

# Affect=intensity->expression

Choreography as a kind of a feeling

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*o10. Choreography: Eeva Juutinen. Photograph: Katri Naukkarinen*

**ABSTRACT****DATE:**

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The final project can be published online. This permission is granted for an unlimited duration.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	The abstract of the final project can be published online. This permission is granted for an unlimited duration.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

English:

My artistic thesis work *oIO* will work as a base for my written thesis. *oIO* works also as an artistic frame for this writing which defines its topics. This thesis will open my current perspectives to choreography from the viewpoints of body, movement and matter as affect=intensity->expression and feeling-performativity. It includes my conceptual interests towards intimacy and intensity. Feeling is seen as feeling-like or kind of a feeling that is impersonal and performative. Performativity is an area of my work that we tried to gain virtuosity and understanding with the dancers in *oIO*. Affect-intensity-expression summons my approach towards choreography, movement and body/matter. It is an approach that stems from an interest towards difference. In the end I will write about movement and mundane aesthetics and transformation that I have been working with in *oIO*. Throughout the writing the perspective of poem and poetic is present here and there as it was one aspect of *oIO*. I will write about writing as a main procedure in relation to choreographing set movement material that we explored in *oIO* and that I have been carrying in my work during the studies in the Theatre Academy. This thesis gives condensed version of the process of making *oIO* and the problems and questions that appeared in the process and that we worked with the working group and learned from. In general I move on very practical and base levels of how I approach choreography, trying to carry practise and theory parallel through out the whole thesis. I write from the perspective of 'how do I work and think' more than from about what do I do and think.

Suomeksi:

Taiteellinen opinnäyte työni *oIO* toimii pohjana kirjalliselle opinnäytteelleni. *oIO* toimii myös tämän kirjallisen thesiksen taiteellisena rajauksena ja määrittää sen aiheet. Tämä thesis avaa nykyistä näkökulmiani koreografiaan kehon, liikkeen ja materian perspektiiveistä affect=intensity->expression ja feeling-performativity konseptien kautta. Se sisältää kiinnostukseni intiimiyttä ja intensiteettiä kohtaan konsepteina. Feeling (tuntemus) nähdään tuntemuksen kaltaisena tai tuntemuksen suuntaisena, joka on persoonaton ja performatiivinen. Performatiivisuus on alue jolla yritimme kehittää virtuoottisuutta ja ymmärrystä kun harjoittelimme tanssijoiden kanssa teosta *oIO*. Affect=intensity->expression kondensoi lähtökohtani koreografiaan, kehoon/materiaan ja liikkeeseen tällä hetkellä. Se on näkökulma joka tukee kiinnostusta erilaisuutta kohtaan. Lopussa kirjoitan myös liikkeestä ja arkisuuden estetiikasta ja transformaatiosta, jota tutkin *oIO*:ssa. Koko kirjallisen thesiksen läpi kuljetan teemoja poetiikka ja runous siellä täällä sillä ne olivat yksi *oIO*:n lähtökohdista. Kirjoitan myös kirjoittamisesta pääasiallisena koreografisena menetelmänä, jota käytin *oIO*:ssa sekä olen kuljettanut mukana opintoissa Teatterikorkeakoulussa. Kirjallinen thesis antaa tiivistetyn version *oIO*:n luomisprosessista ja niistä problematiikoista ja kysymyksistä jotka nousivat prosessissa ja joita työstimme työryhmän kanssa ja joista opimme. Kirjoitan työstäni ja lähestymistavoistani koreografiaan käytännön tasolla, yrittäen kuljettaa teoriaa ja praktiikkaa yhdessä mukana koko opinnäytteen ajan. Kirjoitan enemmän perspektiivistä 'miten työskentelen ja ajattelen' sen sijaan että mitä teen ja ajattelen.

**ENTER KEYWORDS HERE**

Affect Intensity Intimacy Expression Feeling Performativity Body Matter Movement Mundane Aesthetic Poetry Writing Choreography  
Boredom Anger Tension Eruption Language Poetic Virtuosity Amateurism Doubling Context Subjectivity Objectivity Potentiality Touch

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

I am writing this thesis in a pre set form. This thesis template was given to me and I am following the instructions in font, font size, colour, page setting, distances between the lines and in the sides of pages. I am adjusting, orientating and adapting my writing to this given form, to this given context. By doing this I am already been suggested that what I write is more important than how I write it. In choreography I think the other way, that how is more important than, or at least as important as, what. In this thesis I will write a lot from the perspective of ‘about’ in terms of choreography. That again is something that I don’t do so much whilst choreographing. I don’t describe choreographies of being about this or that but try to find other ways to define and describe what I do. It comes with interest towards difference and a desire to avoid representation as the main logic and motivator when working with body and movement. It also comes with my interest to poems as philosopher Jaques Derrida writes that the question ‘what is...?’ laments the disappearance of the poem. By announcing that which is just as it is, a question salutes the birth of prose (Derrida 1988, 9).

I will try to write this text also in the area of how to write although it feels limited what I can do. Using writing in choreographing is my main practise and interest and writing also as a side practise to go together whilst choreographing. I will write about writing and its relationship to choreographing in this text. British poet J. H. Prynne writes in his essay *Poetic thought* that language is produced by meaning habits but resists definitive assignments of motive and desire (Prynne 2010, 598-599.). It implies that we produce habits and meaning continuously in any case but we can control or regulate the expression, visibility and existence of our motives and desires. For me it makes language sound potentially performative. Performativity is one important aspect of my work that I will write about in this thesis, together with feeling.

I have started to write this thesis again already twice. In both times I left behind almost everything that I had written and started again. During the writing processes I have got insights in how I write and how I would like to write. I have got closer and closer to what I actually do. The insights came from the act of writing. It included assumptions of how this thesis should be written and realisation that I don’t need to follow those ideas



always. During writing this latest version I have tried to pay attention to the act of writing and my body when I write which has created different rhythms and contexts for my writing. Reflecting on what we do, how we do it and why we do it is important. What my doing as a choreographer does or is? What is it that I do when I create? How does it speak back? For me choreography is doing and acting but also reflecting about the doing and acting in multiple ways. I can thrive on what I have and can do and I can also stop to think and reflect on that doing, which can change the doing.

Writer, artist and teacher Jenn Joy writes in her book *The Choreographic* that to engage choreographically is to position oneself in relation to another (Joy 2014, 1). Although she might mean it more like of another body or another entity I refer to it now in relation to this thesis writing. I am introducing in this text some concepts and areas that relate to choreography, matter, movement and body. I do it because those are all areas that I think and focus on and that affect my creating. What I am interested, as Joy also mentioned, is the relations between these concepts. The relation of affect to body, or feeling to performativity and so on. My way of working at the moment focuses in connections, activities and sensibilities between these concepts, rather than focusing in only one of them. I believe meaning emerges through these connections. It stems from a desire to see the bigger image and to see the whole rather than fragments. It is a logic that goes against compartementalising information into boxes and instead trying to see everything as connected to everything else. I also use many references and combine references freely. Through that I want to say that there is nothing wrong in using references when you actually mention the references. I don't strive to call this text mine only, I think it is interesting to find ways to use and combine references and it doesn't take away any value of the work. Combining references in an interesting way is also a creative skill. Because of the limited amount of space in this thesis I will sometimes only refer to some references shortly. It feels worth to mention. I have tried to carry my practical work and refer to it through out the whole thesis, also in more theoretical parts of it. The challenge of writing this thesis has been to condense my work into this given space which has also required to leave some important parts (of *oIO*) out of this writing.

The subtitle of this text 'Choreography as a kind of a feeling' relates to interest in seeing choreographic as something that operates as a feeling like; kind of impersonal

and performative way of thinking about feeling. I include the words impersonal and performative in order to give direction to otherwise common word of feeling. I will explain each word more in detail during this thesis. The headline Affect=intensity->expression comes from the focus I have had during my studies in the Theatre Academy. I have been focusing to how I choreograph movement, matter and/or bodies. Although reading and being interested in many things, what I will be doing in the end is creating composition with bodies and/or movement. So I tried to go deeply into that. The whole title also makes me laugh: don't ever underestimate the power of laughter.

Composition is an important part of my work. As in the beginning of studies it felt more of a word that relates only to procedures and methods without meaning. In the book *Practising Composition: Making Practise*, edited by Kirsi Monni and Ric Allsop, Monni mentions in a conversation with Victoria Perez Royo that composition could mean research into the premises of the composing mind in question (Monni & Allsop 2011-2013, 92). This means that potentially anything that happens anywhere and all the time is already composition. It makes me interested to look at the world and my own body now as composition that is composed from different components (chosen and not chosen). It gives space to see composition as multilayered process that operates also on the levels of perception, feeling, affect and body. How much of who I am, of how I feel, think and behave affects to the way I compose in choreography? Can these be kept separate? I think it is important to make separation in how we apply these processes in choreographic work and every day life. Things that I research in choreography or use in composition are not usable in my normal social interactions in a similar way. This comes with interest towards ethics. I don't use choreography to gain personal power over others. However I feel that practising somekind of ability for transformability also in my everyday life and body supports my choreographic practise. So I can't completely separate them either. In this thesis, as I had to limit the amount of things I write about, I don't write much about composition. It is still very important part of my work and that's why worth mentioning. I had a desire to write about body/matter and movement but as I have been writing I have realised the importance of composition. Leaving composition out leaves a gap to the wholeness of this thesis text but was necessary because of limited amount of space. It enabled to write about movement and mundane aesthetics.

My choreographic interest is to use writing in choreographing and to develop writing practises whilst choreographing. I have been interested in the question of how does body receive information in different environments? This has been the main question guiding the writings that I have done. This has lead my interest to concepts of intensity and intimacy in relation to connections between body and environment. This question came from a desire to prove the process of receiving as active instead of passive and to see whether that could be interesting in choreographic writing. It also touches both spectators and performers of the work, and contexts outside performance. Maurice Merleau-Ponty says that the theory of the body is already a theory of perception (Noe 2004, 1). Working with moving and speaking body has also been one of my interests. Eszter Salmons *Dance for Nothing* (2010) has been one of my inspirations in it.

Philosopher Tristan Garcia in his book *Form and Object: A Treatise on things* often mentions: ‘price to pay’. Non-comprehension is a price to pay for being and non-being is a price to pay for comprehending (Garcia 2010, 127). When I write something, as if I know, recognise and name something, do I also kind of kill it in some way? How do these processes operate and can they be altered? Jacques Derrida mentions this in his book *The Animal that therefore I am*: whoever receives a name feels like mortal or dying, precisely because the name seeks to save him, to call him and thus assure his survival (Derrida 2008: 20). I think about this in relation to making decisions by setting movement material, as I am especially interested to choreograph set movement. How to do it in a way that the movement doesn’t die? This questioning and problem also lead me to work with the notions of aliveness and mortality of the body: a question which arised during the creation of my artistic thesis work *oIO*. In this thesis writing I will write mainly about *oIO*, and exclude other works that I did in Theatre Academy. This is because of limited space I have for writing this thesis. I will try to connect the themes I introduce into the process and performance of *oIO* through out the whole writing.

## 1.1. Context

I use few different references in this text. The references and influences that I have and include are part of the context of this text. In the areas of body and affect I am referencing Brian Massumi and Baruch Spinoza. I also use references from a performance and choreography studies such as Andre Lepecki and Bojana Cvejic. I will

quote Andrew Hewitt in terms of social choreography. In relation to performativity I quote Karen Barad from her posthuman performativity. I reference shortly poet Rainer Maria Rilke whilst he writes about *The Open* and think about it in relation existence. Also Miika Luotos article on poetics and ontology is referenced when I write about those same topics. I mention Adam Phillips and Elina Reenkola when speaking from the perspective of psychoanalysis in my work. In relation to feeling I will quote Erin Manning and Alfred North Whitehead. I will also refer to some art works from fields of choreography and visual arts. These include works of Mette Ingvartsen and Lee Ufan.

I have been researching contexts and working conditions as part of the created work during my studies in the Theatre academy. For me context equals with the word environment, both internal and external environment. Internal context could be called also psychological context which includes knowledge, assumptions and psychological processes of people in a communication situation. External context could be seen as environmental context which consists of elements that surround the observed person/thing. These examples of psychological and environmental context are taken from Simo Kellokumpus PhD (2019) *Choreography as a reading practise* in which he explains some ways to define the word context that are constructed by Urho Kovala. He gives altogether nine ways to define the word in order to show that it can be seen in many ways. Another definition he wrote that I also felt connection to is intertextual context in which context is formed from relations between different elements. Kellokumpu explains that the word context comes from the Latin word *con* (=together) and *texere* (=to weave) which when to put together form *contexere* (to interweave). So context can be internal, external or relational (and much more). These three ways I felt most connected in terms of choreography. There is also ways of defining context in terms of chosen text or texts, which can be relevant too. Even a discourse (or discourses) can interestingly be a context. I am interested in context in my choreographic work in order to show and explore that context has agency of its own. I have interest to see what kind of agency and affective and other relations and connections it forms and is part of in relation to making and performing body-involving performances and choreography. I believe that everything always exists in some kind of context(s) and so everything is interconnected continuously in different levels. What kind of understanding or knowledge this creates in relation to body and choreography?

## 2. ARTISTIC WORK

### 2.1. Working group and working conditions in *o/o*

I choreographed my artistic thesis work *o/o* for two dancers Maria Mäkelä and Terhi Hartikainen. They were both Master students in dance performance. I worked with Maria also on another project in the spring 2020 which we had to do online as the school was closed because of the corona situation. I asked Terhi after we did one two weeks long voluntary course together in the autumn of 2020. I asked Helka Saariniemi to be a scenographer. I had worked with her in the previous ACO process in autumn 2020 and that had gone well. She was also interested to do costume design. She had a time issue and could not be involved to the process much in August as she had another project then. I appreciated that she was much more flexible in the end with her schedule than she promised in the beginning and of her enthusiasm to get the work done. Sound designer was Tony Sikström. I didn't know him before at all. I sent an open message to all sound design students saying that I was looking for a designer. He was the only one that replied to me. Light designer was Vilma Vantola. I contacted few female light designers I knew that were students in Theatre Academy but they all had other projects during the time I had my thesis. I was also asking people quite late, this probably being one reason too. There was a possibility to work with nudity so I thought intuitively that female light designer would be good. Vilma had just graduated and I would need to use most of my budget to hire her. I had seen one project where she did the lights and thought that the lights were good in it. After we had met we figured out that she could work part-time only with the money that was available to pay her. It made me hesitate a bit because I didn't have experience of a situation where only one designer works part-time. She would be also the only one who gets paid for being in the work. I think at that point could have been wiser to send an open message to all light design students and see if I could have founded someone to be there full-time in the rehearsals. I hired her as I got a bit extra budget from my program. I think that her being the only one working part time but being present during the whole period can be stressful for the designer and for me as well and I wouldn't make that choice now. Everyone should be equally present: that is what I learned. I was pleased to all the design lights, sound, costume and scenography in the actual work though. So the end results were still good.

