

>matter joining subject<

Choreographing *with*

KAROLIINA LOIMAALA



ABSTRACT

DATE: 30.03.2020

AUTHOR Karoliina Loimaala		MASTER'S OR OTHER DEGREE PROGRAMME The Master's Degree Program in Choreography	
TITLE OF THE WRITTEN SECTION/THESIS >matter joining subject< Choreographing <i>with</i>		NUMBER OF PAGES + APPENDICES IN THE WRITTEN SECTION 68 pages	
TITLE OF THE ARTISTIC/ ARTISTIC AND PEDAGOGICAL SECTION <i>Purpling</i> The artistic section is produced by the Theatre Academy. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The artistic section is not produced by the Theatre Academy (copyright issues have been resolved). <input type="checkbox"/> No record exists of the artistic section. <input type="checkbox"/>			
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"/>
<p>This written section of my thesis work is based on the artistic part <i>Purpling</i> that premiered at the Theatre Academy 24.9.2019 in Theatre Hall.</p> <p>The written section departs from analysing the artistic part. It attempts to present leading questions that drove the artistic process, what kind of choreographic and bodily practices were engaged in throughout the process, leading chosen theoretical frameworks, personal remarks and experiences that have affected both artistic and writing processes.</p> <p>The written section attempts to focus on how choreographing <i>with</i> matter and human as both active, vibrant constitutions, materialises in an affective, rich, and constantly changing intra-action (defined by Karen Barad). It tries to ponder on what possibilities a thematic of moving subjectivities might offer in terms of ending the era of Anthropocene.</p> <p>In this written section I will:</p> <p>Centralise my artistic interests in choreographic realm to the concepts of thingness, polysemy of matter, breathing space and affected body. Observe these interests through theoretical frameworks offered specifically by Hélène Cixous, Erin Manning and Jane Bennett.</p> <p>Itemise my tendency to begin an artistic process and analyse how that reveals the constitutive ingredients of my choreographic thinking.</p> <p>Introduce the driving motives and questions for <i>Purpling</i>: A personal sensorial experience event of purpling defined by Erin Manning an interest towards working with soil a question about translation as an artistic method, regarding translating a reconstructed subjectivity of Hélène Cixous' hysteric into a choreographic work.</p> <p>Analyse how a period spent in Brazil functioned as a premonition for the artistic process, through personal, sensorial experiences and the questions that arose.</p> <p>Observe how and where the choreographic work actualised while being framed by concepts of vibrant landscape, <i>feeling with world</i>, and being (with) mineral. Observe what kind of choreographic operations were needed when researching the thematic of a reconstructed subjectivity of Cixous' hysteric and so being, moving subjectivity. Observe and analyse how to use a Lacanian division into imaginary, symbolic and Real as a choreographic grid and a compositional tool.</p> <p>Ponder on possible meanings behind the initial questions and a possible outcome of what this choreographic work is about, to me.</p>			
ENTER KEYWORDS HERE Matter, subjectivity, mineral, relativity, feeling with world, intra-action, Cixous, Manning, Bennett, Lacan, Discourse of hysteric, choreography, hybrid, translation, transformation			

