitions of scoring. Another way of contemplating the relation between game and world is seeing the world as being the inventor of the game, and us as being the play pieces, or the dealt cards, as Andrew Quick writes of Forced Entertainment's work: "Language is often revealed as playing a game with those who attempt to master its complex workings" (Quick, 2004, p. 142). So perhaps I could consider myself a card being dealt and played by society and environment. One of the cards in the deck of *Insomnia Poems* contains the text "the world writes the inside of your body with its breath".

Dance makers Simone Forti and Anna Halprin have long histories of working with game structures in dance research and performance. Halprin's influence on Forti through her workshops in the 1950's and 1960s is well documented. The RSVP cycles, for example, Halprin describes as a "method of collective creativity" (Halprin, 1996, p.122). The term RSVP is an acronym that refers to a structured creative process – R for resources, S for scores, V for valuation and P for performance. Halprin describes these terms in an interview with dance therapist Irene Serl. She describes resources as,

The basic materials ... human and physical resources and their motivation and aims ... scores delineate place, time, space and people, as well as sound and other related elements. V stands for valuation, meaning 'the value of the action' or the analysis, appreciation, feedback, value building and decision-making that accompanies the process of creation. P stands for performance, the implementation of the scores, which includes the particular style of the piece. (Halprin, 1996, p.122-123)

The RSVP cycles might be considered rules of play or rules of engagement that organize Halprin's exploratory mode of improvisation-based dance performance. Simone Forti's book *Handbook in Motion* (Forti, 1974) outlines a series of works wherein game rules set out highly specific structures for performance, while also allowing a sense of open-ended experimentation and chance to infuse the work. She describes her piece *Over, Under and Around* for example, as a "rule game" in which "players alternate actions of going over, under and around each other, with visits to bases. A radio, tuned to any station, gives cues for when to change to the next kind of action or to the next base" (Forti, 1974, p.69). Many of Forti's performance works – largely based in art gallery environments rather than traditional dance spaces – draw on structures similar to children's games and draw on a combination of pedestrian action combined with unusual built constructions and repetitive cycles. Forti's game structures have much in common with the work of Fluxus artists from a similar period (the 1950s through to the 1970s). Fluxus artist George Brecht created his event scores as a way to frame ordinary experiences as aesthetic events using many devices drawn from the vernacular of game playing – instruction cards, chance operations, a community of players and a sense of play as a mode where imagination and experimentation is prioritized over function.¹⁵

Brecht's work provides a creative precedent for the *Insomnia Poems*, especially in terms of the notion of scores for creative practice that can easily travel through space while remaining part of an overarching body of work. The genealogy of the event score as a mode of art practice can be traced to John Cage's workshops, of which Brecht was an avid participant. Art theorist Hannah Higgins (Higgins, 2002) traces Brecht's practice of working through event scores as a mode of artistic production that coincided with Allen Kaprow's Happenings. These participatory artistic forms call audiences to actively participate in the becoming of the artwork, emphasizing the art work as a trigger or catalyst that stimulates multiple responses, actions and shifts in attention which themselves constitute the art event.

Art historian Julia Robinson discusses Brecht's event scores as "an affirmation of the powers of the subject to *notice* and *experience* the ever-unfolding syntax of the given...Brecht saw the linguistic score as an ideal *focusing* device and a useful point of departure for the work...to give things a readily perceptible *presentness*" (Robinson, 2005, p. 61, author's emphasis). The *Insomnia Poems* have much in common with Brecht's event scores. Often about the size of a playing card, Brecht's scores present instructions for engaging with an action or mode of perception. Brecht often sent these cards through the mail to his fellow Fluxus artists, many of whom then used the card as the impetus to create an art work or to execute an everyday

¹⁵ Compare, for example, documentation of Forti's work in her book *Handbook in Motion* (Forti, 1974) with documentation of Brecht's work in *George Brecht: events: eine Heterospektive = a heterospective* (Brecht and Robinson, 2005).

gesture with a focused attention, taking actions out of the realm of function and into the realm of the “event”. Brecht’s definition of the term “event” can be seen in the following instruction from his notebook listing, “Ways of treating objects in order to see them...(5) Consider their relation to people involved with them, that is, focus on an event, rather than on an object” (Brecht, cited in Robinson, 2005, p.62).

THREE GAP EVENTS

- Missing-letter sign
- Between two sounds
- Meeting again

(Brecht, cited in Robinson, 2005, p.62)

The above example, sent to artist Ray Johnson in 1961, is an event score that draws the reader into relationship with environmental, aural and social elements of her or his immediate experience. Higgins draws attention to the sensation based tendencies of Fluxus artists, who designed objects for handling and who created food, smell, sound, video, artist book and performance works as well as more traditional forms such as painting and sculpture. She writes that, “the Fluxus experience, in its matter-of-factness, situates people radically within their corporeal, sensory worlds. Such materiality is fundamentally incompatible with a radical division of object and subject, of perceiving and knowing” (Higgins, 2002, p.67). The tendency of Fluxus art works to deliberately spill over boundaries such as that of art and everyday, subject and object, sensory knowledge and conceptual knowledge, artwork and game, and artist and audience, is also highlighted by art theorist Henry Martin, who discusses how the protagonists in Brecht’s events are the potentials for action held within them. Martin cites an example from Brecht’s series *Water Yam*:

THREE AQUEOUS EVENTS

- ice
- water
- steam

(Brecht, cited in Martin, 1978 p.8)

While this event gives little direction for the intended role of the three items, it

creates a relationship between terms that is activated differently by each of its recipients, so that the recipients themselves, in the very act of reading the event score, perform it. Martin draws attention to the multiple potential modes of performance contained in *Three Aqueous Events*:

A work such as this can be performed but it is also a work that is in constant existence no matter what the modality of the forms of human consciousness directed to it. Simply reading the work is a performance of the work, and the same can be said of simply thinking it, and one can think of it as three words, or three sounds, or three states of activity, or three physical entities. It can be oral, aural, tactile, visual, taste or any other kind of experience; it can be of any duration and of any order of dimension. (Martin, 1978, p.10)

Brecht created hundreds of event scores over a period of decades, including his own pack of cards, *Deck*, which had, depending on the game, either no rules or rules that change at the will of the players (Martin, 1978, p.34). The ongoing nature of the event scores is made evident by Brecht's decision to identify them under a single title. Early scores were published in the box-work *Water Yam*, which was a wooden box consisting of a series of white cards, each one with event scores printed in black ink. *The Book of the Tumbler on Fire* consists of an ongoing series of events, many of which take the form of glass fronted display boxes. Brecht divided the events that make up this book into 'chapters', and described the boxes, cards and other objects that made up the work as 'pages.'