The rehearsal period was two weeks in April (just me and the dancers) in normal rehearsal studio. Then we had nine days in June. This was because one of the dancers had other work in June for the weeks we had the theatre space. Then we had four weeks in August and on the fourth weeks Friday we had premiere. It had both good and bad sides of spreading the rehearsal period widely. Sometimes when I feel we were in a good flow of rehearsing we had to stop because of the arrangements of having rehearsals in periods. When I felt there was something interesting coming up in the rehearsals I would have wanted to continue with it straight away. During these empty periods I sometimes ended up overthinking and changing things that were in good flow already before. It kind of broke the natural continuation of the process. The times between were between 1-2 months. On the other hand it also allowed for me to spend some more time doing research and reflection during those breaks, which was also good. I had time to think parts, which were unclear. It made the whole rehearsal period spread into time period of five months, instead of the normal month and a half for a thesis work like this. I ended up in this arrangement, as there were not enough time slots from spring 2021 for all people in my class. The producer said that if I would do it over the summer I could have some extra time in the space (two weeks). It was also good in that sense that the school was quieter and emptier on those months, which created nice atmosphere and concentration for working. It also allowed some longer processes like drying of plants in press over the summer holiday weeks which wouldn't have been possible in a shorter process. We rehearsed from ten to five and had one-hour lunch break and some small breaks. I never asked for extra work hours to the ones that we agreed in the beginning. We also decreased the hours from the will of the dancers.

### **2.1.1. First condition for production and poetic**

The word poetic stems from the word poiesis which is latin and means both production and poetry. For two millenia, poetics served to name the primary knowledge of art. Only towards the end of the eighteenth century the name poetics was replaced by aesthetics. This showed that the dominant perspective on art had changed from the production of the work to its reception (Luoto in Allsop & Monni, 34-35). I find it important in art to challenge the end-result-only oriented way of thinking and to find meaning and effect in the process and production. Poetics entails focusing also to the conditions, contexts, structures and production models of the art work.

In *o/O* the process started already in the January of 2020. I then started to dry plants and flowers in my own home in Hakaniemi. I would buy flowers or pick plants in about every two weeks during one year and a half to do this. I thought that this would be the first condition of production in the work and that it would also be the one which takes the most time. The act and gesture of doing it, hanging something and then storing it into a boxes as well as watching the plants dry was part of it. It took time to dry the plants and the change was visible in them only over time. I thought to let this action be continuous and affect (consciously and unconsciously) the rehearsing. I think it brought in the notion of being, feeling and boredom. Doing it over and over again took time and was repetitive and I could only see the results happening over days, not by just staring at the plants continuously without a break. So the interest to gaze and difference also emerged partly from there. I thought that this activity would give a space and area to think about the upcoming work without the need to rush through the thinking process. It was a way for me to process and accept death. My mother had died two months before I started this practise. The practise emerged spontaneously and also helped me to process death. So the rehearsal process was a continuation of this long process of drying. The fact that I was drying the plants in my home was important. It made me think about the everyday in relation to art. Doing it repetitively over a long period of time allowed the experience of it to deepen and to reflect on it in different levels in my everyday environment. I was doing the work with plants/flowers. The flowers were the best collaborators and I want to keep working with them in the future. They were my companions whose presence and being soaked into me during the time I was drying them. I wanted to keep them when they dried and to not throw them away.

## 2.2. Choreographic questions and practises in *o/O*

As a starting point for the process I had three questions. How does body receive information in different environments? How does difference emerge? How to not to perform? These questions were based on my earlier interests in the process of receiving information, difference, intensity and intimacy. It could have been easier to only focus to one of these questions. It also produced interesting and new frictions, combinations and relationalities to have them all. I had two base practises that were there to start the process. These two base practices were also the physical research practices for this

work. One was combining the two first questions. In it the dancers try to resist impulses to move. I didn't give any directions of how to do it but let them find their own ways. The task is to think about what intensity means in the level of the body and in relation to natural habit of starting to move. How and why do we start to move or the movement starts? I was interested on the experience of doing it in terms of how it affects the mental state of the dancers as well as how can it manifest in movement/stillness. I was curious whether it could result in creating some kind of intelligence and logic in relation habits, limitations and restrictions of the body. So although the task was simple the idea was to develop it along the way by reflecting on the experiences of the dancers and analyzing them as well as analyzing the physical articulations of the body. We analyzed the feelings and physicalities that the different ways of doing this practice resulted in. The task was to do the impulse of starting movement differently and so also resist the naturally emerging impulse to move, and to observe what the impulses are and how to resist them and what does that create in the movement/stillness and meaning. We spoke about and analysed the ways that they were doing this task. It gave space for the dancers to reflect it from their position as performers and for me from the perspective of choreographer. I was interested to think that why does movement emerge and what makes it happen. The task was asking for awareness for the moment before the impulse arrives. So it asks for alertness that produces different kind of feelings also. I found it interesting to ask for this readiness before the moment. It created intensity and awareness of the habits and reasons that we have when we start to move in affective level. Both of the dancers developed different ways of doing this that we then continued working as separate things. However this was something very difficult to set as set movement and choreography. The ways of resistance were often related to energy, dynamic, scale and tension. They produced interesting rhythmicity and surprising moments. The form that they took was often surprising. But it was difficult to move from this perspective towards setting movement. In the end there was a short moment in the work where they did it spontaneously with other tasks layered at the same time. This practice manifested more in other areas of choreographing like in relation to time, rhythm and temporalities of the movement. I developed logic in relation to this practice and time that I used in choreographing set movement. I felt the movement task wasn't specific enough to create form for the movement. It was still an interesting experiment and part of the research on how and why to choreograph set movement material.



The other task was a solo practice on intimacy, which we all did one by one whilst the two others were spectators. It was a kind of walk and talk situation where the performer had different tasks to do and they can choose when and how they do them during the time. It was performed naked except that the performer has shoes on. The audience is clothed normally and is in traditional frontal setting. After each round of doing it dancers and me would write down their experiences in a free/poetic way about doing and seeing someone doing this exercise. We didn't use this practise in the end as an aesthetic, performative or movement based form. It affected to the performativity of the dancers also by letting us discuss and reflect performativity together through it. In relation to this practice one of the main task was to keep an eye contact to the audience all the time. It was the only task in the practice that was not allowed to be broken. It made us research the eyes, act of looking and being looked at and the connections between those. From this practice watching and looking stayed in the actual work. In *o/o* there were parts where the dancers were only looking at the audience. We worked with the eyes and ways of watching, as it seemed to create meanings in relation to otherwise quite set movement material. When watching or having an eye contact or even directing your eyes towards something a connection is straight away formed. Looking is like one way of communicating. Because of the texts that we wrote in relation to this practice it ended up being one of the two ways we produced text *o/o*.

### 2.3. References and methods

Drying the plants and flowers in the beginning of the process made me think about water as a life giver, which eventually made me read some books about it. I didn't want to make work about death. These references helped me to create some kind of logic from water and liquidity that became part of the work. I was reading *Sensitive Chaos: The Creation of Flowing Forms in Water and Air* by Theodor Schwenk and *The Fourth Phase of Water: Beyond Solid, Liquid, Vapor* by Gerald H. Pollack. These were from a reading list I got from Satu Palokangas when I took part to ecosomatics class that she taught in the Theatre Academy. Reading these books made me focus in to links between water and time and want to change the way they occur naturally. The other base practice on resistance also combined in to this water-time logic. I started to change the timings in different moments of moving by relating time with different forms of water (solid,

liquid, smoke). It manifested as for example stopping the movement in a moment it wouldn't usually stop or dropping something that would usually be held (change in relation to naturality of gravity). I thought about the water's heaviness and relationship to gravity and of how forcefully it seeks support from the ground. Adding the suddenness of feeling of heaviness came from water. The flow and fluid like nature of water made me want to change it by slowing it down, sometimes consciously deciding something is slow. Using repetition also broke the flow and I developed a method of doubling everything (everything happens twice but with variation) as another logic of resisting the flow. Thinking about water, time and resistance made me focus on the expectedness of unfolding of movement in terms of dynamics, qualities, intentions and temporalities, beginnings/ends. It also made me think about the relationship between body and gravity. All these relations were challenged from their natural occurrence.

Another practise that emerged during the process was called *katkos* (in English break) where we were trying to make the time disappear from the body and by doing that create a break to the continuation of the character that body had naturally become. I thought that the more body has time in it the more it has a character in it. So in order to make a difference in time and in character we tried to stop them from the body. This was a task that required attention and creativity from dancers. It was interesting to see how they solved and started to create physicality around it. In the end setting movement based on this task ended up being difficult. In the end I set something, which was mostly turning or rolling and ways of going to the floor. There was also a very little part in the performance where they did it spontaneously layered together with the bodily resistance practise. The task started to produce very spatial solutions in dancers and the attention towards space was very clear. That was the guide for me to set movement based on it: the set choreographed material had clear relation to space. It is interesting that by focusing to time or focusing to eliminate time something spatial appears.

## 2.4. About choreographing

In the beginning of the process my aims and questions about choreographing were clear. How to choreograph set movement material? How does choreographing set movement material affect the way body appears and its meaning? How to choreograph set movement material in a way that the doing of it feels interesting artistically? How to use

writing in creating set movement material? These questions raised notions of body looking dead or alive, empty or full, meaningless or meaningful. I was interested of the space of possible meaning(s) in relation to the material that was set: does it leave space for many meanings or does it give one clear meaning or does it produce multiple and simultaneous meanings? How much information the choreographed material includes or gives out? Now reflecting afterwards I have been thinking about the amount of ways that I used to set movement in this work. I think writing and the using and editing of writing in choreographing was some kind of common and connective factor in the ways of choreographing. Also the different ways used to choreograph (set movement material) form relations and meanings between themselves. Their appearances affected the structure and dramaturgy of the work and the body.

Thinking about these questions and the issues they brought up made me think again about the question I was also working with: how does body receive information? This was interesting from the point of view of the dancer, choreographer and audience (in relation to choreographed set movement material). It was interesting to give space to see how the dancers were taking in the instructions and ideas I proposed, and let that also affect the process of choreographing. I was observing on how I took information from the dancers in the moments of choreographing, how I experienced their ways of interpreting instructions and how I could find potential from there. I was also experiencing everything from the viewpoint of potential audience member, as how do I receive this inside a performance. All these viewpoints were present whilst choreographing and they were also points of reflection for me. Before the studies in the Theatre Academy my experience was strongly rooted in the experience of moving. I often danced in my own choreographies. I didn't dance in *o/O* and that gave me more space to process the experience of receiving the work, from the perspective of an audience. I have become sharper in processing the experience of the work and trying to pay attention to the details of it. It has been interesting, thoughtful and rewarding.

#### 2.4.1. Writing and choreographing in *o/O*

In *o/O* we used language in the process of choreographing. The focus and question was: how to use language/text and writing of text in the process of creating set choreographed movement material. We also invented a way of writing that was

connected to one of the base practises that we did and another way of writing connected to the dried plants. I was instructing, editing and inventing the ways and means for the writing but we wrote together with the dancers. In some cases we did writings as a whole working groups and I edited the texts together, leaving out bits and changing the order and appearance of the language. One way of writing was in relation to dried plants and happened by watching and sensing them (they had a very strong smell too) in silence. It often made us laugh also as there was something romantic, erotic and symbolic about the plants that also suggested humour. The other way of writing was in relation to the base practise on intimacy. We would write straight after doing or witnessing it and reflect on it from a bodily perspective of being a performer or spectator. In general these both practises of writing were stemming from the question: how does the body receive information? It stems from an interest to see the filtering and processing of information from dancers, designers and my body as part of perceptive layers of the body. I encouraged the form to be open, it doesn't need to make sense.

When working with these writings that we had done and I had edited I approached them from the perspective of pauses and resonances as well as breathing and objects. Breathing was a connective element between bodily movement and bodily speaking. I asked the dancers to create breathing patterns in relation to these texts. They read the texts with the breathing patterns. We spoke about the experiences of doing this and analysed it. Then I asked them to create few pauses to these texts and patterns. We were then speaking about their choices of where they put the pauses in their texts. We were thinking about what putting a pause to that part of the text did for it. From these experienced we extracted some resonances and words that each one of them had different. Third layer in working with the text came from the task where I asked them to pick one object from the scenography department that somehow catches the essence of the text. Then they were exploring these objects physically in improvisations. After these explorations we spoke and analysed again the experiences of doing it and thought together what from it stayed resonating bodily and what kind of observations they had had. Based on these three layers of working with the text I chose some words for both of them, which had both shared and different ones between them, from which I asked to improvise in a slow speed. The base 'aesthetic' for all these explorations was slow and 'strange' everyday/mundane corporeality. These improvisations were interesting and it

was easy for me to make choices and to choreograph set movement material. These texts that we used in these phrases were from the ones the dancers wrote after doing or witnessing one of the base practises. So there were three ways of approaching the text: as object/matter, in body (breathing) and as resonances in stillness inside itself (pauses).