TIIVISTELMÄ

PÄIVÄYS: 30.03.2020

TEKIJÄ Karoliina Loimaala		KOULUTUS- TAI MAISTERIOHJELMA Koreografian maisteriohjelma	
KIRJALLISEN OSION / TUTKIELMAN NIMI >matter joining subject< Choreographing <i>with</i>		KIRJALLISEN TYÖN SIVUMÄÄRÄ (SIS. LIITTEET) 68 s.	
TAITEELLISEN / TAITEELLIS-PEDAGOGISEN TYÖN NIMI <i>Purpling</i> Taiteellinen osio on Teatterikorkeakoulun tuotantoa <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Taiteellinen osio ei ole Teatterikorkeakoulun tuotantoa (tekijänoikeuksista on sovittu) <input type="checkbox"/> Taiteellisesta osiosta ei ole tallennetta <input type="checkbox"/>			
Kirjallisen osion/tutkielman saa julkaista avoimessa tietoverkossa. Lupa on ajallisesti rajoittamaton.	Kyllä <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ei <input type="checkbox"/>	Opinnäytteen tiivistelmän saa julkaista avoimessa tietoverkossa. Lupa on ajallisesti rajoittamaton.	Kyllä <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ei <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Tämä kirjallinen osio perustuu taiteelliseen opinnäytetyöhöni nimeltä <i>Purpling</i>, joka sai ensi-iltansa 24.9.2019 Teatterikoululla Teatterisalissa.</p> <p>Kirjallinen osio on analyysi taiteellisesta osiosta. Tämä analyysi tapahtuu seuraavanlaisten toimintojen kautta: taiteellista prosessia ajaneiden pääkysymysten esittely sekä pohdinta, koreografisten ja kehollisten praktiikoiden analyysi suhteessa kysymyksiin ja valittuihin avainkonsepteihin, valikoitujen teoreettisten viitekehysten esittely ja liittäminen taiteelliseen käytännön työhön, sekä henkilökohtaisten muistiinpanojen ja kokemusten kuvailu.</p> <p>Kirjallinen osio pohtii, miten materian ja ihmisen <i>kanssakoreografoiminen</i>, tunnistaa ja tunnustaa molemmat osapuolet perustavanlaatuisesti elävinä, aktiivisina toimijoina, ja miten tämä materialisoituu affektiivisessa, rikkaassa ja alati muuttuvassa intra-aktiossa (Karen Baradin intra-aktion määritelmän mukaisesti).</p> <p>Kirjallinen osio pohtii myös, mitä mahdollisuuksia liikkuvan subjektiviteetin käsitteen käyttöönotolla on poeettisessa sekä yhteiskunnallisessa toiminnassa, ja mitä se voi mahdollistaa uuden aikakauden kynnyksellä liu'uttaessa pois ihmiskeksyydestä.</p> <p>Kirjallisessa osiossa:</p> <p>Keskittän taiteelliset intressini seuraaviin käsitteisiin: "thingness"= asiaisuuden asiaisuus ja olioisuuden olioisuus, materian polysemia, hengittävä tila ja affektiivinen ruumis.</p> <p>Tarkastelen näitä intressejä erityisesti Hélène Cixous' n, Erin Manningin ja Jane Bennettin teorioiden kehystämänä. Erittelen tendenssin aloittaa taiteellinen työ edellisen kolmen taiteellisen prosessin kautta ja analysoin, miten se paljastaa koreografisen ajatteluni koostavat perusaineokset.</p> <p>Esittelen <i>Purpling</i>'in taiteellista prosessia ajavat ydinkysymykset ja -kokemukset: henkilökohtainen, aistinen maailmakokemus, Erin Manningin määritelmä/kuvailu "purpling" in tapahtumisesta, kiinnostus maaperän kanssa työskentelyä kohtaan sekä kysymys käännöksestä taiteellisena menetelmänä.</p> <p>Tässä käännöksestä on tarkalleen ottaen kyse feministisen, poliittisen esseeseen ytimessä olevasta subjektiviteetin rekonstruktiosta koreografisen työn ydinkysymyksenä ja kääntämisenä koreografiseksi menetelmiksi.</p> <p>Analysoin Brasiliassa viettämäni ajan vaikutuksia kehollisten ja mielellisten kokemusten, sekä minua pohdituttaneiden kysymysten kautta prosessin etiäisenä.</p> <p>Tarkastelen miten ja missä koreografinen työ realisoitui ollessaan kehystetty käsitteiden värisevä maisema, kanssatunteminen sekä mineraali(n kanssa) oleminen, kautta.</p> <p>Tarkastelen, minkälaisia koreografisia operaatioita Cixous' n hysteerikon ja näin ollen liikkuvan subjektiviteetin käsitteen työstäminen vaati käytännössä.</p> <p>Tarkastelen ja analysoin miten Lacanin jakoa todellisuudesta imaginaarisen, symbolisen ja Reaalisen verkkoon voi käyttää koreografisena kehikkona sekä komposition rakentamista ja ymmärtämistä helpottavina työkaluina.</p> <p>Pohdin näiden prosessia ajaneiden kysymysten taustoja, sekä mitä niiden avaamat ajatukset tarkoittavat minulle valmistuneessa koreografisessa työssä, sekä mihin ne mahdollisesti osoittavat.</p>			
ASIASANAT Materia, mineraali, subjektiviteetti, Cixous, hysteerikko, kanssatunteminen, suhteisuus, Manning, Bennett, koreografia, intra-aktio, Lacan, hybridi, kääntäminen, transformaatio			

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
<i>Cixous, matters, thoughts</i>	8

IT BEGINS TO PURPLE	12
<i>Texturing world</i>	12
<i>Event of “Purpling”</i>	14
<i>Working with Soil</i>	16
<i>Translating Cixous</i>	18