Like time itself, the book is a familiar means by which an individual's perspective is ordered and compartmentalized ...this was Brecht's own figurative representation of the idea that very different-seeming things can be all of a piece. (Robinson, 2005, p.144)

As noted above, Brecht was strongly influenced by the work of John Cage, who also worked deeply with scores, language, and the poetics of the ordinary. Cage wrote of his work with language that he wanted to "make something other than language from it" (Cage, cited in Perloff, 2010, para. 5), to treat it as music. Cage discussed this as a "demilitarization of language" (Cage, cited in Perloff 2010, para. 6), and likened this process to working with a haiku poem wherein, "Only the imagination of the reader limits the number of the poem's possible meanings" (Cage, 1998, p.2). A similar concept and poetic is evident in Brecht's event scores, which set out to find gaps and spaces within the habitual world of the every day.

In the *Insomnia Poems* words merge with drawing and performance scores merge with poems, imperative directions merge with abstract affect. In a research meeting my supervisor asks me, “Are these poems or are they scores?” My reply is that they are both. The *Insomnia Poems* are first and foremost cells of movement-initiated writing, created with the intention of being fed back into dancing. Their syntax combines the poetic with the imperative in order to offer multiple trajectories of interpretation from each rectangular card, in a way similar to that of Brecht’s event scores.

6.1 The emergence of a game structure out of duet practice

The *Insomnia Poems* return to extremely specific thematic material, all of which can be traced back to the practice dancer Katherine Tait and I maintained over an eighteen-month workshop series. Our process kept returning to sleeping patterns, because Katherine often doesn’t sleep well, which meant her energy levels were low. During our process, Katherine was consistently monitoring sleep to energy ratios, to ensure she could sustain everything she needed to do in a day. As we began working together it was always a rule that we would focus on ease and sustainability, with an overall sense that we’d work towards acknowledging and undoing ambitions towards producing or performing our work, even though we were both aware of the inevitability that we would at some stage want to take our ideas further towards performance making.

Priorities of Practice

1. *Sustainability*
2. *Release of ambition/ Doing less*
3. *Laziness*
4. *Organic development*
5. *Process orientation/ no expectation of performance outcome*
6. *Intention to follow our shared interest in somatic body-work, Contact Improvisation and to a lesser extent, choreographic phrasing.*

We embraced things that are often considered trivial or in excess of serious dance work: we talked for as long as we felt inclined before starting to move, we’d go to eat instead of beginning dance work, we’d spend the majority of our three hour session swapping massage. We allowed one thing to lead into the next, and resisted fixing our outcomes, even though we both had ideas about developing strands of the work choreographically or performatively. Throughout our conversations I took notes here and there, just noticing what I was noticing. It turned out that these noticings accumulated into one another, often becoming improvisation

frameworks or source material for solos.

The topic of sleep, the effects of lack of sleep, the bodily sense of exhaustion and rest, images around waiting for sleep to arrive, observations from watching each other moving in different states of ease or unease, became a developing theme in our improvisations. The integration of writing into the ongoing workshops gave an increasing sense of structure and a specific tone to our work.

I agreed to perform in an improvisation event hoping that Katherine and I could work together with this material, but Katherine, true to the rules we'd established when we began our work, considered performance to be too big a commitment. We wanted the work to continue its focus on undoing ambition and privileging process over product. So I asked myself; 'How can I translate the logic of our work into a performance environment without having Katherine there with me?'

I turned to our notes, to things we were talking about before we began dancing, responses to bodywork and to watching each other move. The sense of our words being two parts of one stream of work was very evident. Often the experience of moving and the experience of watching movement supported each other via journal pages. The sense of our practitioner knowledge streamed through these notes and I decided I wanted to accentuate this sense of practitioner knowledge by developing our journal writing into a form designed to fold back easily and pragmatically into the studio setting, for further workshopping and performance making. There were three key considerations that were central to the development of the *Insomnia Poems*.

1. Mobility. A primary motivation in creating the *Insomnia Poems* was to make scores for collaborative performance events. In order for the ideas to circulate around a group of dancers or an audience, this artist book could not have a spine holding the pages together. The pages would need to be loose and of a size and paper type that was mobile and durable.
2. Abstraction. I wanted the writing to be evocative, abstract and open to interpretation while potentially focusing dance tasks in a very specific way.
3. Device for Structure. I wanted the writing to be able to be used to structure movement scores for both choreography and improvisation.

Artworks that influenced the development of the *Insomnia Poems* as a deck of cards were George Brecht's event scores (discussed earlier), the manifesto of the site specific performance group Wrights and Sites which utilized the structure of a card deck and a post card collection made by *The Museum of Lost and Found* as part of the Melbourne Festival of the Arts in 2005.

Wrights and Sites are a theatre company who specialize in having audience members experience and interact with their environment in unfamiliar ways, in order to made the city a “real, yet imaginary, space of play” (Wrights and Sites, 2006, p.115). Wrights and Sites created a manifesto of their work in the form of a deck of cards. They write that using a pack of cards as a medium to articulate performance concepts “gave us the structuring guide we needed” (Wrights and Sites, 2006, 121) in a link with game structure as an “active and creative form of artistic manifesto” (Wrights and Sites, 2006, p.121). To find the order of their presentation the members simply had to shuffle the deck. I wanted to take this idea into my own practice, to have a set of cards that I could use to develop the ideas Katherine and I had generated in our studio practice.

By chance one day I had stumbled upon the *Museum of Lost and Found* as part of the Melbourne Festival of the Arts. This exhibition had published a series of postcards in a packet, with each side of each postcard presenting someone’s memory of losing something, and a related image. In teaching choreography to first year students, I often used the cards for dance making, as they gave a tangible starting point, I could give small groups a card each to work off, so students worked on a similar theme in different ways. I decided that if I was to make my own card deck, generating movement from the cards themselves would be step one in a longer process, as the cards could then be used for organizing movements, just as the shuffling of the deck chose the order for Wrights and Sites presentation of their manifesto.

6.2 Card as map: “Space is fashioned in a corporeal vein.” (Bruno, 2002, p.208)

I had a week between deciding to create the cards and performing at an event where I was using them to structure a solo improvisation. I sat with my process notes, underlining and writing out possible combinations of words, images, spatial patterns, remembering as I did so various somatic explorations, duets and solo performances Katherine and I created for each other.

In keeping with the design of the pack of cards, I decided to create a series of images, intending to place an image of us in rehearsal on the reverse side of each card. Rather than have an outsider enter our practice in order to photograph our process, I decided to go with an ‘insiders’ perspective on the movement, so we photographed each other soloing, and then brought the camera into a duet, so that it was like the third dancer in a trio. Katherine and I took turns holding the camera at arms length while dancing in order to take photographs of random, chance moments of our movement from inside the work. The sense of this being a trio came from the constant awareness we needed to have of the placement of the camera and of the dancer holding the camera so that its lens faced us, while continuing dancing.

We took hundreds of digital photos of which about twenty are used in the *Insomnia Poems*. Katherine and I agreed that the resultant photographs present a kind of partial mapping of our duet process. The combination of images that are in focus and those that are out of focus serves well to present the emergent, unfinished nature of our work.