Another way that we used text in choreographing was in relation to early versions of the texts that we did together whilst watching and sensing the dried plants and flowers I had been drying. I decided to work with touch as the dried plants were very tactile. We also decided to work with nudity in relation to this material as it highlighted the tactility. The plants produced interesting sounds of rustling. The sound of the skin felt like an interesting area to explore as well. In nudity workshop with Julius Elo of which we had four days in the very beginning of the process with me and the dancers, Julius had asked the dancers to make a duet in which they only focus to the sound of the body. With that memory also in mind it felt like a good point of departure to create a duet. We were first exploring and analysing different ways of making sound between skins. Then I was choosing some words from the writings that we had done in relation to the dried plants. The words I chose had dynamic or relationality in them that the dancers could explore. These explorations had an aspect of repetition in them. The repetition stayed there as an anchor of this part. From these words I chose from the texts, the tactility of the plants, repetitiveness and touch I constructed movements. It happened easily. I was working with cuts and repetitions to challenge the feeling of flow and sense of organic.

I kept editing these texts of dried plants for a long time. Once ready they didn't fit together anymore with the tactile movement material we had created and it felt important that the tactile material happened in silence. This time I tried an approach where I just gave the texts to the dancers and let them speak and perform them and to see what happens. I felt there was interesting movement and dynamism in the texts. It automatically suggested a melodramatic quality in them. Originally I had hoped that our sound designer would have composed a song of the text that the dancers would then sing. In the end he refused to do so. But the melodramatic quality was a bit 'song-like'. So we kept going with what the text suggested. In the end they spoke the text three times during which melodramatic expression and movement emerged and grew.

My processes of editing and extracting of words are important in these operations. I also find the moments of speaking together with the dancers interesting. I am attentive towards which words they choose when they analyse and describe experiences. I feel alert to catch the ones that feel interesting and resonate choreographically. In the editing and extracting (these being two processes in relation to text and choreography) I am trusting my sense and bodily listening and resonance in relation to words. It is difficult to explain exactly how I do it other than I know and trust that I know what will work.

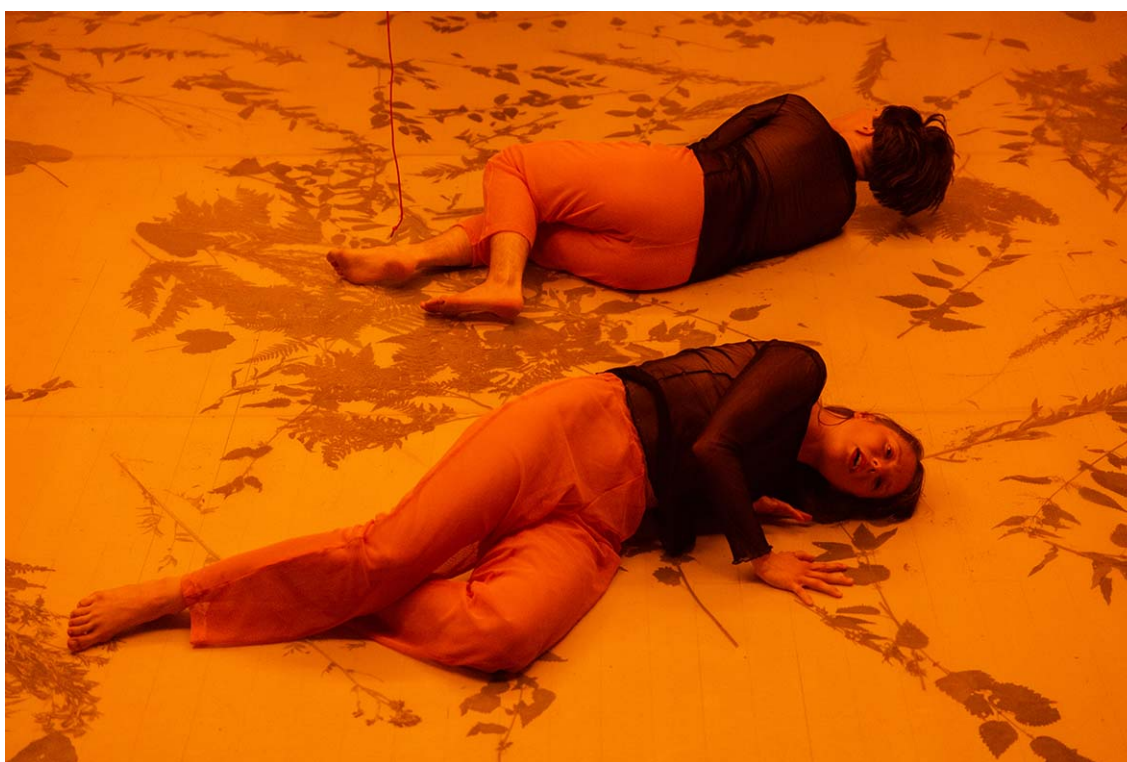
## 2.5. Theatre space and working together

The space we had was a light grey studio theatre space. We were exploring the possibility of having the audience on two sides. I liked it but we didn't have much time to consider and think about options in terms of the movement material, as the scenographer was present for limited time. We needed to make the decisions quickly and it felt safer to go for one frontal solution. Thinking about it now the two-sided audience could have also worked well and it was interesting in its own way. I think the solution we ended up with was also very good. It affected a lot in how the material developed further in terms of the decision of having just one-sided audience.

I proposed a bodily warm up exercise in the beginning to do together with the whole group but I felt most of the designers were not so interested of taking part to it. They tended to stop during it or stayed in the sides of the spaces. So although engaged in to the work otherwise, they didn't have a physical relationship to the work. I should have insisted on them doing it as whilst I noticed this I soon let go of the idea of them joining in as I thought they were not comfortable. Perhaps explaining to the designers more that why I wanted them to do it would have helped. It could have produced something interesting to the work and made them aware of their bodies in a different level. I try to develop ways to find softness and listening in the collective bodily level of tuning.

I didn't ask dancers to produce movement material. It happened naturally only in one section of the work in the end where the text was more highlighted. In that section one of the dancers naturally started to create patterns of moving whilst saying the texts. Because of the nature of that part of the work it felt interesting in relation to the text-movement and the dynamic of that scene. I would have choreographed that section for

both of them but we didn't have time in the end. Otherwise I made the decisions in choreographing the work. If I had had time I would have set all choreography in the whole work. About 85% of all the movement was set. But the 'improvisational parts' that were on it were done in clearly framed, instructed and constructed manner.



oIo. Photographs: Katri Naukkarinen

### 3. BODY AND MATTER: AFFECT=INTENSITY- >EXPRESSION

#### 3.1. Body-movement bind

Body is an environment that I decide to work with and research. Affect-intensity-expression doesn't exclude other matter from it. I used it to also compose and think about matter and areas of design. Some aspects of it might be more closely tied to the body such as body-movement bind. Before writing about the body it feels choreographically important to introduce the question of the body-movement bind. Performance theorist and dramaturg Bojana Cvejic writes in her book *Choreographing Problems* (2015) about the synthesis of body and movement that constituted the modern dance in first decades of the twentieth century. It happened either through subjectivation of the dancers body through emotive self-expression or objectivation of the movement through the physical expression of the dancing body (Cvejic 2015, 17). Subjectivation through self-expression is seen in works of Isadora Duncan or German expressionist such as Mary Wigman or Martha Graham from USA. Objectivation of movement appears in works of choreographer Merce Cunningham and some choreographers from Judson Church movement such as Yvonne Rainer. Body has a specific place and is emphasized in both of these operations although I am not myself especially interested in either one of them. In subjectivation body is emphasized as it uses movement to express itself. In objectivation bodys physicality is emphasized so that movement is there to show that the body is functional and physical (only). It is as if body is using movement in two different ways. It could be also thought that the movement is either alive (self-expression) or dead (objectivation). In my thesis work I ended up researching on how the body appears as alive or dead (through the movement) in relation to set choreographed movement material. Although I wasn't following or going with either of these notions. I found it interesting to think and observe on how the operations and methods for choreographing set movement (and the ideas and questions behind them) affect in to how alive or dead the body appears on stage. My aim wasn't to represent aliveness or deadness or to aim for it in that sense. It was an issue and a problem that emerged during the process of aiming to choreograph set movement material. I have learned that often the problems that emerge in the making are the most interesting ones to work with. They have actual relation to the precise and work of doing. Before I used



to see them as obstacles or mistakes but realising their potential has taken my work further (I think) as well as make it more interesting and enjoyable. So body's dead or alive appearance in relation to movement stayed in the work as one aspect of its being without becoming too dominating. I noticed that I naturally tended to resist and tried to avoid the dead qualities and appearances and strongly prefer the alive ones. It made me think of how I perceive the body through them and in which levels do they operate.

### 3.2. Expression instead of representation

In order to not to go automatically with these two notions it has made me think about what expression could be or mean in the body (other than self-expression or expression of physicality)? Expression, just as meaning, operates differently in terms of framed improvisational tasks or set choreographed material. What do I want to express with/in terms of thought relations between body and movement? What do the relations or separations (created consciously or unconsciously) that are set between body and movement express already in themselves? According to philosopher Baruch Spinoza expression is the definition itself which concerns the internal constitution of substance. Expression stands for a monistic conception of being, where the verb to 'express' can comprehend the multiplicity of modes in which substance is/manifests itself. For him God equates substance which consists of infinity of attributes of which each one expresses an eternal and infinite essence (Cvejic 2016, 42). It is quite materialistic way of thinking about expression. It implies that expression is not necessarily an action or something that someone or something does, maybe not even movement. Spinoza uses the word 'constitution' of substance as if it would be automatic and generative, but nevertheless active process. As if without expression there would be no substance, which makes expression a condition for substance to be. Perhaps these thoughts can free expression as a dominating action only between body and movement and in the body-movement bind. They also give a new possible way of thinking about expression as kind of being of the substance instead of movement of the substance. Because of this in my thesis project *oIO* we were focusing into how we the dancers inhabit the body and movement in the moment of performing. How is their body and movement emerging in terms of attention, presence, focus, sensibility and gaze for example. We worked on performativity and pondered what it means. How is matter (or body) performative in itself? We were thinking about the limits of performing and non-performativity in order

to find the right way for them to be in the performance. It resulted in thinking about the limits of the self and functional/obeying being as well as self and the characteristic, performed, expressive being. In relation to Spinoza's concept of expression in *olo* the multiplicity of modes in which substance manifests itself was explored in relation to body. We were focusing on selected attributes, like breathing, speaking, touch, nudity, stillness or slowness, which I carefully selected and composed. The work of *olo* was not about these attributes. I was trying to leave space around the concept of expression in terms of meaning so that although the action would be clear it could be interpreted and seen in different ways by different spectators, without being too abstract.

Spinoza continues of expression by saying that the infinity of substance is expressed in infinity of its attributes. Attributes are essence of substance, such as thought and extension, which are expressed in their modes which are the affections of substance. For him mind and body are expressions/modes of attributes of thought and extension (Cvejic 2016, 42). This made me also think about 'resonances' in the body and the significance of it. What Spinoza says suggests some kind of logic of fragmentations in the substance and its modes, that is interesting. In relation to *olo* this made me trust sometimes simple already existing corporeality or language that was rooted in actual every day perceptions and slightly transformed. By changing it in terms of temporality or scale of doing/saying it is enough to make it look like something else. It also made me trust in stillnesses and pauses as body in itself is already an expression of the attribute of substance. I noticed that before there had been more movement and need to create more movement and moving whilst choreographing. There has been underlying thought that only creating (dancing) movement is choreography. It has resulted in specific tonus. This had relation to my own body as also a dancer's body which likes to move in a certain way. Now that I have been focusing on choreography I have been able to distinguish this and also question it and find other ways to think about choreography. Using my own body and its ways of moving is now just one of the options.

Cvejic analyses how the logic of expression could replace the logic of representation in choreography. She writes that Spinoza's univocity of being, supposed by the immanent causality in the parallelism between thought and extension is an ontology that posits and absolute power on thinking and acting/doing/making as autonomous and equal on the

same plane (Cvejic 2016, 43). For Spinoza the levels of thought and extension seem to work parallel instead of on the relation of cause and effect. In relation to making choreographies, as the logics of thinking or ideas and of actions or composition run parallel, I interpret it that they are related in their logics. It doesn't seem to suggest that from idea comes the action but instead that thinking unfolds and develops and so does action/making as parallel activities. This suggests that in creation there would be experimenting in both action and thought. It roots thinking in the actuality of doing, and doing in the actuality of thinking. It could be about the desire to link theory and practise in making art. It seems to suggest non-hierarchical relation here between thought and extension and between mind and body. Philosopher Rene Descartes theory of representative ideas proposes resemblance between an idea and a thing, ideas being like pictures or images of their objects. Expression, which is thought to replace representation, is a matter of something making itself known to a knower, where 'making itself known' is synonymous with affection (Cvejic 2016, 42,43). I am wondering whether making itself known could also mean making itself seen or experienced by the other and so also revealing its existence. How can matter or body reveal its being and allow itself to be seen/experienced in different ways? How does it create meaning? Cvejic continues that if the relations between being and thought are not representational they have to be practical. She writes about logic of expression as experience of thought where ideas and things are dynamically integrated by the same movement *which gives rise to them*. Expression embraces both the way things come to be in reality and the way they are in thought since the act of thinking something is the same act that produces it (Cvejic 2015, 46). In the process of making *oIO* the more we practised actually in the rehearsals the more clear it became for me what was emerging as well as how it was emerging. During the process the work makes itself known to me and to the working group. In *oIO* we worked with embodiment and transformation of mundane. The work of *oIO* wasn't a representation of the everyday. The designers said few times that there was nothing every day –like in what the dancers did. I found that very interesting comment. The comment that the designers gave also proved me that I had managed to work with expression. The movement wasn't recognised and identified with where it comes from, and it wasn't coming from an idea. The aesthetic of mundane also emerged through experimenting practically, not as a pre-decided idea/choice.

### 3.2.1. Subjectivity, objectivity

These two notions also suggest different approaches towards body, movement and subject. In the first one body is emphasized as a subject that expresses itself and in the second one body is reduced into an instrument for movement and its articulation. These operations connect the body and movement as one organic whole which in the former case is comprehended by inner, emotional experience and in the latter by physical activity (task, action) (Cvejic 2015, 20). This organic bind suggests a naturalness in relation to body and movement as one whole. How to disturb these connections and the impressions that they create? Or how to work with them with the awareness of using them or changing between them? How to see body as something else than only a body, or to find new transformations for the body? These questions can explain my interest in difference, instead of an identity. I have been approaching this problem from the perspectives of perception, affect and intensity. How can body and movement have different and even contradictory functions? These relations can become statements or habits. The fact that these relations (between body, movement, objectivity, subjectivity) are constructed for the performance and with the intention of sharing with an audience (not in personal every day life context), as the context of the construction, is part of the statement. What kind of relations between these elements do I emphasize and with which tone or seriousness, what kind of world image and body image do they create, and what does it communicate in terms of meaning and recognition in art work for the audience? Awareness of subjectivity and objectivity has become important in my work.