BBRRRZZZZL	22
<i>Wandering, frictioning, dusting, layering</i>	23
<i>Part of a Topological Field?</i>	27

VIBRANT LANDSCAPE	31
<i>Land + scape</i>	31
<i>Streams, colours, affects</i>	33
<i>Practicing feeling with world</i>	36
<i>Being (with) mineral</i>	40

CHOREOGRAPHING WITH CIXOUS’ HYSTERIC AND A LACANIAN GRID	44
<i>In search of a new subjectivity</i>	44
<i>A subject joining matter - moving subjectivity</i>	45
<i>Streaming Thing Power</i>	50
<i>Choreographic Grid – Lacan</i>	53
<i>Drowning in Autre Jouissance</i>	57

DESCRIPTION OF PURPLING	60
<i>The Space</i>	60
<i>The Cyclical Timeline of the Piece</i>	63

CONCLUSION	67
REFERENCES	69

INTRODUCTION

There are many I's that write this work. It is hard to draw a line between sensorial I, theoretical I, the I that is concerned with how we exist together and the descriptive I, among plurality of yet more. This is because they seem to clutch at each other and form layers for one another. The plurality of an I, is at the core of this work. I consist of many. I am never isolated. A quote, "*The environment enters into the nature of each thing*" (Whitehead in Manning 2019, 2) tickles gently the backs of ears and roots of the skull of this I, summarising perhaps what this paper will 'be about'. In my choreographic thinking an interest towards such things as *thingness, polysemy of matter, a breathing space* has deepened throughout my studies of choreography and specifically throughout this work. Still I notice I cannot but look at the world from my human perspective, affective, aware of its incompleteness. (Lepecki 2016, 86)¹ I observe as if from far away, how my boundaries leak and fluctuate like the fluids that construct this body, blocking up from time to time. *An affected body* is the last point of a quadrangle that pinpoints the leading interests inside the choreographic thinking of this work.

This written section of my thesis is based on the artistic part *Purpling*, 2019. It analyses the artistic part that springs from my way of being in the world and chosen theoretical frameworks. With my way of being in the world I refer to my existential orientation and how it manifests in how I experience sensorially, mentally, socially, politically and philosophically. It refers to how I *relate* in the world in these realms and how I understand or misunderstand inside or outside them. I use the word relate, because it entails a large variety of possibilities of (in)action whether that is seemingly passive, happening on a deep level invisible to eyes, out of reach of ears, or is without *interaction* that can be measured or quantified. Relating happens immediately.

¹ This phrase is a catch from André Lepecki: He talks about human's placement, 'doom and destiny' in dance through Derrida's description of a dancing human, as human has been practicing other modes of life/being throughout the history of dance: "This impoverished being, "this passive infinitude, this infirmity, this lack from which the animal does not suffer" (Derrida and Mallet 2008;130), this entity who is not quite a beast and not quite a god, and still not quite a machine⁵, this *exception* or *rent* in the fabric of nature, can only strive for a kind of imperfect, never quite or only momentarily graceful, too *affected*, too *self-conscious*, dance" (Lepecki 2016, 86.)

This written part will present methodology used regarding my research upon the title, *>matter joining subject<*. In this methodology I have come up with some concepts that have sprouted from practical artistic methods. I have worked with a *vibrant landscape* and choreographed with *Cixous' hysteric* and a *Lacanian grid*. What these conceptualisations have brought up further, I will present in the subchapters through analysing the artistic methods. I will observe the thoughts these methods have awakened as themselves or together with some theoretical puzzling. What makes this paper less straight forward, and direct analogies reluctant to appear, is that everything is linked, and methods converse with several questions weaving everything in one braid.

When it comes to the theoretical point of view, the artistic part intends to converse in a material form with some theorists that have framed my thinking and helped me to conceptualise the artistic work and accompanied my journey in the field of choreography. In this group of theorists there is H  l  ne Cixous, and her notion of not knowing it all, not being it all, all of herself, but a specific body, placed, situated. (Cixous 1986, 172) There is also Erin Manning, with her *“Love is more than human: it courses across the human, across life in all its material and incorporeal ecologies, touching on the folding of the world bodying”* (Manning 2013, 183). In all matter, *world bodies* and *body worlds*. Another essential theoretical anchorage is offered by a Russian scientist Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky, quoted by Jane Bennett, presenting a rousing thought that *“We are all walking, talking minerals”* (Bennett 2010, 11). Throughout this work I will analyse how these thoughts incubated and either *affected* or *were affected by* the practical work.