When I made the first set of cards, the images formed one side of the cards while the drawing and word arrangements formed the other. I considered each card a field, a microcosm of the studio space. I imagined a bird's eye view of the studio from above and mapped the directional pathway of specific improvisations. The challenge was to graft textual fragments from our rehearsal process onto the card space in such a way that a residue of the performance work translated into a flat design space. This was an attempt at transferring the spatial, conceptual and affective coordinates of our dance practice into the flat space of card.

Each of the *Insomnia Poems* could be considered a map of an affective, ephemeral, transitory, somatic space, offering players an opening to explore or enter the poetics that our improvisatory workshop processes generated. Charles Bernstein draws on the poetry of Susan Howe to discuss poems as spatial systems for navigating readers through fictional, affective imaginings.

I prefer to imagine poems as spatializations and interiorizations – blueprints of a world I live near to but have yet to occupy fully. Building impossible spaces in which to roam, unhinged from the contingent necessities of durability, poems and the books they make eclipse stasis in their insatiable desire to dwell inside the pleats and folds of language.
(Bernstein, 1999, p.100)

Bernstein's discussion of poetry emphasizes the spatiality and transition evoked in poems. Juliana Bruno's *Atlas of Emotions* (2002) presents a conceptualization of cartographic practice that encompasses emotional, gendered, fictional and affective impressions of space and place. Poems exist in the liminal spaces of language, and themselves might be considered, as Bruno would put it, cartographies of intimate space that "relate affects to place" (Bruno, 2002, p.208). Bruno discusses her analysis of affective, emotional and somatic spaces as a kind of geography – a study of the nature of specific terrain.

This geography is a terrain of "vessels" that is to say, it is a place that both holds and moves. The notion of vessel incorporates a double image: that of

the boat and that of the artery (as in blood vessel); it implies the container of a flux and a system of routing. (Bruno, 2002, p.207)

Juliana Bruno discusses the tender maps of Mademoiselle De Scudery in eighteenth century France as an example of the haptic routes of maps wherein “space is fashioned in a corporeal vein” (Bruno, 2002, p.208).¹⁶ Bruno also writes of the “map as link between people” (Bruno, p.235). The *Insomnia Poems* are simultaneously tender maps and poetic blueprints for creative practice. Hands holding the *Insomnia Poems* transfer movement practices between people; each dancer who plays recreates the world of the work and each card offers a small, partial navigational pathway into a studio process.

Beneath the surface of each card are chambers of memory and affect – processes that underpin the vocabulary and design of each one, and the worlds of memory and interpretation that players bring to their collaboration with the *Insomnia Poems*. Another way of considering the *Insomnia Poems* card deck is as a body of cells or vessels both containing information and assisting actual and conceptual travel. The cards map a studio process – each card might be considered a pathway into the revelation of a place in a specific dance process. Readers of this card deck might literally move as a way of discovering these places, or might simply imagine the responses these cards elicit.

6.3 Rules of Play: Two choreographic experiments with the *Insomnia Poems*

1. Improvisation Performance

November 2007, Soul, Centre of the Body and Mind, Huia Road, Titirangi
8pm

The first game structure I devised for the cards was improvisational. I decided to make the piece for four dancers and audience. The game basically worked around the idea that one dancer (in this case me) would repetitively work through scores related to four cards. For this performance I chose scores that Katherine and I had collaboratively developed for a recent workshop:

1. Trains and Angels
2. Weighting/ Waiting
3. Stop itchy space must scratch/ Momentum chains gasping limb lego /suck in swiftly/ Face distort fall into/ the air catch me I'm not going to

¹⁶ De Scudery's work is a historical precedent for this project in terms of the way in which her *Carte tendre* map intimate and affective spaces from a feminine perspective.

4. The world writes/ the inside of your body/ with its breath

My idea was that these four scores in a repeating cycle would create the 'world' of the piece.

This allowed me to rehearse for the performance, as I could play with different ways of working with each of the scores and modes of transitioning between cards, and with the dynamics of repeating the cycle working with the space. I had a specific sense of the tone and shape of each score, but deliberately retained the improvisational sense of the work, so the vocabulary and dynamic changed constantly.

In rehearsing for the performance I played with generating specific improvisation frameworks and movement pathways for each card. I then worked on different ways of transitioning between the cards, exploring how I would repeat this cycle, taking into account the particularities of the performance space. I set a task for the audience – to pass the cards around and when they came across one that caught their attention, they were to raise the card into the air.

The job of the other three dancers was to take the cards from the audience members and to 'deliver' the information of the card into the performance space. What the dancer considered to be the information of the card was up to them; they were free to interpret the card in any way, and to work in the dance space in whichever way they saw fit – they could choose to work with other dancers or solo, take as long as they felt they needed to, and work with their particular card's text, image or design (or any combination of these). The 'choreography' of this improvisation had three key elements: my solo, which continued in the space throughout, and which was drawn from four pre-chosen cards; the audience passing around the other 48 cards that make up the pack and raising a card whenever they were inclined; and the four dancers who had no rehearsal before the work but were told the rules of the game before we started. In my rehearsals of the score I planned that the movement of other dancers would strongly shape my own movement choices.

When the dancers felt that they had realized the intention of the card in the space, they were then to wait near the audience, for the audience to raise another card into the air. The piece would end when a person designated outside eye called 'end'. For this performance, I explained the rules of play to the dancers, and as they looked through the pack of cards we discussed ways in which they might translate the card into the space, so that they were very clear about their freedom to play, experiment and interpret the cards in their own ways.

It was a fun performance. The audience members were pleased to participate and as we danced

there were hands constantly raising cards in the air. The different dancers tried a wide range of ways of working with the card as a provocation for their collaboration in the improvisation, and I enjoyed working with a group of dancers as well as the audience – there was a strong sense that the work was a game and an experiment and that everyone there was involved.

2. Choreographic Laboratory

Kenneth Myers Centre Dance Studio, Shortland Street, Auckland

May 2008, 1pm

A choreo-lab gave me the opportunity to work for an afternoon with four dancers towards developing methodologies for devising choreography via the *Insomnia Poems*. After passing the cards round, each dancer was asked to choose two cards. For each of the cards, they were to develop a cell of movement. As with the improvisation score that I performed with the cards earlier, the dancers were free to work with any aspect of the card – the design, shapes, text or images in any combination.

I watched as they each created two cells of movement, which could become a repeatable phrase, or a movement score that changed each time. If they were focusing on a score based approach (such as specific points of initiation or imagery) this was to be as clear as possible, with a delineated beginning and end. Cells were to be reasonably short, but most important was that dancers felt that through their dance material they had translated an aspect of their card into the space.

It did not take very long for the dancers to generate movement from their cards. One dancer worked with the image of a shoulder and the word ‘falling’. Another found a specific movement quality translated from the affective resonance of the card as a whole, others created mini-narratives from a story they drew from their cards. The movement they choreographed traveled through a series of images or imagined spaces, all stemming from specific details on the cartographic vessels of the *Insomnia Poems*. The cards traveled with the dancers to corners of the room, and they held the cards in their palms as they began their pieces. They would then put them down on the floor to concentrate on their movement, returning to the cards every now and then.