### 3.2.2. As experience and visuality

One way to approach subjectivity is through experience and objectivity through visuality. Philosopher Alva Noe writes in his book *Strange tools: Art and human nature* (2015) about experience and art work and reflects it through philosopher, author and psychologist John Dewey. Dewey says that the existence of art object gets on the way of understanding the nature of art. He says it is because we look at the things but the art itself is about experience. For him art is about making experiences. (Noe 2015, 241-242). Art is composing of materials but also composing of experiences. This brings an invisible level to the work of choreography. I am monitoring the complexity of experience and the complexity of how that experience looks like, gets articulated and organised. It is important to keep reflecting on both and the relations between them. I

have been starting to think about experiences in different scales. Whether specific cultures and species have their own ways of experience. How does the way I construct experience correspond to larger fields of experience or experience in different scales outside theater or art context? From this perspective the experience created in choreography can create composition with experiences outside itself or with personal experience of the audience for example by creating contrast, tension, correspondence or resonance. Thinking this way is also thinking about the audience. This reflects on what kind of tool art becomes, what is its function in the level of experience and visibility.

### 3.3. Affect=intensity

Philosopher Brian Massumi writes in his book *Parables of the Virtual* about affect and equates affect with intensity but emphasizes that it isn't the same as emotion as they follow up with different logics (Massumi 2002, 27). Intensity has been a concept that I have been carrying in my works during the studies in Theatre Academy so I have been also thinking about affect. Affect is not the the same as affection. My interest lies is affect so it is important to make the distinction between them. Philosopher Baruch Spinoza writes in his book *Ethics* (1677) about affection as same to mode. For him mode is the opposite of substance. To be a mode is to be in something else and to be conceived through that something else (Spinoza. Ed. Parkinsons 2000, 319, 322). I define affect as a change from one mode/affection to another, the in-betweenness or transition between different modes. I am more interested in that change, gap, movement and difference between rather than any specific affection(s). The polarity of substance and affection that Spinoza proposes is interesting and it resonates with intensity and expression. Affect can happen as change that highlights the body through and between it as substance and affection. Affect can easily create feelings of figures or distorted and changing characters. This doesn't mean going back to ballet where dancer was embodying a character and whose movements were based in mimesis and symbolic representation (Cvejic 2015: 18). Body can also appear beyond the common definitions of it as only human. Body move on the limit of its own recognition. These 'inhuman and unnatural perceptions' point to philosopher Gilles Deleuze's way of thinking about cinema where a rupture with the phenomenological concept of perception that rests on human consciousness is allowed (Cvejic 2015, 32.).

In *o/o* I was working with affect in relation to breathing. The different and changing ways, temporalities, qualities, patterns and corporealities of breathing of the performers created different impressions on the being, recognition and materiality of the body. In *o/o* there were parts with repetition where the body appeared also machine like. These parts were purposefully done in silence in order to highlight the plane repetitions, not trying to make them more interesting. Repetition communicates automaticism, mechanics, habits, obeying, conditioning and affectivity of the body. That's why it is relevant in relation to affect and composition. In *o/o* the sound of naked skins slapping, rubbing, dropping on each other and moving against each other made the body appear through sound and emphasized the skin: the outer container of the body. In *o/o* it was important that there was enough parts during the whole work when the bodies were in stillness as much as in movement in order to create contrasts to the appearance of the body (in movement or stillness). Stillness can highlight the body as a substance.

Affect has been part of my work in relation to difference and intensity. Research on intensity has also made me research on how movement emerges and how that process of emerging is allowed or resisted in the body, interrupted or continued, also in relation to time and temporality in perception. One of my base practises for *o/o* was exploring and challenging affects in the dancers body in relation to the start of the movement.

Although this didn't result in choreographing it, it gave space for the dancers to explore their own habits and affects in relation to how they start to move and why do they do it. It gave them insights on how movement is used and I believe it affected positively to their performativity. Movement can be a way for sustaining identity. There are many reasons for moving and they can be also unconscious. Paying attention to them will give more options and free potential in the body. The practise created change and difference in how the movement started, and worked on its potentiality and affectivity. Many of habits of movement come from affects. Cvejic writes about how choreographer Xavier Le Roy refers to learning as the process of a removal of habit under the construction of constraints. Le Roy says: I always worked with constructing constraints in order to produce new movement or to transform the perception of the body in a situation. What can you do when you can't do this or that, you have to look for another way, and you have to go around habits. In a way, it's making things difficult in order to explore ways outside the power of habits (Cvejic 2015, 50). How to construct constraints in

choreographic processes in order to transform the body? I do it for example by focusing on some clearly chosen attributes and by combining them in various ways and composing them in different ways in time. Or by creating practises like in *o/o*.

Massumi continues about affect (and so of intensity) in the same book by writing that affect is central to an understanding of our information- and image-based late capitalist culture (Massumi 2002, 27). Affect has an effect on how the body is drawn to different things or actions and how it starts to move or act or how is it moved. Affect relates to relationality and connectivity between entities, things, forces and environments that also include the body. Affect relates to the mechanisms and logics of connectivity. It is connected to meaning as meaning builds in connections between components. During the studies in Theatre Academy I have been working with a question of how does the body receive information in different environments. What Massumi writes explains why I am interested in that question. Understanding how the body is drawn towards certain stimuli and gets attached to certain information explains how body functions and why. Becoming aware of these increases awareness of how and why body wants to keep moving or keep being in stillness. This question can explain why and how body uses movement and that is why it is interesting choreographically. Thinking about affect in more widely in everyday life and capitalist culture can create understanding of bigger movements than individual ones. Why people follow certain phenomena or behaviour or how certain phenomenas affect and direct peoples behaviour? Working on and researching affect is a research on how body can use movement, and the potentials of it.

In one of the works I did during studies *Other Nature* (2020) we did some practises based on sense immersion. Forcing some senses and our attention to some specific things for long periods of time was an interest to research affect, senses, information, difference, intimacy, perception and receiving. The longer time allowed the experience to change and transform and for different kinds of perceptions to emerge. This practise was present in the very beginning of the creation process and it resulted in creating another practise that had directly more physical effect. It was practise that lasted sometimes even 45 minutes and I tended to do it as kind of long exploratory movement research. I would specify the focus points by speaking during the long period of time. The dancers were figuring out their corporeality in their own ways. It was basically

immersing their senses in different places and in different intensities and ways. I didn't then have such clear aims in relation to how to create (set) choreography with it or its intentions in terms of bodily engagement and relations in performance. It had some potentials which I realised afterwards. At that moment I wasn't so sensible towards the small acts and movements of the body and had more pressure on creating something-like-dance. Now going through the artistic thesis project I would have found this interesting in its subtlety and small details which I then didn't appreciate and direct. Specifying and manipulating the bodily experience in this practise could have allowed the insistence to stay with it on the time. The long duration could have been explored further too and the written instructions that I spoke during it. We only did this twice in the very beginning of the process, so it was something I abandoned quite quickly.

### 3.4. Affect and doubling as a choreographic method

Massumi writes in his book *Parables of the Virtual* about Spinoza that for him it is only when the idea of affection is doubled by an idea of the idea of the affection that it attains the level of conscious reflection (Massumi 2002, 31). Inspired from this idea, in *o/o* everything happened twice during the work. It was an idea that was easy also for the designers to understand and use. It was easy to work with dramaturgically. We were working with doubling situations/sections of the work with slight variation and with differences in terms of time and temporality of occurrence. Another point on this last quote from Massumi is the doubleness of it operating in terms of body-movement bind and composition. For example the idea of the idea could be a decision of using self-expression in terms of body-movement and then using repetition as a compositional idea on top of it. This would transform the original body-movement intention because of its doubleness and produce something that would communicate beyond the idea of self-expression. Repetition would also highlight the body movement bind of self expression and make the spectator more aware of it. Just as Massumi said it would attain conscious reflection in the audience of how body uses movement. In *o/o* this approach was present only in the melodramatic part that was aiming for emphasized expressivity.

Cvejjic says that we know nothing about the body until we know what it can do, what its affects are, how it can or cannot enter into composition with other affects (Cvejjic 2016: 45). The procedure of doubling can have both strengthening and weakening effect to the



thing that has been doubled. Depending on when and how the doubling occurs affects whether it has powering or shrinking effect. For example simultaneously doubling an effect with sound and lights and body supports the same movement. But for example doubling in some other contexts or temporality can have a hindering effect. It also depends on what is doubled and how. These procedures are something I am interested to explore in my own choreographic work and not in interactions in normal social circumstances. The way Cvejić speaks about the affect gives another perspective on the body: affects interact with other affects and the more affects the body can interact with the more it can also do. Spinoza speaks about affects that are actions of the mind and refer to minds own capability to create affects and to act. These affects don't come from encounters with other bodies (Cvejić 2016, 166-167). I find it interesting to explore affect beyond the action-reaction pattern in the traditional sense, of not just performing on how something affects something. Inventing new affects was possible in *oIO* through the method of doubling and by trying to find and explore different ways of doubling.

### 3.5. Affect and writing

Another way to define affect for Massumi is to speak about it is as a two-sided coin: one side in the virtual (the autonomy of relation) and the other in the actual (functional limitation). He continues by saying that this two-sidedness is the simultaneous participation of the virtual in the actual and the actual in the virtual, as one arises from and returns to the other (Massumi 2002, 35). Performance theorist and professor Andre Lepecki writes in his book *Singularities* (2016) in the chapter *In the Dark* of how language can also activate the dimension of the virtual. As in Mette Ingvarsen's work *Speculations* where she uses language-choreography to re-arrange constitutive matters by re-legislating imaginatively the appearing of actual and virtual in the world and thus the appearing of the world. Lepecki reminds that virtual and potential are as much real as actual (Lepecki 2016, 67). In *oIO* we were exploring language as imaginative virtual level. Some phrases of movement had text attached to them. There was one movement phrase which was repeated twice, first in silence and second time with text spoken. As the text was attached to the movements and relating to the experience of the dancers, mainly reflecting on the experience of watching and being watched, it added another dimension and layer to it. It showed the movement as another kind of expression, as another kind of possible actual-virtual connectivity. There was another text in the end

that was written whilst watching dried plants that I had been drying as a long term process. The plants never became part of the performance in their actuality but were there as that text which was spoken and during speaking it also physically moved in by the dancers. So it could be said that dried plants were there virtually and their actuality manifested in another way: in the text and body as movement and certain dynamic. The whole process of drying these plants for a long time as well as the plants themselves made that scene possible but the plants were never present in their actual form.

### 3.6. Affect and potentiality

Norwegian choreographer Ingri Fiksdal writes in her PhD *Affective Choreographies* about affect and potentiality. For Fiksdal affect is interesting in relation audience and she is concerned in how to create affective, liminal spaces where there is potentiality for change within and amongst the audience and the world (Fiksdal 2018, 24). During the studies the audience perspective has become more and more important for me. Being an outside eye and not performing in my works has allowed me to reflect more on the experience of the audience member. I have started to monitor it very carefully and with detail. I will write about feeling in relation to choreography which is also one perspective and aspect of the monitoring and creating potentiality of affects. It has effected and enabled to create distance to my body as performers and dancers body.

Fiksdal defines potentiality as everything that can or cannot be actualised, deriving from Giorgio Agamben who defines potentiality as 'the existence of a non-Being, a presence of an absence'. In her own words Fiksdal is aiming to produce a potentiality for affect to occur through specific choreographic principles (Fiksdal 2018, 24). Her perspective is in what choreography can do to the audience (Fiksdal 2018, 176). This is also interest of mine whilst working. In *o/o* creating affects was of interests but also in a way that I wouldn't decide which affects I would like to create, strictly speaking. I was interested to create ground for affects but leaving enough space there so that the affects that arise could also be partly dependant on the perceivers/audience members own body. Fiksdal quotes Susan Sontag who says that we must learn to see more, hear more and feel more (Fiksdal 2018, 180). It points in my opinion in a potential for experiencing and creating new affects in relation to art works. Art work can produce new and unknown affects that might not be recognisable. This feels interesting and because of that it felt

important to leave space for affects to emerge in *oIO*, instead of trying to strictly decide them before hand. In *oIO* the differences and intensities between ways of choreographing created affects. Fiksdal quotes philosopher Gilles Deleuze by writing that for art to be affect and catalyst for it it is necessary to set up conditions for the unimagined to occur, free from societal or political instrumentalism. She also says that art could be seen as social practise, and that art could include more specific and discursive engagement into a given context (Fiksdal 2018, 183). Working with imagination has been important, also in *oIO*, and the last comment of Fiksdal brings in mind the aspect of social choreography. It concerns me in a way that I see choreography always suggesting a possible social reality. I confront this when creating although tend to forget it sometimes. For example in the creation of *oIO* I remembered it when once after seeing rehearsals my mentor Elina Pirinen asked whether I wanted to say something about control through one section of the work. That comment reminded me to see again what I do from the perspective of social order. We were not working with control at all but somehow the material had shaped in a way that it seemed so. In relation to this I try to see choreography from the point of view of social choreography as Andrew Hewitt writes about: How do various notions of choreography correspond with, derive from or reflect political ideologies or social conditions (Hewitt 2005, 6)?

### 3.7. Intensity as difference

I have been working with intensity as change/in-betweenness that is also contradictory and vary in distances. Intensity can happen between body and environment which together form assemblages of different sorts. In *oIO* it was present in the ways the body is handled for example in relation to gravity, weight, dramaturgy, tension, composition and qualities. Intensity can also operate between audience and performers. Fiksdal writes that affect occurs within the change of intensity in the transition from one state to another (Fiksdal 2018, 177). Intensity is a dramaturgical tool that can be part of the wholeness of the performance. In *oIO* intensity was important part of composition and between design (sound, light, scenography, costumes) and the bodies of the performers.