In this work, I attempt to draw loops and lines between practice and theory. This loops and lines define themselves through personal notes, experiences, descriptions of the piece and ongoing discussions I have with philosophers, artists, and colleagues inside my head, through this writing, as well as through the piece *Purpling*.

I think of theory as a concrete roof filled with concepts, hanging up there like ripe olives. It concretizes as a place, the question being where to pick from and where to attach to. It offers a place to verbalize corporeal memories, material situations, ways to exist - a domain where some feel more at home, some less. This thought of theory as a *place* helps me narrow down the abstract nature of it.

I feel choreography practices and peruses relativity and connectivity in the world. It plays with utopias, dystopias, potentialities, and recomposes relations. It remains bound to situation and is never neutral. I choose here the word ‘perusing’ since I came across the following definitions for it; *observing with care, to read completely, to skim through, to wander*. In a way they all run together through a process of choreographing a work, clashing into and absorbing one another. They have different intensities that feel familiar during a process. As a choreographic state of mind, I relate mostly to an identity of *wanderer*. It is not still, though sometimes it might appear sluggish, lost, determined over what might seem random details, finding things along the way but choosing coincidences carefully. It harkens.

As a choreographer in both artistic and written works, I observe human as a part. As part of a landscape in relation with its environment, as a processual constitution, as a composition of its personal history and its possible futures. As part of *landscape* because it offers a complex and vast enough surrounding, that reveals humans’ fundamental relationality. I try to engage in practices where the human remains an active participant, though not the main figure. This is challenging, even troubling, since in dance and performing arts we are both accustomed and easily drawn to the human performer. It can surely be challenged and asked; do I ‘succeed’ in presenting human as part? What is more fundamental to me at this point is to practice how to build emergent relativity between human and matter into the composition of a choreographic work.

Within this topic is a question that drives me; *how to perceive the entire composition as an ecology?* Ecology, because environment is an indispensable part of composition, and I am very excited by spatial arrangements, whether they are assembled by chance or carefully constructed. I try to find ways where the scale of the human fluctuates between bigger and smaller, both physically and mentally, or that its way to be partial to/apart from the rest plays with variation. For the performers, it means porousness and sensitivity in the tuning. With tuning² I mean mindset, bodily being towards a direction in the world, level of sensitivity, being in relation to some specific way to experience time, things that determine how we practice being here now. This tuning converses with

² *Vire* in Finnish

environmental tuning, colouring. I want to simultaneously respect performers as the wonderful, trickling, imperfect humans they are. They bring their history, emotions, affects, memories and the current tuning stored in their flesh to the work. Balancing with these elements makes me realise we work constantly with *scale*.

These notions have led me to think of choreography essentially as an event of choreographing *with* – wanting to articulate the importance of material existences that piercingly affect the choreographic.

The process for this thesis began in March 2019, with handing out a preliminary plan. What is introduced in a chapter *It begins to purple* were the primary interests that reared their heads during this time. After this I travelled to Brazil, and this travel is pondered on in the next chapter, *Bbrrrrzzzzl*, as a sort of premonition for the piece. The group process for the artistic part started in August 2019 and the completed performance that we built together took place in September 2019 in Theatre Hall, at the Theatre Academy in the University of Arts Helsinki, Haapaniemenkatu 6. The writing process started in November 2019, as the last one, even though this work includes notes from the entire process.

The performance was created with and by:

Choreography: Karoliina Loimaala (thesis work in MA choreography)

Light Design: Sofia Palillo (MA in light design)

Performance and co-choreography: Krista-Julia Arppo (visiting performer), Geoffrey Erista (MA in acting), Anni Kaila (MA in dance/performance), Kalle Lähde (BA in dance)

Set Design: Teija Turtio (MA in Set Design at Aalto University)

Sound Design: Atte Kantonen (MA in Sound Design)

Production: Salli Berghäll

With wonderful help from: Opte.

Thank you, to the mentors of the artistic and written sections, Maarit Rankanen and Liisa Pentti, and the professor and support for the entire studies of choreography, Kirsi Monni.

Cixous, matters, thoughts

When the thesis process started, I asked, how do I tend to begin a creation process? This made me go through the beginnings from three previous processes during my time in Theatre Academy during 2017-2018, that I will present here. Since they all have a connection point to Hélène Cixous, I will first take a moment to present her key ideas that are relevant to me.