6.4 Drawing words

Like the *kinesthetic archive* and *immersed* books, handwriting is a key element in the *Insomnia Poems*. As discussed in earlier chapters, handwriting might be considered to bypass (to an extent) the generic functions of the graphics of language; it is a kind of enunciation of the

written that gives visibility to the physical practice through which it materializes.

Word paintings might be considered to push the affects of handwriting to a threshold, through allowing abstract qualities of line, force and rhythm to express concepts that are potential in a sequence of letters. In New Zealand the tradition of word painting forms an important part of the canon of art from the modernist period into today. This tradition also forms an artistic context for the *Insomnia Poems*. As a teenager my bedroom walls wore postcards of the work of Colin McCahon and Ralph Hotere, two very highly regarded New Zealand painters who are well known for their dynamic, evocative textual paintings. In the work of both of these artists, the text is pushed to a threshold of meaning by the painterly abstraction of form, which heightens and extends the stuff of language.

Contemporary New Zealand artist John Reynolds also employs the form of the word painting, using a large number of small canvases with which he creates a kind of inventory of phrases that form a series. Reynolds work *CLOUD* from the exhibition *I Tell You Solemnly* (Reynolds, 2006) for example, was a series of 7073 small square canvases, with each one bearing a word from Harry Orsman's Dictionary of New Zealand English (Orsman, 1997). In *I Tell you Solemnly*, Reynolds took the poem of the same title by Anne Kennedy and presented it in a large-scale installation of small canvases, each one with one to three words written upon it. Each of the canvases makes up a cell that forms the body of the poem as a whole. This installation was hung at the Gus Fisher Gallery (Reynolds, 2007), through which I walk many times a week, as the gallery is located two floors above the dance studio where I teach and rehearse. Writer Andrew Clifford describes the exhibition as comprising "a loose, sprawling grid of 838 individual 100 x 100 mm canvases, mostly black, with silver writing phosphorescently twinkling from the shifting light that filters through the gallery's remarkable glass dome" (Clifford, 2008, p.261). Reynolds' practice of handwriting text onto a series of fragmented canvases that form a cohesive whole allows each canvas to function both independently and collectively. The independence of canvases allows the poetics of specific word combinations to ring with unusual emphases.

The overall form of *I Tell You Solemnly* is intended to resemble a speech bubble emanating from the stairwell like the variety of sounds that routinely waft up from the building's lower levels.
(Clifford, 2008, p.261)

On my way to rehearsals I would enter the site of installation from the highest point of the bubble, and travel down the stairs to its base. Each time I would read the poem/installation anew, as my attention was drawn to particular patterns of sense, sound and spatial

organization. The mobility of space, site, phrasing and words were heightened by the figurations of handwriting. Recalling Bernstein and Bruno I consider this a kind of cellular organization of language, because each of the small canvases might be considered a cell that is part of the larger organism of the artwork, which also functions within the body of the building. In the same way, the *Insomnia Poems* might be considered as a series of cells within the organism of the card game, which also functions within a body of dance practice. The *Insomnia Poems* are cells or vessels, made with the intention of moving a particular body of dance ideas through studio and performance spaces both theatrical and readerly. Like Reynolds' installation works, the *Insomnia Poems* emphasize the relationship between part and whole, cell and body, independent and collective. Dealing out the *Insomnia Poems* in our choreographic lab, four dancers drew three cards each from the deck and disappeared into private spaces of translation, giving bodily readings to the cells of paper, text and image, each card part score, part poem, part document.

When each of the dancers had made their solo, I asked them to work in pairs, to create duets without changing the movement itself, focusing on spacing and timing. From there we made a series of duets and quartets, refining spatial pathways that emerged from the shapes of the movement. As our choreography developed, the cards were a returning point to develop transitions and clarify movement intentions.

At the close of the afternoon we had created a three-minute work that all five of us (the four dancers and myself) were enthusiastic about developing further. It should be noted, however, that the work we made was structured as a set choreography with all phrases and spatial patterns decided in advance. On further reflection, I think development of a workshop structure towards choreographic performance of the *Insomnia Poems* needs to incorporate a game structure in which the dancers make decisions in the moment of performance according to a set of preset rules, so that a key element of performance incorporates active responding to given variables, with less of an emphasis on completion and fixity, and more of an emphasis on following a particular, yet also emergent, logic.

I wrote out a plan for developing the cards in an intensive three-day choreo-lab. Themes thread throughout the *Insomnia Poems* drawn from ongoing conversations, responses to somatic work and improvisation scores. I consider the thematic cohesion of the cards a necessary element if they are going to seed further performance. If this method of movement-initiated writing practice were to be applied by another choreographer in a different setting I would expect that very different themes and atmospheres would be evoked. Specificity and repetition are a pragmatic element of this methodology for movement-initiated writing and within the pack itself unison, motif and variation play a comparable structural role as they do

in the organization of dance phrases. For example, motifs such as “weight and wait”, “drifting open”, “ease, discomfort and rest” and of somatic sensations (“of creases in the cells”, “knee initiates the falling ankle joints to revolve outward”, “where the marrow is making itself still”) recur throughout the pack of cards in different ways, with different turns of phrase, image, and spatial organization.

Combined with dance photographs taken from working with these same phrases as points of initiation, each card presents a glimpse of a process and multiple choices for developing movement ideas. The design of the cards used in the choreographic experiments described above utilized an early version of card-design, quite different from the version re-developed for *the library of moving words*. Rather than having the images on one side of the card and the text on the other, I superimposed the text over the image. Photographs of our dancing became inextricable from written scores and responses that fed movement phrases, extending the possibility that future players of the *Insomnia Poems* may work with their own specific translation of an image / text to form movement material. Like a conventional pack of cards, I decided that the reverse sides of all the cards should be the same. I photographed the sheets inside my bed, lifted to form tent like shapes with the sun streaming through them, to create a kind of abstract texture for the reverse side of the cards. I also made eight “blank” cards – which have this texture on both front and back, with the intention that dancers who draw these cards have the opportunity to either create a transition between two other cards/ movement phrases, to improvise with space or somatic initiation, or to work with the movement created by other dancers around them, rather than initiating movement from a specific intention.

And now I have created the potential for a game. Earlier I was thinking about the writing of Andrew Quick and the notion that ‘play deconstructs’ (Quick, 2004, p.160). I like to imagine a group of dancers dismantling my expectations of what these cards might conjure and working with them in unpredictable ways. After all, isn’t the role of games to create alternative worlds out of the limitations of reality? In digitally formatting the cards I toyed with the opacity of images, allowing the worlds of two visual fields to wash into and shift each other by taking the opacity slider from 100% to 60%. Doing so created a palimpsest, allowed glimpses of practice to come into view.

Can you feel them moving? You can see the momentum of the movement but not the movement itself. But see if you read the words and attend to the blurred edges of the bodies you can sort of feel their dancing washing

through your bones. Can you feel it?