Bojana Cvejic mentions intensity and affect in relation to Mette Ingvarsens solo choreography *50/50*. She writes that affect is a synesthetic transversal and transformative power of intensity. Cvejic also quotes Massumi who says that affect is based on the

intensity of resonance between multiple sensorial stimuli and that intensity is a different order of connection that operates in parallel with the signifying order while being disconnected from it (Cvejjic 2015, 174). I became interested in intensity because of its potential in change and transformability. I had somekind of bodily experiences of it that were difficult to describe. Intensity as connective element also lead me to work with contradictions, distances and opposites in body, body-environment and dramaturgy. The element of resonance between multiple sensorial stimuli had been present when working and researching doubling as a method in choreography. In *o/o* intensity was explored in composition in relation to space and time in relation to body and design.

According to Massumi the primacy of affective arises from a gap between content and effect of expression, between cognitive and sensorial registers in perception (Cvejjic 2015, 174). This could be choreographically explored for example by doubling only the content (or effect) of expression and so creating awareness of their separateness and creating a new kind of expression which meaning would be something else than the original expression. This creates kind of fragmentarity inside the expression. It could also mean creating rupture between content and effect of expression or altering either the content or the effect of the expression. Affect has transformative power to expression. Affect can create rupture in and between what expression is, what it is used for, how does it communicate to others, what is its meaning, what is its intention and of how it looks like. There is something poetry like in it. In *o/o* this meant for example laughing in place where there was no reason to be laughter and nothing funny happening. The performers were not amused. There was only one part of the performance where there was laughter but because that part was done twice (doubled) the laughter also happened twice in that same place. It creates difference inside the expression of laughter and in this case also brough slightly uneasy or creepy feeling in it. It created difference and so also intensity to otherwise recognisable expression.

### 3.8. Choreographers/dancers/designers/works body

In Lepeckis book *Singularities: Dance in the age of performance* (2016) he speaks about the difference between policy and planning. He writes about Ralph Lemons way of planning as readiness, preparation and courage to encounter the unknown, the discipline of being available to it which is not an excuse for not doing (Lepecki 2016,

158). Encountering the unknown requires the ability and willingness of not knowing everything. I can't sometimes tell which colour the work is, or whether it has bright or dim lights, or if the sounds need to be loud or silent. Knowing some of these things in the early stage of the process could be interesting way to challenge my own way of working. It would make me search more references that are outside of choreography: from music, visual arts, photography... I think it will be an interesting area to explore in the future. I noticed that my approach to working can be challenging for the working group. The designers felt that the more I described the actual happening of the rehearsals and practises, so what we concretely did with the dancers, the more useful it was for them. We were looking for a vocabulary that we found through the practicality of doing. As I don't work so much with topics or works that are 'about' one thing but rather with questions and areas of interest in the actuality of making it was difficult for the designers sometimes to understand the work. People want to know as many thing as possible in the beginning of the process. I could focus on how to plan and prepare my collaborators and plan and articulate more specifically my interests and ways of working. I also find the problems in understanding and the conversations around them interesting.

It is important to think about bodies in the practical level in the working process. I tend to be very engaged with the body of the work. I tend to swap my own body to the works body. It means I don't focus to my own body and its needs much, or as I normally would, and I give lot of focus to the body of the work instead. It happened in the last two works I did in the Theatre Academy especially during the two last weeks of rehearsals. In the creation of *oIO* I tried to insist doing jogging as a hobby during the rehearsal period but even that stopped during the last two rehearsal weeks. This usually results my body being tired and stressed once the premiere comes. I try to take care of everyone elses body, the dancers and the designers bodies. I try to make space for conversations and listen to everyones needs, wishes and boundaries. Sometimes with more and sometimes with less success. It can feel difficult because for me it feels sometimes difficult to sacrifice aspects of the works body. If I get lots of wishes from the working groups bodies it also starts to resonate on the level of my own body whose needs I am not fulfilling. The state of my own body can also perhaps trigger other peoples bodies. I have had to accept that not everyone is as attached to the body of the work as I am. I have also started to observe more the attachments that I have to it.

### 3.9. Learning outcomes

In the future I will aim to speak about communication with the whole working group in the beginning of the working process. Organising specific times when we speak about our bodies in terms of engagement and feeling during the working will be important during the creation process. To find understanding of how we think about what we are doing in the work is also important. In the beginning of the working period of *oIO* I spoke about the working more generally and gave space for everyone to speak freely about it. It is important to also speak about the scenarios that if we face difficulties how do we act, what is our own responsibility in it and what is not. I appreciate when people come to communicate to me directly and straight from what they think. It feels important that I feel there is a motivation behind the communication to work together and solve issues together, to stay in contact. I have so much responsibility in the process and I get so enthusiastic of the works body that I can't sense everyone's bodies all the time. And even if I can I can't always recognise how I sense them or what are they thinking. Especially challenging I find situations where there is dissatisfaction and it is not shared for me clearly and directly. Then I feel like it is not supporting the work anymore. When I cut the connection to my own body I also cut the connection to some sensibility and listening of it and its messages. This cut has effects and affects that probably affect to the way I am sensed and how it is to spend time with me.

One of my aims in studying choreography in the Theatre Academy was to research on why and how I make choices and how I construct something to work with. I wanted to understand the links of how and why I start to work with something in choreography and how defining and choosing that will affect to the creation of the performance. I have often exposed my understanding in its rawness, in order to understand what I don't understand in order to learn from it and gather new knowledge. Using the time of the studies to understand something that will be always part of my work felt important. Whilst student in another school than Theatre Academy I remember from a lecture with Jonathan Burrows him saying that how to create a practise (in choreography) that can be sustainable for the next 20 years. It inspired to take an approach towards body and movement as I will be working with bodies and/or movement probably for my whole career. It has been valuable to be able to do so many choreographies. The practical experimenting is irreplaceable. Working with the problems that emerge in the process

of creation have helped to go beyond what I have done before and what I think I know, and to create new understanding and knowledge. It feels important to allow and admit the state of not-knowing in some areas. Before I thought that I would need to always think beyond the body. But body and movement are not separate from the world.



*oIO. Photographs: Katri Naukkarinen*

## 4. FEELING AND PERFORMATIVITY

### 4.1. Feeling, performativity, intimacy and *o/o*

The name of my thesis work *o/o* means something like being, existence or feeling in Finnish language. It has multiple meanings and it fitted to the idea of the work as part of its idea was to leave space and encourage audience to make their own interpretations about it. This emerged when I was thinking about what do I want to give the audience through *o/o* and how do I want it to communicate in terms of meaning, statement and interpretation. It felt inspiring to think that instead of trying to give a certain experience or make certain experience to appear in the audience the point would be to let the experience emerge partly through them, and even encourage that. This would make them maybe aware of how experience unfolds and its reflectivity. That reminded me of tranference which I had been reading about in the books of Bracha Ettinger and Elina Reenkola. The idea of tranference comes from psychoanalysis. According to psychoanalyst Elina Reenkola tranference happens in the process of therapy when the patient starts to have unconscious emotions, desires, fantasies or feelings towards the therapist. These are feelings that have been distinguished from the consciousness can have their origin in the patients childhood or other previous experiences (Reenkola 2012, 214). If there would be right amount of space in the work the spectator could use it as a reflective surface to themselves, in terms of what they see and interpret. It was interesting to look for balance in this in choreographing as I didn't want that the world of the work to be too loose or free either. It supported the idea of working with gaze. It highlighted and gave the work a dimension that suggested that we always see everything through our own bodies and construct the meaning of what we see through it. I was interested of the phenomena which I have been observing in relation to emptiness and space. When there is enough space or more empty space we tend to want to fill the empty space with something from ourselves. I found it interesting to think about this in the relationship between spectator and the performance. This also supported poetic perspective which I have been interested in *o/o*. Ville Hytönen writes about the relations of poetic and erotic by saying that the basic aspects of erotic are fear, secret and uncertainty. If poem is compartmentalized its sensus will disappear (Hytönen 2014, 42-43). His writing inspired and supported the idea of tranference in *o/o*.



The way the word *oIO* looks visually felt interesting. It is like two circles and a line or two circles which are divided by a line. As in choreographing I wanted to focus to both experience and visuality it felt like a justified decision in the name of the work too. I decided to put the big O in the end instead of the beginning because I thought changing the order would create contradictory order to the usual grammar. The shapes of the letters o and I contradicted each other in their form as circle and straight line. I thought the shapeness of the name would also highlight the symbol-like and visual aspect of letters and words. In choreographing *oIO* it was an attempt to show and experience language as both signs that look/sound like something and as carriers of meaning.

Intimacy is the main inspiration where the desire to research performativity and feeling stems from. In the process of researching and creating *oIO* I was interested in intimacy also through psychoanalysis and its relationship to the body. It made me read books of Adam Phillips *On kissing, tickling and being bored* (1993) as well as Elina Reenkolas *Woman and anger* (2012). I will also write about the concept of The Open from poet Rainer Maria Rilke in relation to existence/feeling and poetry in *oIO*. I relate the Open to transindividuality that Bojana Cvejic writes about. I will use Eric L. Santner's book *On Creaturely life: Rilke, Benjamin, Sebald* (2006) to tackle the concept of the Open. I will write about feeling by quoting Erin Manning and Alfred North Whitehead.

In *oIO* the starting point to research performativity was to look at it through negation. What is not performativity or not performing? Or what is non-performing? We spoke about the limits of the notion of performativity and of how experiencing that could affect to its formation or determination in the work of *oIO* and in the dancers experience of performing. We were researching this question by doing the practise of intimacy mentioned also earlier. After each time it was practised we would immediately write about the experience of doing it or witnessing it. The writings were interesting because they were reflecting on the immediate experiences of watching and being watched and of the intentions, expectations, demands and notions around them in relation to performance, performativity and non-performativity. The writings allowed us to observe performativity in a creative way and through free poetic form (of writing). Speaking about these experiences through the writings became important. After writing these texts we read them to each other outloud. We spoke about the questions of

authenticity and subjectivity/objectivity as well as real and performed, the visibility and differences of the desires and assumptions of the performer and the spectator. It made us aware of power in terms of performativity and of the feeling of power between the spectator and performer in relation to the way the dancer embodies and inhabits what they do. It gave us platform to experiment and think about performativity. The practise gave the dancers some important embodied knowledge on where their personality starts and where they start to perform something else or when do they perform themselves.

Through this performative practise the characters or figures of a child and an athlete emerged, one from each dancer. We were pondering for a while how to work with these characters. In the end they were there as somekind of feelings and references that didn't become obvious and didn't need to be discovered by the audience. Perhaps these figures relate to the movements of subjectivation and objectivation that I wrote about earlier.

#### 4.2. Feeling - performativite, intimate, impersonal

Philosopher and artist Erin Manning quotes philosopher Alfred North Whitehead when speaking about feeling as propulsor to experience. Instead of speaking about human feeling or emotion she writes about feeling as affective tonality. Feeling is related to preindividual but is more like how an occasion comes to its subjective form (Manning 2013, 20-21). Whitehead writes about feeling himself in the book *Process and Reality* (1978) as various specialized operations, effecting a transition to subjectivity (Whitehead 1978, 40-41). According to this feeling and creation are closely connected, as in the operation or process of something coming to its being or form. How does subjectivity formulate itself in relation to what surrounds us and how is feeling related to these surrounding environments? How does feeling operate in terms of creating and receiving of art work? Instead of speaking about feelings in general I will focus more to the specific feelings that were researched in the process of creating *oIO* which were boredom and anger. The reason I choose this pair was partly by chance but also because they seem to at the same time contradict each other and also have connectivity. I was also thinking about these feelings in the experience in different cultures and how it could resonate in audience. Both these feelings are intimate in different ways.

Feeling by Whitehead is always in the realm of impersonal. Manning also highlights that feeling in this sense is not exclusively human feeling (Manning 2013, 20-21). The word impersonal might sound cold or object like. I am not making a statement that there shouldn't be anything personal in art. I think personal is an interesting and important area in art which I also relate to. The way Manning and Whitehead write about feeling make it and intimacy inclusive also to non-human realms and entities. I am interested to observe, sense and think about feeling in wider sense than human emotion only.

Choreographically, as someone interested of environments and textualities, feeling that is inclusive to non-human feels interesting. Seeing feelings as impersonal also frees me of them. I can experience them and research them in their full variety, because they are not personal, and I am not using them in order to express anything personal in or through them. Feeling is for everything and for everybody. Feelings just move around.

In the book *Meeting the Universe Halfway* Karen Barad refers to Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity that links subject formation to the production of body's materiality (Barad 2007, 191). Performativity exists also outside of only stage and performance settings. As subject formation affects to our bodies materiality then our bodies must be materially forming themselves all the time. The process of subject formation or the processes of how we form and think ourselves as subjects is intimate and performative. Matter is performative. There is every day dimension also in relation to performativity. According to Butler matter is understood as process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity and surface we call matter (Barad 2007, 150). Performativity happens in relation to boundaries and repetitiveness (and change, or the lack of them). Matter seems to have double function: materialization and stabilization. It is in movement and it is active. These actions have results which are boundaries, fixity and surfaces. These are the basic components when approaching performativity. These components tie performativity also into intimacy.

Barad says that power is transmitted through the repeated application of pressure on the body. The body reacts to forces, manifests as shifting material alignments and changes in potential, and becomes not simply the receiver but also the transmitter or local source of the signal or sign that operates through it (Barad 2007, 189). In one practise that I did with the dancers in *oIO* s rehearsing process the performer is forced to keep looking at

the audience all the time and speak with the spectators. This creates some kind of pressure that affects the performativity and physicality of the dancer. In the same practise the performer is both speaking and moving/dancing as in a kind of 'walk and talk' way. The continuous eye contact forces the performativity to be there in an intimate level. It is interesting to see what the affect of this gesture is to the body of the performer and body of the receiver. It brings more attention to the gaze and both to the eyes of the watcher and the one watched. The other tasks included in this practise relate to space, physicality and speech that explore the boundaries between performing and not performing. The other tasks would inevitably make the performer move in different states of performativity which would have an effect on the act and experience of watching and being watched which affects back to the performing of the other tasks.