The Laugh of the Medusa from 1975, introduced itself to me in autumn 2016. Funnily enough, this introduction overlapped with my rising interest towards choreography studies. This essay still hasn't left me. Cixous was born in Algiers and moved to France in 1955 for university studies where she then stayed and began building a gender studies department in Paris 8 (Frédéric Regard in Cixous 2010, 7). *The Laugh of the Medusa* seeks out new ways of writing, new ways to construct language, to exist (Cixous 2010, 87). What needs to be mentioned, as I will have few quotes from *The Laugh of the Medusa* by Cixous, is that the edition I am quoting here is translated into English by Paula and Keith Cohen, (except for the quote above that is from the Finnish translation of *Sorties* as part of *Medusan Nauru ja muita ironisia kirjoituksia*). It is translated from an original collection of essays by Hélène Cixous from 1975, with the title *La Rire de la Méduse et autres ironies* published by Éditions Galilee, which is situated in the second wave of feminism. I interpret the other half of the title "and other ironic writings" referring to the side of Cixous that doesn't take herself too seriously - even though the text could be considered a manifesto, it retains an ability to smile at itself. Cixous has been my leading theoretical interest throughout the choreography studies, and she will play an important role in this written work. The very beginning of *The Laugh of the Medusa* calls out the following:

"I shall speak about women's writing: about what it will do. Woman must write her self: Must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies – for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history – by her own movement." (Cixous 1976, 875)

Écriture féminine (from years 1960-1970's) could be described as feminine logic that the patriarchal canon has othered. Second wave feminism based itself on the speciality of the feminine and its empowerment. The quote above can be observed as a strong

statement, for some of its content even provocative. What I want to pick up from it concerning *écriture féminine* is the end where *écriture* is called out to come to the world, “by her own movement”. *What kind of movement* is it, and how does it actualise through choreographic practices?

Cixous sees writing as the very method and space of change, as well as a place that appears as a non-place, which disguises it to easier maintain invisible ways of oppression (Cixous 1976, 879). She works for a language that happens in its heaviness, flesh and new ecologies. Since “choreography” refers etymologically to “writing” (– “graphia” from Greek language), isn’t choreography one of those places where desired structural realities are possible to practice and research – to fulfil the means of intervention critically as well as hopefully? As a last quote to wrap up this introduction of *écriture féminine* by Cixous, I present a thought on love and loving that enjoys change multiplying itself all the time while changing.

“It’s not impossible, and this is what nourishes life-a love that has no commerce with the apprehensive desire that provides against the lack and stultifies the strange; a love that rejoices in the exchange that multiplies.” (Cixous 1976, 893)

This feminine logic is not limited to biological women but feminine as a vaster concept belonging to whomever feels belonging to it (equally she does not speak of/from a place of heterosexuality) – feminine that does not diminish, does not melt in the other to control or to lose oneself, but stays open to flux, towards more directions, staying alert to all parties in an event of exchange. Loss of control in general sense and loss of control as losing one’s sense of agency are options that logocentric logic is traditionally terrified about.

My further interpretations and thoughts on Cixous’ writings will drop, drizzle and pour throughout this work and I will elaborate why and how they have impacted my artistic work. Now let’s move on to the first beginning of a creation.

In the beginning of a solo work in 2017 in Theatre Academy, I asked what is “Souffler” as an event, as a state, as possible emerging associations? In the essay in question, Cixous uses actually *voler* as “*voler langage*”, (Cixous 1976, 887) but it has been translated in Finnish as “*puhaltaa, puhallaa kieltä*” - “to blow language”. I continued

this associative play of words until “souffler, souffler langage”. The creation process, shaped these initial thoughts further, to questions; “What is this secret space inside the core and peel of a Peruvian pepper? What does it mean to carve space when it doesn’t exist? What happens when it is freed?” Together with these questions I was accompanied by a pile of radiantly pink Peruvian peppers, in the end six kilograms, a slingshot, and a microphone. The solo was titled *Voler, écrire, lance-pierre*.

In the next process we summoned an interest towards text and corporeal practices as a group, and a question of how to practice writing with dance? We plunged into the *écriture féminine* of who else but Cixous. *Écriture féminine* seeks to function as writing and thinking that challenges two-dimensional thinking, thinking where white man is a universal neutral, a point zero, enforcing its power on all matter/body/corps. In this piece we engaged in a corporeal translation of *écriture féminine* through a research of watermelons. How watermelons arrived in the process was rather intuitive, as I thought aloud in the studio one day, “*I have been thinking about watermelons.*” - I kept on having dreams about them. The collaboration was titled *Moi-femme, je-femme*.