The creation of a game might be considered a form of theorizing or abstracting experience. Perhaps this might be considered a way of condensing experience with a particular focus. The *Insomnia Poems* distilled a long-term dance practice via journaling practices of writing, drawing and photography. The distillation of experience that emerges is one that emphasizes the poetic abstraction of language, somatic sensations of movement, and ongoing relationships between players. This card game is one that presumes the centrality of movement, both ontologically and epistemologically. In the language of the *Insomnia Poems*, movement and physical sensation lead players into interaction and into the world. The cards also propose that players experiment with movement sensations in their own circumstances as they follow poetic scores. Play is central to the creative thinking that brings artistic practice into being and games are a way in which play is structured and focused to create particular imaginative worlds. Forms of engagement with studio practice such as the *Insomnia Poems* work deliberately to blur the edges between experimentation, play, structure, reflection and articulation.

7.0 Conclusion: Proximity and Distance

It's February 2009 and it's summer. She has spent the summer editing chapters, painstakingly rereading, reordering, rephrasing. There are near-completed or completed final proofs of each of her five artist book projects in orderly piles about her office, there are her emails with artist Emma Cowan back to back in her in-box as they detail time-lines and plans for binding.

*She wants to write about so many things, about even now how her writing like this in the second person allows her that tiny bit of distance from her practice, so that she can take up the challenge of practitioner-theoretical work, to simultaneously participate in an artistic practice and analyze that practice. There are difficulties in doing so, the sense that she's battling to outwit something overwhelming (the overwhelming sense of the impossibility of expressing the intricacy of studio practice in academic form) hangs around her. She's thinking about the difference between making creative decisions and writing about why and how one chooses to make particular creative decisions, or writing about the practitioner-theoretical context surrounding specific projects rather than entering the emergent logistics of rehearsals. She's thinking about Italo Calvino's work *On a Winter's Night A Traveller* (Calvino 1998), about the way stories lead us and the way we lead stories, about how stories are pathways into imaginative spaces. She's thinking about dancing stories telling partial versions of states that emerge inside certain worlds of movement.*

The five artist book projects that form *the library of moving words* are all concerned with translating the felt sense of particular dance processes from studio practice to artist books. Rather than documenting the process from an observational perspective, these books focus on the practitioner's sense of feeling, sensing, getting lost, generating structure (both stable and unstable), refining ideas, practicing, rehearsing and performing.

This concluding chapter will draw attention to themes and issues that recur throughout this thesis and that have emerged as specific methodological principles in the formation of movement-initiated writing. As noted in the introductory chapter, a key motivation behind this thesis has been to explore ways in which the logic of dance might be registered in words, pages and books. This is a key issue in the development of practice-led research; how to find an appropriate language to discuss the implications, issues and work inherent in studio practice without compromising the integrity or nature of that practice? This research offers insight

into dance practice by insisting that writing emerge *from* choreographic processes, from the practitioner's perspective.

The field of practice-led research has grown exponentially over the last twenty years, with examples of writing around performance extending articulation of performance-based knowledge in a wide range of contexts. However, there is little writing about *how* leading performer/ writers approach their interactions with pages, for example, where do these practitioners begin in generating a vocabulary to discuss their work via language? Despite the important role that the page plays in feeding the creative and analytical development of dance and performance studies, methodologies for writing about practice from the site of the studio remain largely unexamined.

This study has drawn on a wide range of performance makers and theorists, philosophers, translators, artists, poets and literary theorists in order to generate and contextualize methodologies for movement-initiated writing, a response to the lack identified above. In conclusion I will discuss key issues that emerged in this study under the following headings; 1. Movement-initiated writing 2. Translating Affect 3. Notes on Interweaving Practice-led, Narrative and Poetic Methodologies 4. Implications of Study.

7.1 Movement-initiated writing

As DeLahunta et al (2004) suggest, a choreographer's interaction with pages creates "a catalyst for creation" (p.67) through notation processes such as drawing, noting feedback and engendering a multitude of forms of conceptual development. Writing practices such as free-writing, lists, timed writing, attending to environmental details, experimenting with disjunctive metaphor, transcribing voices, incorporating mobility of authorial voice and experimenting with the relationship between writer and reader are evident in each of the projects that form *the library of moving words*.

These elements of writing practice formed an interplay with modes of dance practice in a series of attempts to allow dance to lead language away from linear structures of documentation and record into a more playful, experimental and mobile state. In this way, movement-initiated writing exists as an event of performance rather than the documentation of a performance. André Lepecki writes that "movement is that which releases writing from any representational hopes, from any illusion of its subserviently serving a fixed 'conscious presence of full intention' of anyone who produces a mark, thus writing as movement performs a displacement, a dislodging with profound political consequences" (Lepecki, 2008, p.2). The methodologies for movement-initiated writing discussed in the previous chapters closely align with Lepecki's discussion of 'writing as movement'. It was through attending to writing as a

form of movement exploration/ dance performance and attending to dancing as a form for 'minorizing' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, 1987) and mobilizing the written that these choreographic projects emerged. Explanation or description are not the aim of the approach to movement-initiated writing proposed in *the library of moving words*. Instead, this terrain of practice emphasizes the rhizomatic proliferation of states that emerge through dance into page-based forms of performance.

7.2 Translating affect

The performances of *the library of moving words* make what might be considered unusual demands on the reader – they are invitations to enter specific worlds of practice – minor worlds in which the majoritarian laws of “proper writing” are rejected in favour of the trajectory of performative writing (Pollock, 1998) or movement writing (Lepecki, 2008) where meanings are inconsistent, changeable, up for grabs and always in the process of unfolding. Just as a work of art continues to unfold through inestimable durations for each person who participates in it, these artist book performances prioritize the unfolding meanings of felt affect over singular or fixed concepts. Focusing on page elements such as spatiality and texture, design and page surface were tactics for allowing the affective grain of the page to emerge. As Quack (2004) writes, “the grain of a Barthesian page can always be felt” (Quack, 2004, p.135). This thesis proposes that these kinesthetic feelings of space, texture and form have an important role to play in allowing traces of dance process to animate page works.

Terence Rosenberg's discussion of poetic methodology outlines a strategy for attending to the grain of an artwork through experimentation with the abstract, tonal potentials of language. According to Rosenberg, poetic disruption of recognized terms create “abnormal paradigms” that resist “the reification of conventional research methodologies, and most especially the requirement to conform to the formalizing protocols of their epistemologies, which in their absolute application are unsympathetic to creative practice” (Rosenberg, 2000, p.10). In this study rearrangement and play with the symbols of letters led to rearrangement and play with the structures and pathways of concepts, which aided the development of choreographic projects. Having a range of stylistic options through which to understand, reflect upon and document my dance practice opened out choreographic/critical choices and diverse frameworks for feedback structures. These practice-led writing methodologies could be considered closed improvisation scores, with the aim being to evoke compositional modes. Writing methodologies created structure for noting dance concepts as they arose and fed them back into choreographic processes.