Barad writes that there is a mistaken belief in the givenness of bodily boundaries which is an artifact of human psychology. According to physics the edges or boundaries are not determinate either ontologically or visually (Barad 2007, 156). This extends the notion of what body is. It is also not a reason or justifier to do violence to other beings. Barad writes that matter emerges out of, and includes as part of its being, the ongoing reconfiguring of boundaries (Barad 2007, 152). She says that material phenomena and discursive practises are not separate but their relationship is one of mutual entailment, which makes boundaries both interesting and intimate but also challenging area of work. In the intimacy practise that we did in the process of *oIO*, keeping the eye contact fixed into the audience, worked on this notion of non-fixed boundaries in the experience of the performer. It could also work so from the perspective the audience but the audience is allowed to also look away from the performer. By keeping a close eye contact continuously I believe the experience of the relation between audience and performer becomes closer and less separated. The performer is challenged to face and witness all reactions of the audience, whether positive or negative, interested or not. The performer is then forced to process their own reactions that emerge from the reactions that the audience expresses towards them. It plays with power between performer and spectator, both having different ways of using and developing power. When the performer is multitasking, with also physical, spatial and speech tasks, the act of being affected by the audiences bodily being and reactions (or lack of reactions) manifests both unconsciously and consciously in the performer. Although this practise didn't end

up being part of the performance in its own form it affected the performativity of the dancers and brought the element of gaze present to *oIO*.



*oIO*. Photograph: Katri Naukkarinen.

#### 4.2.1. Boredom

Boredom is interesting choreographically as a gesture of letting an experience unfold with time. I have been interesting in slowness and stopping in the earlier works in Theatre Academy and boredom came as a continuation from them. I am drawn to art works where there is a way of giving space and time for me to experience the work and kind of ground and settle in it. I enjoy experiencing slowness and stillnesses. Boredom also happened to be one chapter of the book I borrowed of psychoanalysis by Adam Phillips *On kissing, tickling and being bored* (1993). It was the only book in the Theatre Academy library written by Phillips on psychoanalysis. The feeling of boredom came to me partly by chance. It has an interesting experiential ground. Its aesthetics are enjoyable for me in art so I decided to follow this interest and enjoyment. For example in visual art works Lee Ufans *From A Line* (1978) stayed with me and still moves me. His work is not about slowness but it stops me and strikes me as an image that I can keep watching for a long time although its appearance is very simple. I saw this work in Tate Modern in London in 2013 and still remember the experience clearly.

Phillips writes that the inability to tolerate empty space limits the amount of space available (Phillips 1993, 75). The ability to experience boredom creates expansion and widening of experiential possibilities. Boredom can be challenging as it creates empty space which can be uncomfortable for some people. In *oIO* I wanted to find a balance in boredom in a way that it wouldn't become too challenging. Boredom would be there as somekind of feeling of rest or expansion in relation to attention and receiving of the performance. It would give space for the spectator in the moment and entirety of experiencing the work. I didn't want it to become too dominating theme so the amount of it and the selected moments that it was there in the work felt important. We once tried to do the work without any 'boring' parts in it and I really disliked the experience. The feeling of boringness became part of the rhythm and temporality of the work, in its actuality but also in the experience of the work as it unfolds in the spectator during the time of the work. Boredom was there to balance the fullness and emptiness of receiving of the work and amounts of information the audience receives in the work.

Boredom is interesting in relation to performativity. Phillips writes about one of his patients who was not allowing himself to feel bored. He tells how he suggested to this patient that being good (not bored) was a way for him of stopping people of knowing him. The patient replied that when he is bored he doesn't know who he is (Phillips 1993, 74). When I am bored I can't cover my being under tasks, movements, actions or things that I do. What is revealed is how I occupy time and how I occupy space in terms of my own body-space and the relational environment it is in. Boredom has a level of intimacy where some parts of how we relate to time and body become visible in a different way. The notions of efficiency and decency don't apply to boredom. Phillips quotes Sigmund Freud, one of the inventors of psychoanalysis, on boredom: when bored as an adult one cannot hide the weakness of ones own nature (Phillips 1993, 75-76). In boredom we cant hide ourselves. Restfulness and relaxedness is revealing and intimate. Avoiding boredom could be one way of using movement as in creating identity for the body. Avoiding boredom can mean identifying the body with the notions of the movement and movement itself. Boredom reveals our ability to connectivity and expression outside movement. Boredom reveals our performativity in relation to movement and body. Phillips writes that boredom is a defence against waiting, which is

an acknowledgement of the possibility of desire (Phillips 1993, 80). Boredom is both temporal and bodily phenomena which makes it interesting choreographically. In *olo* boredom happened in times when dancers were just sitting and looking at the audience without moving much. It happened as stillnesses during the work. Sometimes it was present in simple repetitions or in slow pace of the movement. It was also there as a continuous awareness of how much information was given in terms of bodies, movement, sound and lights. How much changes were occurring and how slowly or quickly they were unfolding, and in the sense of repetitiveness in relation this. Boredom occurs when we know exactly what is happening or when nothing is happening.

Boredom resonated with one of the ways I was working with text in order to choreograph. The idea of creating gaps to the text and work with them instead of the text created empty in-between spaces inside the text that we then worked with bodily and choreographically. Phillips writes that intense boredoms are merely an interruption – after something and before something else. Like all genuine transitional states, their destination is unclear (Phillips 1993, 75). I feel there is poetic dimension in boredom because when we are bored we are not trying to be efficient. The meaning or purpose of our being and moving becomes being. In boredom we don't impress or perform. Boredom reveals the being of our bodies to ourselves and others by creating space of emptiness that doesn't ask anything from our bodies. It reveals how we relate to silence and how we can be curious, creative, playful or restful when we don't need to do anything. Boredom is something we experience in mundane life, it relates to the everyday aesthetics that I am interested in. Boredom challenges the economic demands where we have to show our bodies as being ready to produce and work. Boredom creates different relation between body and movement that can be also hesitant, ambiguous, problematic or unclear.

#### 4.2.2. Poetics of boredom

Poet Olli-Pekka Tennilä says that poem has a special relationship to silence, absence, muteness, death, externality and nothing. Poetry crafts form for absence. On the edge (Tennilä in Hytönen 2014, 97). In *olo*, and I could say in general in my work, silences and stillnesses have an important part. I am monitoring how much information is given and how much space is left empty. In *olo* there were parts when there was no sound and

no movement on stage, or very small movement such as performers just watching the audience or breathing. There were parts when there was no sound or movement at all. These parts are very important. The balance on the sound that the performers create, for example by breathing, speaking or moving, as well as the sound of the sound design is composed carefully. Many times there was just silence. Sometimes the performers were not moving when the sound was on, and vice versa. So working with poetry is actually including the nothingness, silence, stillness and creating it inside the and to the work.

Another aspect of poem in *o!O* was fragments. Tennilä says that fragment is part of both incomplete, intermittent reality as well as lost, alien world (Tennilä in Hytönen 2014, 92). Fragments are the units and cuts that create change but also potentially empty and/or silent moments or in-between moments. These were important in *o!O*. I was interested how the cuts (that create fragments) affect the emptiness and silence that often follow (in varying temporalities). In *o!O* I was researching on how these fragments and cuts could create possibilities for both comedy and drama, depending on how and where the cuts occur as well as the length and quality of the fragments.

#### 4.2.3. Anger, tension and eruption

Elina Reenkola writes that men use more rational aggression and women more manipulative aggression. In women aggression is also often more indirect. The way women handle aggression can make it turn towards themselves and manifest as depression, anorexia or self-harm and result in psychosomatic and corporeal symptoms (Reenkola 2012, 47). In the end of *o!O* there is a melodramatic scene where the dancers speak the same text three times and move to it on the two last times. On the third time of saying the text feeling of anger was present as they were growing the volume of saying the text on each round of saying it. In the last round feeling was allowed to be present and expressed. The text they were saying had erotic and destructive notions in it which affected their expression. It was a surprise for me that this scene emerged. We created it during a day when I was tired and the dancers wanted to reduce the amount of rehearsals from what we had planned and agreed on with seven hours less. It was because of another project they were doing at the same time. I was trying to get into compromise of doing only three of those seven hours so reducing the amount by four hours, and by not doing any Saturday rehearsals (the dancers had suggested to rehearse



on one Saturday earlier). We didn't get fully into agreement and discussion was challenging. I started to cry. During that time the dancers just started to rehearse the text that I had given to them to learn by heart few days before. As I stopped crying I asked them to just perform the text as it suggests them to do. From that text melodramatic expression emerged very naturally in them. The text in itself was an important agent in this. I decided they would say the text three times. First time just reading the text from the paper very plainly and without expression. The second time they would move in to it and raise their voice and gaze. On the third time they would let the feeling or expressivity in face, voice and movement be part of it. It was the only part of the work where there was possibly clear self-expression involved which however came from the text. I couldn't figure out any other way of including this text, which I liked very much as a text. As I was interested in different ways of relating to spoken text and movement of the body this felt like something I hadn't tried before. I remembered the book of Reenkola which I had read earlier in the research of the process without really knowing how to include it in either. I thought that this must come from there as I had edited this text now, which had the notions of erotic and destruction in it. As I was interested to challenge my own aesthetics and do things I haven't done before and because everyone liked that scene, it stayed there. I felt there was something in it that resonated in the female body, perhaps the fact that eroticisms and anger were allowed to be shown publicly and come out of the body, for a short time. Reenkola says that in psychotherapy expressing feelings of anger for the psychotherapist can be very good experience for women as the energy that has been used to suppression and prevention of them frees up. She says that in order to turn their own aggression into strength there needs to be awareness of the persons own destructiveness which can then be chastened, tied and integrated as part of their personality (Reenkola 2013, 197). So according to Reenkola if we don't admit and become aware of our own destructiveness, we will use it unconsciously to destroy ourselves or/and others.

Dynamics of anger as tension and eruption were part of *oIO* in terms of the movement dynamics and qualities. There were sometimes small and sometimes bigger sudden fast movements in the often slow movement quality, especially in the first half of the work. I was interested in how to build up tension and then to free it in movement, and of how it happens in relation to time. This wasn't trying to mimic or represent anger in any

way but was present purely as a movement dynamic and as an interest towards how to create tension and how to make it erupt in movement and time. Tensions and eruptions were also present as part of the structure or dramaturgy. The results of reading this book by Reenkola manifested mainly as this interest and awareness of when and how to create feelings of tension and eruption in the body through movement and in the experience of watching the performance in its time. It was one layer together with boredom that created experiential ground for *oIO*. The feelings of anger or boredom were not present in the work as themes of the work and *oIO* wasn't about these feelings.

### 4.3. Performativity, matter and language

Barad speaks about material-discursive practises and says that everything has been turned into a matter of language or cultural representation. She says that language has been granted too much power (Barad 2007, 132). As a choreographer who is interested in relations between movement and speaking and writing in the body this kind of critical comment on language felt important to take into account. This criticality also made me interested in the potentials of performativity. Barad thinks about some interesting questions. How did language come to be more trustworthy than matter? Why are language and culture granted their own agency and historicity, while matter is figured as passive and immutable (Barad 2007, 132)? I find it interesting that she defines discourse not as what is said but instead as that which constraints and enables what can be said (Barad 2007, 146). This brings attention to the context and structure of a situation and matter and to the logics it operates on. It is both choreographic and performative as the context of theatre space and the audience-spectator relation have also their assumed constraints. This point makes me interested to become aware of the constraints that creating performance or choreography or working with body include. Finding new kind of performativity can be found in these constraints, surfaces or boundaries that these different features of performance suggest.

According to Barad performativity is a contestation of the excessive power granted to language to determine what is real. For her performativity is also a contestation of the unexamined habits of mind that grant language and other forms of representation more power in determining our ontologies than they deserve (Barad 2007, 133). Defining something as something by using language (or body) is a performative power. To make

something appear as something or to define something as something, to name something as something, to make something be recognised as something. As Barad says herself that representationalism is based on belief where representations serve as mediating functions between the knower and the known and posits us above or outside the world we allegedly merely reflect on (Barad 2007, 133). Where as performativity understands us as part of the world we are in and sees thinking and observing as engagement with the world we are part of. These notions and thoughts of Barad made me interested in touch, sensibility and intimacy. Interest and sensibility towards these topics partly already started in terms of some kind of kinaesthetic feeling and experience in the workshops I did in somatic movement and ecosomatics, taught by Satu Palokangas. Somatics gave a new imaginative and sensible layer and sense on communicability and connectivity of and between bodies and environments. I continued to work with touch in *oIO* more as connectivity between the performers bodies.

Could performativity be connective and bodily knowing or knowledge? Barad writes that knowing is a matter of differential responsiveness to what matters and that knowing entails differential responsiveness and accountability as part of a network of performances. Knowing is not a bounded or closed practise but an ongoing performance of the world (Barad 2007, 149). This makes choreography sound as a knowledge because choreography deals with relationality and connectivity between things. In the practise we did in the process of *oIO* it entailed spontaneous responsiveness in terms of how to perform yourself in the limits of comfortability and challenge. By creating connectivity, for example through eye contact, and other simultaneously performed tasks on physicality, spatiality and speech could be like training of performative, responsive, affective, bodily, relational and interactive knowledge. From this practise the performers gained understanding and confidence in terms of performativity. It gave them space to explore their own performativity and its strenghts and challenges.

My interests in posthuman performativity and quantum physics was strong in the beginning of creating *oIO* and its planning and research. In the start it manifested as sensibility and interest towards details, small movements, gestures, stillness and slowness. The original interest in performativity from the beginning of my studies could be summarised in this sentence of Barad: all bodies, not merely human bodies, come to

matter through the worlds iterative intra-activity – its performativity. As well as in her statement that matter and meaning are mutually articulated (Barad 2007, 152). This binds performativity, matter and meaning together in a way that feels inspiring, interesting and important to spend time with practically.

#### 4.3.1. Poetry as an alternative, performative and expressive logic

My relationship to language and an alternative logic to representation is poetry. In *oIO* poetry was aimed to operate as a logic in relation to syntaxes and meaning making of the work, and to language in the writings. Poetry causes a split in expression as written in the chapter about Expression earlier. What is the content of language and how it is expressed don't need to go together in poetry. Poetry can alter the way things are said or/and what it said. For example if poetry speaks about a chair it doesn't do it in order to tell what the chair is. It can see chair as something else, it can repeat the chair, it can stare at the chair for hours. But the poem won't tell you what you have to do with the chair, that you must sit on it. It can also alter how sitting on the chair is expressed. In *oIO* we were trying to work with this idea in both language and movement.

Ingri Fiksdal writes that she is inspired by Franco Berardi's concept of poetry as a tool of resistance (Fiksdal 2018, 179). Berardi claims that the notion of language needing to be as efficient and transparent as possible in order for information to get to the receiver quickly and easily stems from the separation of finance and economy in 1971. That endorsed a parting of value and sign that has accelerated the idea of efficiency in circulation of information so that everything should be understandable, productive and functional. In this sense Berardi suggests a resistance in the operability of language and enhances sensitivity to/in the world (Fiksdal 2018, 179-180). After reading this I feel I have nothing to add as it concludes so well my own interest towards poetry.

#### 4.4. Existence and feeling – The Open

I have been looking for a term and a way to describe the aspect of feeling, poetry and existence in relation to *oIO*. Once the piece was already done and I was still looking I encountered concept of the Open. It helps me to explain the thoughts I had developed in the creation process. Poet Rainer Maria Rilke developed a concept of the Open which I parallel with the notion of existence. Rilke writes of it in his poetry book *Duino Elegies*

(1923) in the eight, ninth and tenth elegy. Rilke praises the capacity of plant and animal life to inhabit a seemingly borderless surround that he names as the environmental correlate or the sphere of the creature – the Open (Santner 2006, 1). Rilke says that man has been alienated from the Open because of his enclosure within an inner theatre of representations and mediations which comes from the stage. He says that man is in a compulsive stance of spectatorship over against the world (Santner 2006, 5). Rilke has been observing the connectedness and feeling between the world and a thing (human or non-human). The Open seems to suggest an existence that is connective and open in relation to the environment and world around. He sees humanity in a little bit negative view as completely unable to experience or understand this. This idea of the Open resonates in me as a place of where poetry also stems from. I use it because Rilke was also a poet himself. In *o/o* this place or state of the Open was present on the level of underlying feeling, idea, affectivity and resonance for the whole work.

Rilke's the Open resonates with transindividuality. Bojana Cvejic wrote an article *In States of Transindividuality* (2016) in which she writes that being precedes the individual and that being acts as the preindividual source supersaturated with potentials. She quotes philosopher Gilbert Simondon by saying that every living and non-living entity is charged with an indetermined nature, a reserve of power of mutation (Cvejic 2016, 5). Seeing entities as beings, as in before the process of individuation, creates more equal and non-hierarchical order between living and non-living beings. Being is something that connects all matter. The state of being is seen as state in plants and animals but also in humans before the process of individuation. I have been thinking about the process of individuation as a process of naming and recognising that can happen in the matter itself or in the observer of the matter. Which one affects the process of individuation more the observer of the matter or the matter itself? This is a performative question. Transindividuality sees Rilke's the Open as a potentially shared state of being between all matter. The transformability of it makes me think about the significance and power of recognition. For humans it can be possible to live completely in the state of individuation but even that doesn't remove the existence of transindividuality or the Open. Preindividual could be also pre lingual or pre language. Addressing this dimension feels important because I tend to work also with language.

The way Rilke speaks about the Open relates to receivingness and comprehension of existence that includes vulnerability. What Rilke proposes inevitably brings in the question of protecting/shielding oneself. Vulnerability is important and intimate aspect and reality of the body and it is an area of interest for me in choreography too. It points to a state in which there is openness towards the environment and an ability to form multiplicity of different connectivities or binds with different entities. This brings in mind Cvejics writing that affects are in relationship with other affects. It is intelligence that is embedded in the matter itself. Nudity is one way of seeing humanity as less strict and separate category. Skin is also a huge sense organ of humans which highlights the porosity between the body and environment. In *o/o* approximately half of the work or a bit less was in nudity. Nudity interested me because it shows the vulnerability in physical level, at the same time challenging the mundane and human notion of the body but also supporting it. It brings the body into another intimate context.

The Open is an example of a feeling like or kind of a feeling concept. It is performative as it also points to specific connectivity and has a relation to an idea about boundaries, fixity and surfaces and to the way they are defined. It proposes a stability/repetitiveness that is rooted in pre individual like existence or being.



*o/o*. Photograph: Katri Naukkarinen.

## 5. MOVEMENT: MUNDANE AESTHETICS BEYOND RECOGNITION

After making *oIO* and starting to write this thesis composition has gained more importance, or at least as much importance, as a movement. If I could start to write this again I would put more importance in composition and would derive more aspects of movement from there. In work I put a lot of importance into the clarity of compositional ideas. I find it important they go parallel with the thinking of the work. Composition produces movement. It will be my point of interest and reference in the future. I feel actually little bit sad that I can't write about composition more. It is also interesting that as a conclusion to the interest in writing about movement I arrive to composition.

### 5.1. Setting movements and vocabulary

At the moment I am interested in creating set movement material. What I am interested in is to set most of the movement. I am interested to set that much that the set movement starts to operate in the levels of meaning making. The line and limit where it happens is an interesting area. In *oIO* the movements, breath patterns and texts were set. What was not so set was the exact timings the movements were made and the extensions they reached into. We also worked with the presence of the performer and of how they were in their bodies in the moments of performing, and how that affects the meaning of the movement. This became important in terms of aliveness and feeling of the body. It affected the experience of the spectator. There were no counts or queues from sound or music. The dancers often had to listen and learn to feel the temporalities.

There are different ways of meaning formulation in set and improvised material (I am now speaking of them as very black and white, strict categories). In the beginning of my thesis project I was hesitant but curious of setting movement. If I set movement in order to just to set it it sometimes feels like a dead movement or an empty shell. Seeing that makes my body bored, ignorant, confused and frustrated. It makes me think why is the movement set. If the form of it doesn't say anything and could as well be any other form (form of movement) why is it important to set it at all? What does this say about the process of setting movement and of where to focus in it? It also made me think about an area of movements I am interested in. Is it enough to be able to say what you

are not interested in relation to movement? Or is it enough to say the wider area of what kind of movements you are interested in? Or do I need to be able to justify the very specific and individual choices that I make? Thinking through Spinoza's expression it is more important to understand why and how movement and its composition emerges.

I am not so interested in developing improvisation or devising based practises at the moment. In two of my works in Theatre Academy I created also some material that was based on carefully and clearly framed improvisation. It was a way of avoiding creating representational movement material which I felt I wasn't able to avoid earlier whilst choreographing set material. By working with framed improvisation I wouldn't create form for the movement so the problem of it would be avoided. Now I feel the problem of it is more interesting to work with. Everytime I set movement it creates vocabulary. What vocabulary did I want to use? I didn't think about this in those two works which were partly based in framed improvisation. So movement was assumedly based in contemporary dance or release technique. The movements resembled dance like movements. In *oIO* the solution emerged as by focusing on everyday and mundane movement as kind of the base aesthetic of the work that was then transformed. The assumed contemporary technique vocabulary was replaced with everyday or action-like movement vocabulary. If it resembled dance or contemporary release technique was fine. By focusing first to everyday and mundane the movement and its form became first more like a gesture, way of being, function, resting or action. It formed its own functionalities, recognisabilities and meanings that could be manipulated and transformed, for example with temporalities, qualities, tension and rhythms. It became something that can be repeated. When it is taken away from its everyday environment its original intention and functionality disappears (at least partly). That brought another context in. It left gap to its expression and showed it in a new way, as spoken about expression earlier. For example in *oIO* a simple act of letting the knees drop heavily from bended position to sideways on the floor can have a dramatic effect in the performance where as in everyday life it could signify relaxation or accident. I would still work with temporality, dynamics, gravity and spatiality of movement. I realised that whilst setting movement the vocabulary of it is the area that affects the form of the movement quite much. There is something language like in movement vocabulary so it



is interesting to think these connections further in the future also with other vocabularies. The way the movement looks doesn't affect its value in my opinion.



*Photos from rehearsals of oIO in April 2021. Photograph: Eeva Juutinen.*

## 5.2. Virtuosity and amateurism

As I started the work with mundane and everyday, function/action/resting, kind of vocabulary it made me think about and define virtuosity in a new way. Can (or how can) there be virtuosity in starting from everyday movement vocabulary? It also made me think of when and how I choreograph virtuosity and what does it communicate. Whether the virtuosity of the choreography and/or of the performer/dancer can exist in different areas. What kind of virtuosity do I highlight when I choreograph? Virtuosity is present whilst doing and watching performances. What are the areas of performance,

choreography or dancing/moving/performing that I want to train and make virtuosic? Often when I watch improvisational practises or framed improvisations I am also watching how good the improviser and dancer/performer is in it. Is that something I want to bring into the meaning of the work? Do I want to show that this person is good improviser or has a flexible and strong body? I think there is nothing wrong with virtuosity. In *o/o* we were training the performativity and its quality with the dancers. We also worked with rhythms, temporalities, qualities, transformations and precision of movement. I was interested in how these aspects affect to the meaning making and how by researching them, some kind of virtuosity can be present. I worked with amateurism in relation to writing in my thesis work. There is some kind of lightness, freshness and even humour in relation to amateurism. Amateurism can contain feelings of embarrassment, shame, lightness and enjoyment. Amateurism and virtuosity contradict each other. Working with writing, and with speaking alongside moving, creates a link to every day reality. As bodies in the mundane environments we tend to move and speak at the same time naturally. We are doing this multitasking very effortlessly. As speaking and moving is something that bodies tend to do it relates directly to the world. Speaking and voice happen in the body as much as movement. Different ways, attitudes and perspectives on how to perceive body and how its being is constructed is interesting.

I think exposing myself as an amateur writer also brought another layer to my position as a maker of this work. I might be soon having master degree in choreography but at the same time I am also an amateur in writing. Both of these elements are important part of my work. So I was not only emphasizing my possible virtuosity, but also admitting my amateurism and working with it, although I have been writing on my own for years. I have never taken any classes in writing or studied it independently so I would still say it is amateurism in that sense. Writing brings forth another reality and layer of the body and another way of manifesting bodily reality. If I would have worked with writer I could have also highlighted the virtuosity of it.

### 5.3. Qualities

The qualities of movement are interesting and important. Quality in itself is still not enough. In *o/o* we tried to work on one approach that was mostly based in qualities. I was never able to set it and I couldn't make sense of what I wanted to say with it. It

only worked as framed improvisational movement that by practising it highlighted the dancers ability to do it well, even when the doing well was also related to rhythms and other choreographic and quided aspects than only the virtuosity of the movement as form. Although qualities and forces exist in the body they are not necessarily in the body. Qualities and forces exist everywhere and in everything: in environments, objects, organisms and non-human matter. This is why they also interest me because they have a link to the world and its functioning and being beyond the body. They are relational forces that exist between all entities. They are something I work with when I already work with something else. In another work *Other Nature* I was focusing on the natural forces which are electromagnetic forces, gravity and strong and weak nuclear force. That was interesting but I was lacking the specificity in relation to body. Now I am more able to extract from practises and questions what is actually workable in them and in which stage of the working. For example when working with intimacy the gaze and eyes were concrete starting points and bodily things to work with. Intimacy could have been decribed or approached differently through senses or sensibility or reciprocity of experiencing and being experienced... I was interested in the gaze and act of looking because it related to physical performative practise that I had constructed. Looking and being looked at is something that happens in the performance situation anyway when there is performers and audience in a traditional theatre setting. It is interesting to relate to something that is part of the contract and limit of being in a performance. That can give the audience space to reflect their own bodies. It brings attention to what is happening in here in this moment. Eyes and gaze are also a sensory apparatus which is usually very dominant in performances. Looking and being looked at also brings forth the question of light and dark and different visions those include. Performance philosophy writer and professor Andre Lepecki says in his book *Singularities* in the chapter *In the Dark* by quoting Stephane Mallarme that: in the theatre, one entity takes precedence above the dancer, the chadellier. Because the chadellier lights the theatre from above it is for Mallarme the transcendent and authoritative principle organizing the entire field of appearances under its domain (Lepecki 2016, 64). So what is interesting in the gaze is that it includes experience of seeing but it also produces experiences from that seeing. Eye is what sees and it is being seen. Maybe this double functioning makes it intimate. The fact that it tends to be dominating could be

challenged. By bringing awareness to it will also change the way that it is functioning. *oIO* wasn't a work about the gaze. Gaze was one of its attributes.

#### 5.4. Logics behind moving

Dance often gives an image of ease and efficiency in relation to movement. Flow and effortlessness of the movement are admired, especially in dance education. Often dance gives an illusion of the weight or lightness of the body. It shows that bodies are trained and that by training the body the performance can be achieved. What does practise support or aim for, also in the level of meaning production in the body of the dancer and in the body of the spectator? Dance has aims and ideals in relation to *how* movement should be done. It judges movement based on how well or how right it is done. What kind of meaning does that create in the body and world? Because of these reasons I describe dance as illusion because its logics and aims are many times based in producing certain kind of language in the level of meaning making and impression. The meaning making of the dance, on the level of its aims and logics, is not often described, noticed or emphasized. I have been interested in weight and gravity in the recent works that I have done. My answer to this in *oIO* was to depart from mundane and action like movement material which becomes dance-like only after its manipulation. I try to be aware of the clarity in what we do: whether what we do already produces something usable or is there to find some aspects and clarity through doing. Time is limited in processes. Making mistakes is also fine and fruitful. How do the practises I choose support the projects aims and help us to get there?

I don't define dance through its form anymore. I use the word illusion because many dance techniques aims, functions and logics are often based on values that are not necessarily natural but support different ideals. I feel dance can easily aim to hide the ugliness and heaviness of the body. Dance often aims to create bodies that move smoothly between each other. Dance is illusionary because it wants to create an ideal of beautiful, effortless and light body, or then some other ideal of the body. It is one reason why working with only dance vocabulary wasn't interesting for me in *oIO*. There are dances like butoh also where the ugliness and heaviness are emphasized. Does the ugliness and heaviness then become ideal or idealistic? My aim is not to create ideals in any direction. Does choreography always create ideals? It can also be very enjoyable to

see someone doing something well and effortlessly. How even and constant the world that the body creates is? When does the world that the body creates become idealistic and in what way? How strict or loose is the world that the body creates and what kind of meaning does that produce in performance and for the audience? Whilst choreographing I think about the logics, aims, intentions and functionalities of the movement and the way movement or performing corporeality is practised. I do it because I believe that those will affect to the meanings of the work. They point to the question of what do we practise when we practise something. Using illusion or dance is a tool with which I can do things in performance, if I like. Dance and dance techniques are languages and vocabularies as is mundane movement. Awareness of values is important.