The processes of writing that translated the affect of dance practice from studio to page that ran through the whole *library of moving words* included: focusing attention on elements of writing that are usually secondary (such as design, cadence, style) and making them primary; emphasizing the feel of language rather than its meaning; focusing on the affect of phrases rather than their progression and focusing on the visual and material elements of the page rather than the sequential progression of a narrative.

Robert Smithson writes in Cornelia Butler's book *Afterimage: Drawing through process* that his "sense of language is that it is matter and not ideas" (Smithson, cited in Butler, 1999, p.41). This focus on the materiality of writing is also found in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*. They write that: "A book has neither an object nor subject; it is made of variously formed matters, and very different dates and speeds. To attribute the book to a subject is to overlook this working of matters, and the exteriority of their relations" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.3). In *the library of moving words*, working with the spatiality of artist book form became a key way in which the materiality of pages engaged directly with choreographic concepts. In the *immersed* project for example, the dance state of feeling as if ideas were opening uncontrollably and perhaps unmanageably, was developed in the artist book where the physical act of opening pages out, without knowing exactly what contents were to come, became a defining design feature. The desire for the *Insomnia Poems* to feed further choreographic practice resulted in their presentation as a pack of cards, and the accordion books of *moving letters* present a dance workshop where performance concepts layered into each other over a series of days. Each of these books was developed through the logic of interaction generated by a particular creative process, wherein the felt state of being *in* a particular practice and negotiating the specific challenges it presented, led the form of the artist book to emerge.

7.3 Notes on interweaving practice-led, narrative and poetic methodologies

In this study narrative research – and the shifts in authorial position that it allows – is central to giving voice from the inside of dance work. My writing position shifted throughout this research from practice-led experimentation, to narrative writing in which I attempted to articulate the methodologies behind specific artist books, to discussion of the relationships between this research and the field of performance studies. In evoking specific creative practices that run throughout this thesis, my intention was to allow readers into the pragmatic, real-world experiences and decisions behind the progression of each project. The challenge in doing so was in choosing which parts of each 'story' to include, and which to exclude.

It is a common adage in storytelling that one doesn't have to tell everything, in fact, it is what one doesn't tell that defines a story. As narratives develop, their logic emerges with them. With an approach very similar to solo improvisation, I focused on letting the narrative I was writing lead me and allowing a single strand or moment in the project flesh out in writing. Instead of insisting on linear progression, I often found that a shift in voice and location was more in tune with my experience of workshopping a dance idea over a period of time. I made a tactical decision to discuss specific moments from a few rehearsals rather than attempting to outline or rationalize every key moment of working in each project. Following an intuitive, poetic, exploratory approach to narrative allowed the experimental nature of practice-led research to continue throughout all elements of this project.

Writing through the projects that underpin *the library of moving words*, I often found my way in through using first person present tense, projecting myself back inside a space, writing from inside the imaginary body of a memory. Equally useful was positioning myself as 'she', or, in writing about the work of another dancer, writing myself in first person present tense; what might I be thinking or sensing if I was inside another's body? These projections of authorial voice worked in two ways, firstly, I found that writing from a different authorial perspective, i.e. turning present into past tense, or writing about myself as 'she' or 'they', reinvigorated my writing when it got stuck, creating a shift in the tone or pathway of a text. Secondly, shifting authorial perspective allowed me to choreograph the relationship between the writing and the reader, moving us closer together or further apart. Experimentation with these levels of engagement opened space for reflexivity and play. In *moving letters*, *Insomnia Poems* and *immersed* my intention was to open a participatory space via the artist book that projected an assumption that readers will translate these ideas into their own sense of dancing.

7.4 Discussion of Key Aims

The key aims of this study were 1) to investigate ways in which movement practices might enable, create and be in direct relationship with page related practices. 2) To discuss specific instances wherein artist books emerge out of dance practice. 3) To interrogate methodologies for employing specific technical/ formal/stylistic approaches to performance writing through five instances of performance making.

Insisting from the outset of this research that movement practices "enable, create and be in direct relationship" with writing practice meant that the intimidating outcome of the Doctoral Thesis and its status within the (traditionally somatophobic) academic institution, could not overwhelm the practice-led intentions of this study. The decision to only present book works

for this study is an unusual one within the tradition of practice-led research in performance studies, as advocates of this research terrain have worked tirelessly to advocate for dance, theatre and art works in their embodied and material forms to be recognized as research. This study, on the other hand, advocates experimental forms of *writing* to be recognized as performance and as outcomes of embodied performance practice. This unusual twist in practice-led dance studies research serves to blur binaries between dance and writing, performance and document. It questions definitions of performance that bind performing to the live moment by claiming that the artist books continue the practice of performance in another form.

Defining the written aspect of this research as emergent from studio logics allowed a shift in my imagining of the thesis document. It gave me a permission as a writer to experiment with ways of working that I might otherwise have considered 'not serious enough' for the academic task at hand. I could embrace writing experiments such as writing from the somatic, writing from a sense of failure, handwriting with a focus on texture rather than meaning, free writing, writing as a performance for an imagined reader. All of these experiments became formative aspects of this thesis document as well important elements of the artist books. The case I present in this thesis is that there are ways for dancers to critically engage with and extend their dance practice in a research context without compromising the creativity and experimentation that drives them to want to make dance.

The artist books manifested by this process articulate a diverse range of ways to bring dancing and writing into reciprocal invention. As I moved between rehearsing and the written extension of rehearsing the physical and conceptual movement between spaces drove this project to constantly generate bodies of studio and written work. Focussing on instances of work rather than on the traditional thesis structure meant that this thesis document diverted from the traditional social sciences writing model. The integration of literature, methodology and analysis within a narrative of a specific studio based project allowed the logics of dance practice to spill through the demands of the thesis document and permeate the language and assumptions held in academic writing.

7.5 Implications of study

This study contributes to the field of practice-led research by offering methodologies for and examples of practitioner-led dance writing that emerged through a wide range of projects and settings: a long-term journaling project, an improvisation workshop with a highly influential practitioner, a site specific dance improvisation performance, a choreographic project mid-process, and a somatics-based duet process. The specificity of these projects gives voice to the

practice-led emergence of ideas, and the various ways that pragmatic decisions, collaborators, performance limitations, chance discoveries, accidents and artistic influences formed the dance works performed by *the library of moving words*. As Melrose (2002) argues, divisions made between theory (traditionally led by writing and reading) and practice (studio-based) are problematic in that separating ‘theory’ from ‘practice’ underestimates the theory-building, analytical and contextual work of performance at the same time as it underestimates the creative, playful, formal and inventive work of writing.

This study has import for the field of practice-led research by providing a series of methodologies for articulating studio-based knowledges in page-based forms. It articulates a range of creative and scholarly possibilities for dance writing processes wherein means of thinking are inseparable from physical engagement. Information on how choreographic processes are developed, remembered and shared is pivotal to practice-led research in dance. This study explicitly outlines, in its articulation of movement-initiated writing, structures for developing, remembering and sharing dance-making processes that could be applied by practice-led researchers from dance and a range of studio based research contexts. In this way the project functions as a moving resource for practice-led researchers.