Notions of beauty, naturalness and anti-naturalness have been present in the Western dance already clearly before. Lepecki writes about this in his book *Singularities* in the chapter *Limitrophies of the Human* when he says that human has been imaged by Western dance's bestiary as that animal which is not quite an animal, forever striving to find its lost natural grace – through endless efforts of discipline (Lepecki 2016, 85). He continues by saying that what human animals lack is nature as its nature. The art of dance in western modernity has then functioned as pedagogical-medical remedy, a clinical as well as aesthetic discipline whose aim is to help humanity to regain its lost nature (Lepecki 2016, 85). I understand his words as a kind of strive for beauty and effortlessness that I wrote about before. It makes dance and choreography sound like a mission to save humanity and bring back its lost qualities. I try to avoid making the performance as a means for that. *oIO* also had quite a lot of beauty in it. It wasn't all intentional. I realised it after the performance was ready. The movement wasn't striving for beauty but the wholeness of the elements in the performance were quite harmoniously connected, even when there was intensity. The natural grace of a man is lost in the ability for self-reflection and self-consciousness and into the fact of being affected. Animals, puppets and god are more graceful because they are either under or beyond it, they lack or have perfected this imperfect nature of the man (Lepecki 2016, 86). Lepecki speaks about the seriousness of the animal which makes it superior to human (Lepecki 2016, 87). I feel like this area of imperfection is exactly the interesting one, although also problematic area of work in terms of choreography. Movement inhabits a body of the human or body of the object, body of the animal or some other body.

Movement is just movement. Movement can be filled with meanings, intentions, expressions where it stems from or where it aims at. Movement can be very full or completely empty. This 'seriousness' potentially exists in movement in the sense that it doesn't necessarily express anything outside of itself. When thinking about expression I wonder whether in order to work with movement it needs to always be separated from its subject? At the same time movement is also not separate of affects, consciousness and reflections. That's why starting to move is never neutral. I believe this seriousness of the movement is very potential and important place for choreography.

Interest towards mundane has also origins in interest towards social choreography. Especially one chapter that Andrew Hewitt writes in his book *Social choreography: Ideology as a performance in dance and everyday movement* (2005) is about English social dancing. This passage caused a reaction of resistance to it in me and inspired to create something different from it. He quotes one of Friedrich Schillers letters who sees dance as a social phenomena:

"I can think of no more fitting image for the ideal of social conduct than an English dance, composed of many complicated figures and perfectly executed. A spectator in the gallery sees innumerable movements intersecting in the most chaotic fashion, changing directions swiftly and without rhyme or reason, *yet never colliding*. Everything is so ordered that the one has already yielded his place when the other arrives; it is all so skillfully, and yet so artlessly, intergrated into a form, that each seems only to be following his own inclination, yet without ever getting in the way of anybody else. It is the most perfectly appropriate symbol of the assertion of one's own freedom and regard for the freedom of others." (Hewitt 2005, 2).

This extract has influenced the creation of *oIO*. It inspired me to create the logic of queering/differing temporalities, in order to break natural flow of movement. It also created one section of the work where the dancers continuously jump on to each other but stop into long stillness straight after the jump. This produced strange postures that lasted purposefully too long in silence. I was thinking how to contrast Schillers ideological thoughts about movement, dance and efficiency. How to create other kinds of encounters that don't need to avoid collisions? That section of the work was inspired

by this but I also tried to reflect on it in other parts of the work. For example the melodramatic scene in which there is open expression of anger and erotic which is often seen as forbidden for women in public. Schillers extract also inspired me to work with simple repetitions of the same movement, as he speak about the *innumerable* movements and *many* complicated figures. It made me think of how virtuosity creates ideology and how to be aware of it in choreography.

#### 5.4.1. Beyond recognition and cliché

The recognisability of everyday movement can be questionable. For me the idea in *olo* was more to depart from the recognisable and by changing it move towards something else, non-recognition or part recognition or multiple recognitions in the same. Cvejic describes recognition as image of thought (Cvejic 2016, 33). I think she means that recognition produces certain kind of knowing in thought. We know what we see.

Mundane movement can be also seen as cliché in dance. I aim to develop an ability of criticality towards what I do. My defence against this is that I didn't use any mundane material without processing and working with it choreographically. There was no mundane as 'readymade'. By blurring or transforming its recognizability and functionality by using choreographic procedures it becomes something else and wasn't the same or often recognisable with where it stems from, it wasn't mundane anymore.

#### 5.5. Poetic and the thing

According to Miika Luoto poetic is a move in which something is revealed (Luoto in Monni and Allsop 2011-2013, 50-51). Mundane or everyday corporeality is something we don't pay attention often in a deeper level. It is more a necessity of being part of the world. Working with mundane is an attempt to find difference in normality. Revealing happens through how we pay attention to something, and how something is letting itself being paid attention to. Andre Lepecki defines a thing as whatever that escapes instrumental reason, whatever exists outside of logics of manipulation, whatever is unconditioned, whatever actively wants to escape from being reduced to graspability and comprehension, whatever that reminds us that uncertainty surrounds the holding of things (Lepecki 2016, 29). Lepecki also mentions thing in relation resistance of the object. So by working with mundane choreographically there occurs transformation where mundane becomes something else, that doesn't need to be recognised only as

mundane. My working with mundane aesthetic is also escaping its mundanity. Working with mundane aesthetics suggest a being/state that is included or stems from that body, physicality and movement. If I am touching my head it can suggest that I might be bored, that I am trying to solve something or that I might have a headache etc. There are multiple meanings in the same movement. The fact that the being in the movement and body is revealed through the movement and body itself in everyday vocabulary is interesting. The fact that being doesn't come from an idea of mine is interesting. The fact that there is a vocabulary that is shared with all the people in the world is interesting. That gives me more components to work with.

### 5.5.1. Aesthetics and criticality

Poetics and aesthetics are two separate things just as Luoto wrote earlier. Poetic can bring in mind certain assumed aesthetic or thought to be aesthetic oriented. I am not interested in aesthetic driven poetics. Aesthetics are about the judgement and receiving of art work for example in relation to beauty. I asked about aesthetics when I took part to Dramaturgy course *Ongoing Movements* as part of Traces of November festival in June 2021 which was held by Esther Severi. She said that aesthetics are the set of tools and practises of how an artist works. Her reply highlighted the connection of tools and practises to the outcome of the art work. Aesthetics are inevitably part of every artists work. In the process of creating *oIO* we were speaking with the working group about non-aesthetics. The term was there in order to avoid too harmonious, assumed and expected decisions in the beginning of the process and in relation to choreographic performance. It was there to open up potentials to go beyond the ideas of expected external appearances or manifestations of art. In the beginning there was interest towards distortion of beauty and contemporaryness of art and the non-aesthetics helped in that. *oIO* had some beauty in it but it also had contradictions and unexpected choices.

Alva Noe writes that for the aesthetic judgement to be aesthetic it needs to be impartial. Noe quotes Immanuel Kant by saying that art happens in the space of criticality. He says that aesthetic reactions are always about feeling and that we think those aesthetic reactions are achievements or insights (Noe 2015, 237-238). I have learned to be quite critical towards my own work. That also helps to take in the criticality of others. I think nowadays that if someone gives me critique about my work it is good because I learn



from it and it shows that the person takes my work seriously or is interested to help me see it in different ways. That can be even more useful than getting compliments, sometimes. Criticality is an ability and also condition of my work as an artist.

## 5.6. Concepts: Intimacy and intensity

During my studies in Theatre Academy I have been interested in concepts of intensity and intimacy. I think body, movement, actions and performances can create and produce intensity and intimacy. Intensity and intimacy are areas of interest from where I further define my points of working and interest with movement, composition, performance and body. These concepts are not themselves the items that I work with as such. Concepts are areas that I like to research and read and think about but that need to be further elaborated and articulated. These concepts link my work to philosophy and are my points of interest towards philosophy in choreography. Concepts are what philosophy produces and invents. Intensity and intimacy, as concepts, have been inspiring and helping me to invent and develop the two base practises that we did with the dancers in *oIO*. Concepts link my work to philosophy but also to personal as I feel there needs to be personal interest in order to use philosophy in my work, although philosophy in itself is not personal. Creating that link links philosophy to the body.



*oIO*. Photograph: Katri Naukkarinen.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This written thesis is not perfect and complete. I notice it when I read through it. I still must now stop writing and editing it and accept its state as it is. I believe that art or being an artist is not about being perfect or complete either. That is one reason I am an artist. So I have excused myself of it in this written thesis although this is supposed to be more academic. Allowing failing is important. I could reference Samuel Beckett here (put 'Samuel Beckett failure housekeeping quote' in google search if you want). I have managed to write this thesis in a way that I have learned through out the process. I have also learned what I want to learn more in the future. Big thanks for my mentor Simo Kellokumpu for conversations and helping me to articulate my thoughts.

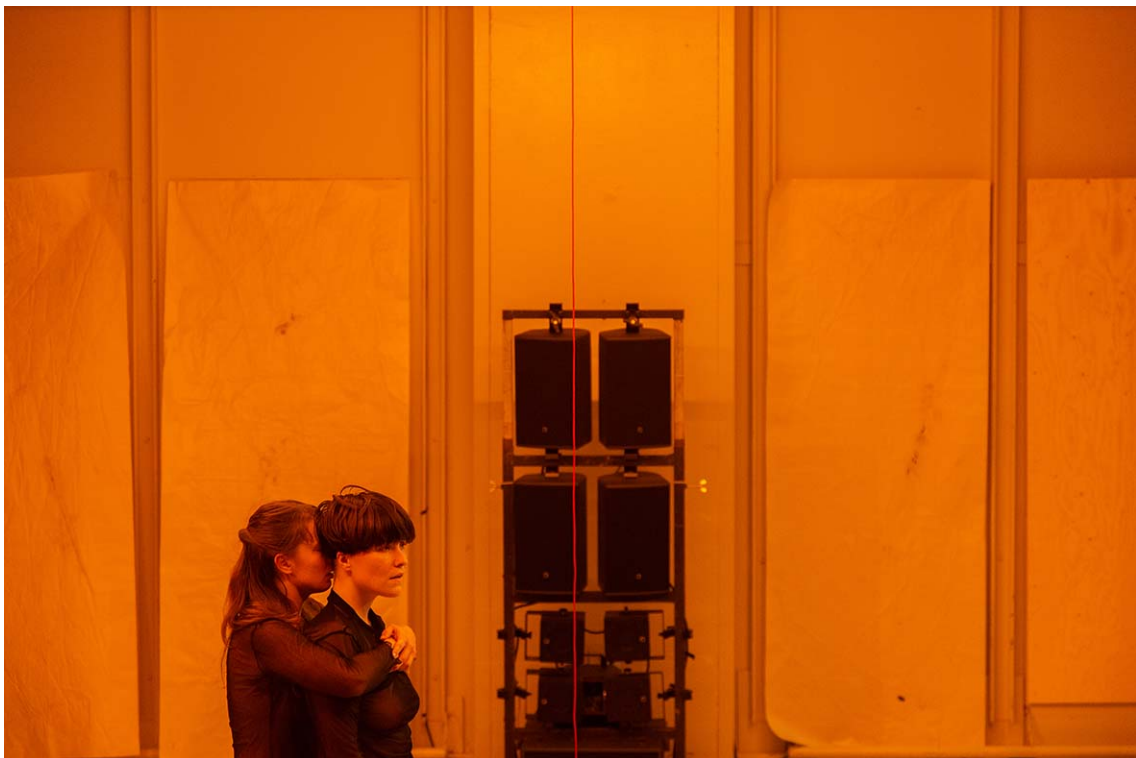
My art is made for audiences. I try to keep developing a sense of feeling of what is worth doing and how to do it. Feeling that takes into account many entities, realities, environments, connections and affects. That's why I have been studying so much: in order to understand deeper how something emerges. I want to take working seriously although the work itself doesn't need to be serious. Humour and richness often appear in my work without planning. Because working with the body is easily close to our own body, it has been important to spend time in the learning and to allow the slowness of learning. And the learning never stops (fortunately). Creation happens in many places, ways and levels at the same time, and generates (from) ideas, decisions and problems. I try to pay attention to how I notice and how I put different amounts of attention and value to these processes of creation. Many thanks for my mentor Elina Pirinen for being there for conversations and honesty whilst making *oI/O*.

I am aware of the context of this thesis as an archive of Theatre Academy and for its purpose for the future students and teachers. Everything I write could be put under knowledge production. These studies have made me think about the role and position of choreography in my life. The act of separating myself from things happening in my life and trying to only exist as a student or a choreographer has been feeling sometimes impossible. This impossibility has made me think about the connections and divisions between everyday day life and art, in the body and in general, and the intimacies and intensities that it includes, and difference(s) that it creates. It became to be part of *oI/O*.

Thanks for the working group in *oIO*: Maria, Terhi, Helka, Tony and Vilma for enduring my creativity. Thank you for the work that we did and the process of it.

Thank you for my mother for everything and beyond, always. You taught me of the heart which is not taught in any school and which goes beyond all knowledge.

In the future I aim to develop a more sustainable way of working as an artist that takes into account the resources and wellbeing of my collaborators, audiences, environment, nature, my body, other bodies, planet and other species. I want to keep practising somatic movement in order to research and learn embodied bodily levels of interactivity and communicability. I try to balance and to find right places for the naturalness and difference/unnaturalness in my practise and do art that is challenging, in the limits of feeling well. I aim to find ethical ways of working and have an ability for reflection and change. I will keep working with the topics and concepts mentioned in this thesis also in new ways, especially affect=intensity->expression and feeling-performativity, intimacy, difference, mundane aesthetics and intensity. I want to focus to composition. I will explore new areas of work. I aim to create space for also softness and peace inside my work and to ground it in a way that I will focus also to the feeling(s) that it suggests.



*oIO. Photograph: Katri Naukkarinen.*

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