This study is also relevant to dance education contexts, where dance students are regularly asked to provide critical, analytical and/or descriptive accounts of their rehearsal processes. Processes of movement-initiated writing provide another tool dance students may utilize in reflecting on, developing, extending and sharing knowledges generated by dance making. Movement-initiated writing is a dance writing practice that valorizes and encourages an exploratory, risk taking, playful and interdisciplinary approach which may well appeal to dance students from primary through to tertiary levels. It may be that a kinesthetic approach to writing as presented in this study has real import for students who struggle with the traditional desk bound paradigms of writing. The utilization of movement-initiated writing in educational environments is an area of research that warrants further study. Elements of this research may also be of use to researchers from the fields of dance ethnography, narrative research or somatic education, wherein a research aim is to recognize and articulate the importance of felt, bodily or somatic experiences in a written context.

Conceptualizing writing as entering a state of minorization through dance practice presents a means of resisting binaries between theory and practice. Such a development may also disrupt what Grosz has described as the somatophobia inherent in language (Grosz, 1994), with specific methodologies for creating page works and texts that emerge through attention to sensory, mobile and felt perceptions. Joan Lyons writes that artist books challenge the reader “to a new discourse with the printed page” (1985, p.7). This thesis posits that such new

discourses provide an essential resource for practitioner/writers to articulate studio-based knowledges in page-based forms. Because practice-led discourses lend themselves to emergent research outcomes, it is appropriate that such research draws upon structures for reflection, documentation, articulation and dissemination that allow “a straining of one’s language toward something outside it” (Deleuze, 1995, p.140), as Deleuze writes of the minor literature.

Musician P.J Harvey and dancer Simone Forti write of the difference between movement logics and traditional conceptions of ‘thinking’,

When I watch you move, I can’t think straight. (Harvey, 2000)

I have found that we think differently when we are in motion. And that is the thinking I am trying to access. (Forti, 2007)

Treating writing as a means of feeding experimentation in performance making rather than a means to analyze it, distance oneself from it, document it or critique it allows potential space for pages to fold the logic of a specific studio project into material form. In this way dance practitioner-writers open a door for bent, mobile, non-linear, atmospheric, sensory, spatial and abstract qualities to enter critical sites of performance reflection and development.

This study presents a series of attempts to meet such ‘thinking differently’ with texts, pages and books by bending the ‘rules’ of writing so that writing might morph and mutate *in response* to transitioning, mobile and sensory logics. In this way, the ultimate aim of this study is to present possibilities for dance ideas to form unpredictable openings across disciplines and spaces.

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Appendix One

Writing from The Little peeling Cottage

19 June 07

I:
There's a pressing forward into action/ a pressing forward into
inaction.

“Sure I'm sure”

Like a waiting line
The weight between your head and the roof.

“I like it, but the roof”.

Divided in half.
Leaning
Throat and scapula
Barometer.
Field day

I then ask Val to repeat her improvisation, or to work with some
intention of repeating it- while still remaining open to the piece
changing at any point. This time to work for 5 minutes. Before she
begins I read her my observations.

Watching Val 2: The weight of the chair is mild. Positioning
myself in a slight crevice. Into the backspace
Seasons Greetings. from here I greet the
weighted roof of the edges of this insolent hour of my life.

Watching Val 3: It's interesting how the temperature shifts pore by pore as the woollen
weight of my brown socks rain to the floor. Also I can feel the cold air upon the tense muscles
of my raised throat. The palest parts of me are my hands and feet, hand wraps like a plant.
Hard roof, beams, roof beams bare as muscles immersed in movement.

Camper Rehearsal 21 July 2007-07

Warmup- passive/ active body into Contact Improvisation, and then we decide to work through the sections we have been developing one at a time.

We rehearse at my house as I'm feeling unwell and am not into going to the studio. It works because it gives us a good sense of working in a small space.

From Watching Val

Tipping granules of small memories across a
rain lit something
Open the clavicle from inside the marrow
Waiting, watching the weather
A sudden pressing of lungs
Relationships between trip of the head and the bowls of
knee joints quickly raising. Diagonals

From Watching Val 2

The first thing is the audibility of almost sighing
that amount of pressure that
pushes the limits of breathing.
Leaning. The corner of a room makes the
slightest indentation upon the soft
bone of the skull.
Kick time itself.
Check the engineering of the oxypu
Jail. Continuum of outside into inside
The interlocking design of your hands.

Camper Rehearsal Tuesday 24 July

Warmup is Contact the room is COLD
we start slowly, and are warm quickly, what is it about CI
that brings the body to be warm while releasing and
softening? The partnering of it- the concentration of cells
to be present.

We've decided to go over set material at the beginning of
every rehearsal so it stays fresh- we work over the Line
Dance, touch-response, me being Val's chair (the sense of
sisters and power games) shaking phrases. The work is
becoming much clearer- how different phrases begin and
end- each one with a very particular logic.

To work on *Somatic Architecture* section I set up a very
small space in the studio surrounded by chairs. The score
was, Val enter: Short (3 min) solo connecting with specific
details of small space, her own kinaesthetic sensations. Me
enter: repeat solo
Duet. Repeat structure x 3.

I noticed that the space transformed- or my perception of
it transformed the longer we worked there. Watching Val
made the space come alive. I felt like we were working at
about 5% potential in terms of subtlety and detail.
Working in the actual caravan we'll start to find specific
elements of the space that hold stories, have a particular
kinaesthetic affect on how we move.

My interest in quite a few of the scores I'm working with
here is with clearly refining a performance logic, rather
than necessarily making highly choreographed movement.

The tendency is for us to work with too many elements –
when dueting our sense of momentum overwhelms
integration with specifics of space, when soloing, we're
generating too much material.

Cultivating delicacy, control, patience.

24 July 07

Landscape of Somatic Architecture

Pencil drawn by a children's
illustrator the kind of child's book that
adults like
she's changing her mind, erasing and
redrawing,
soft lead of pencil,
chiaroscuro,
shadows, ordinary things created and
move around
grey scale
specific lines give the piano a
character, objective and particular, a
pencil drawn,
moved to a
chair, a jersey drawn beside it,
the drawing of the work shifts we are
in a sunny studio all afternoon with
this artist as she rearranges
the shading and order of this
little world continuously.

**Sense of being inside the body for
Somatic Architecture**

Opening attention to allow in the shape of
the room.
The corner space where wall meets wall
where bone meets blade and circle and the
square below the ribs, finding it in yourself
translating this space internally and in shape
and tone
Slow. Rest. Wait. Watch.
Slow. Watch. Wait. Rest
Tone of black dance floor of high roof
of red chair. Registers. Design of
chair and of limbs.
Transmutations of support.

Camper Rehearsal Friday 27 July 12.00

1. How we respond to touch
the emotions of that

Warmup, Contact and Bodywork
Talking
Tired and Emotional
Movement, finding edges

Things to work on:

1. Scripts
2. Opening section, cup of tea (insert picture)
Energy, rhythms, give them memories
heaps of questions and no time to speak.
Where we sit. Behaviour. Lamingtons.

3. Working in the caravan.
Soundtrack. Solo, solo, duet structure

Transitions- changing energy.

4. Scripted argument

5. Potential of revealing spaces.

6. Interweaving and overlapping pathways

7. Countdown- hats, lollipops, hooters.

8. Matching aprons?

Friday 3 August
Somatic Architecture

Sound: the hills
Val solo / Alys watch
Alys solo/ Val watch
Duet

Moving into caravan

- 1 Mapping for shape
2. Authentic movement
3. Val: Death cocoons,
Sleeping on our feet

Camper Rehearsal Tuesday 2 August

Experience of audience in Camper: Everybody in their life has an experience where they are forced to share space with another person.

Compromise/ caring/ arguments.

Initiator/ Support

Initiator: Throwing your imagination into a space and responding to it in whatever way

Support: Tone, space, form, contrast, Scale, form energy, combination.

Porousness, controlling the level/ point of response

Writing from Duet Improv. 2 August

Cos we both had different memories of
the same place it was
Just really nice, Just
Out of Auckland, going South

The Castle dairy just past the Bombay
Hills we both have been stopping there
since we were kids,
stopping for a treat on the way
when we first started travelling together
we were 15, Val's Dad's van.

Val's writing
When time slowed past the index
finger of your intention to pass me, I
stood and patted my stomach to indicate
the end. (a little liberation)

Alys's writing
Thinking about camping about how time
passes about boredom and a view out
the window about rain.
Repeating. Compromising. Composing.
Scale. Organisation.

How to make audience more included in the relationship?

We find a physical structure to mirror the score of our improvisation. It begins with me reading writing from last time I watched her dancing. Val sits nestled on the counter of the caravan, her head resting into the cupboard above while she listens to the words that I wrote out of this same score days ago. So the writing too, is a kind of improvisation, occurring only in the moments of her movement.

After I read, Val holds the words in her body, and moves for 3 minutes.
I then read exactly the words I wrote from watching her (she returns again to the counter-top)

Reflecting on Camper 10/8/07

Rehearsing with Val now that we have the campervan in my driveway I love how site specific our work HAS to be, this restricted space. Rehearsing 12 four to five minute long scores, some finely choreographed, others improvisational. Rehearsing the improvised work for performance is a case of carefully refining the logic of each score, developing our awareness of the possibilities within them. Specifying and modulating the tuning of awareness.

*clinging onto a friendship
your represent but never experience*

Imagining myself in the space
before I enter
and then meeting my imagination there
with every cell
ready to begin, to start with the listening of skin.

8/8/07

Peeling Cottage

Visibility of ribs,
fold time over you like a duvet your
chin opens from under
like a sky.
There was a whale named Moby Dick.
How the leg becomes straight, a fence
posting messages by wire.
Bury me at Wounded Knee.
The roof of a pillow
The weight of your head into hands
What is she looking for?
Behind and upside down?
More (something) inversion of this world.

#2

Starting line hop silently. Raise the roof
with sound with friction with the force of
falling sand. Slightly evil toy. Out the
window I can see an Indian dairy with
flowers in the window.

11 August

#1

The way your shoulder blade creases to allow
weight to pour into a draw filled with
the sound of swallowing

Pulling a vehicle with the rope of bones

Nothing is assumed

#2

The **sensation** of wire underneath the floor
and then through the centre of the
cylindrical spine
burn scar on left hand

falling, I can't remember what or which

Friday 7 September

#1

small table long as the lines on the road
holding two moons and taking them like 2
dogs on a walk through the universe

the hardness and softness of
sand with water and without it

Longing for another city

#2

nose breathes another roof a
tent emblazoned with all the
gaps of people who you
once were intimate

You hang onto those gaps like bread
You hold onto those gaps with your toes

#3

with your toes that have only a
few leaves of dirt left upon them

Sat 8 September, Freyberg Square

#1

Soft top of hair brushes
every smooth lining of time

Your ear is a device for
listening, hearing colours and
all unexpected shapes

#2

Circles that find room inside every
Space you walk through

#1

Shoulder turns the engine of the
heart sideways so the elbow
is clear as glass you reach
into your family tree and
find an anatomy of window cleaners.
Soft top of fore-arm
Wrench the knots out of the branches

#2

Falling out the smallest spaces
where the toes can find the
sun You are an
archway.

An archway with eyes that
can blink

Shadows of jumping spiders blinking with you

Mission Bay 22 September

A line at the tide
where the ocean
sings to every table of teacups the
shells will fit in to

stars at high tide at night time

#2

The lengths of time when you are
travelling. The surfaces of your feet
pour towards blue, leaning and

orange lifesavers

1#

Looking with crashing
loads of onions and garlic

The Munch Bunch have run
away to your bach on

Rangitoto and your boat
is floating as far

away as yesterday

#2

washed upwards
waves that roll backwards
you've found the longest story
it's edges eaten by light

How far past the edges of this
square can your gaze rest
upon the sensations of fingertips

When I was a snail I only
ate pollen and I disappeared
up the wall of an invisibly
time eaten house

Tempo Festival, 30 Sept– 6 Oct

#1

If I had 15 cervical vertebrae
If I had toes that were made as stilts
Once I opened a door knob to find
voices as unexpected as ghosts
of Aunts calling back to us by
lightbulbs, the lightbulb of my
ankle only half glows, glows
quickly

#2

you
are
as
long
as
string
and
I
am
a
chalk
marker
for
traffic
left
in
the
rain
on
the
road,
you
accidentally
dropped
me
with
your
toes
I
think
your
feet
are
the
beaming
sun
you
raise
the
roof
with
your
weighted
risk,
and
then
you
fall
out
the
top
of
your
fingertips

#1

There are biscuits crumbling in my limbs
everything is tightening and creasing
my neck tastes like time and
my back is albatross
 match stick
 crab in handstand

Plates empty as days
holding them tightly

#2

a floral arrangement
that begins
with the bones
of your feet

a wilderness arranging itself
in parallel and
parallel
and taller
parallel
endings

#1

across a continuum
of textured surfaces
each one a specific touch
released from the refrigerator
where memory, fiction and imagination meet

#2

First you snugly approach

neck leads the downward
charge of
lemming like

the hills are evaporating
off the sides of
your throat

tucked nicely

Spring Fling
Sunday October 13

#1

The heat of her face makes every
see through surface gauzy
sprinkler half working
a typewriter writing
as wonkily as upside
down ribbons of chocolate

#2

The elbows clasp
A link in a necklace
The centre is tipped
Hourglass turning and streams of
Silver dust falling as
Stars do, the softness of tall
Thinking, grip the lino roof and
Pivot, arm of a clock,
Towards an ending