The third piece was about emptiness. Emptiness as a corporeal state, and furthermore a mental pondering of mine, provoked by a situation our group inhabited: We wanted to work in the Theatre Hall, a gigantic space, with 40 meters of depth and quite some height. I stood in the empty black hall and felt the blackness suck everything into itself. At the same time the space seemed to literally echo outwards of itself. I felt nothingness and everythingness in there was pulling and drawing my entire fleshy mind in different directions. At the very same moment everything seemed so still. You could hear a pin drop. “*What is in here? Emptiness? How does emptiness feel? Everything seems so full even here. Paradoxical.*” We built an artificial desert. Cixous was part of this process through a bodily practice of ‘writing in emptiness’, and her small novel *Un vrai jardin*, for a short while. The piece was titled *aavikko-desert*.

What is common to these starting points is that they all start from a material that beckons me at that moment. Pink pepper, watermelons, air particles. A common theoretical background, a point of discussion for these previous works and *Purpling*, has been Cixous and *The Laugh of the Medusa*. Another common denominator has been

presence of a strong radiant colour. A colour that through time and process changes its shade, density, and light, sometimes multiplies itself to a palette and sprouts a net of associations. Questions have arisen from these materials, or vice versa. Sometimes it is hard to understand which came first – questions or materials.

IT BEGINS TO PURPLE

Texturing world

*air thickens,
 lights slimy contortionists
 reclaim
 golden worms linger, pierce through sealed
 plump eyelids
 soft sizzling swaying mantel mellowly pushes*

I fall levitate fly drown

*electricity crouches cuddly cruddly centre chirp crickling crackling crrk
 agitate the fold*

*I am
 ill at ease
 balmy
 death sizzles
 precise in my flesh
 silently alive*

This poem describes a corporeal experience that visits me since as long as I can remember. It appears wherever and always out of blue. Air pressure condenses in a peculiar way, pulsating, making it rather uncomfortable. It feels as if the world around communicates through pulsations, vibrations, electricity, light. Romanticism aside, it can be named a neural brain jam or something similar with purely physiological reasoning. However, I find this short circuit quite poetic. It moves and it is not about me.

To open reciprocity towards world's textural unfolding is a way to practice relational being. "Dance of attention" by Erin Manning offers an inviting framing for this practice. It talks about forces that compose an event, and where attention is not directed at them but operates with and toward them (Manning 2014, 75). I was curious to intentionally practice dance of attention. We discussed corporeal experiences of worlds texturing and dance of attention with working group of *Purpling*. People shared reminiscent experiences. These experiences were described as lingering states between falling asleep and staying awake among others.

As a chosen practice where dance of attention could be experienced were for us meditational practices. What relates meditation to dance of attention for me, is that you deliberately observe and feel world's dancing. You cannot affect how it dances, but you can observe how your body affects its dancing. There are few aspects that repeat in my meditations.

Anxiety in perception calms down
 Unpredictability of rhythmicity in perception is highlighted
 Feeling of textures, weight and directions are highlighted
 Surface and depth mix up
 The space around dissolves
 Borders of my body leak out
 Pulse variates between deep rest and highly active swerves
 Moment of now emphasizes
 Appearing of radiant colours
 Still becomes mobile
 Sense of events in my body feel surprisingly sharp and detailed

Meditation is not "productive activity" per se. It does what human as a socio-political being is not supposed to do. Being still, heavy and vulnerable, while refusing to interact socially.

I think of what occurs in a meditation, becoming available for worlds dancing and ones own dance of attention, as one method of *intra-action* with the world. With *intra-action* here, I refer to a concept by Karen Barad;

“The notion of intra-action (in contrast to the usual “interaction”), which presumes the prior existence of independent entities or relata represents a profound conceptual shift” (Barad 2007, 139). This shift of paradigm in thinking of subjectivity as not being an independent entity redefines completely the thought of a subject that is entire and solid, that ends at its visible physical boundaries/skin, that our entire culture in capitalistic societies is built upon. The subjectivity in what I call here the old paradigm, springs from a Cartesian dualist world, where world is divided in subjects and objects, where the latter always returns to the former as being a shadow or a disposable part of the first. The world is not made of solid entities neither fixed agencies, but of dynamics, forces, and interrelations. Subjectivity as *fluctuating intra-acting dynamic organism* was a foundation for the work of performers and matter in *Purpling*. We engaged in meditational practices throughout the period of creation. Meditations felt like soft introductory practices and ways to spend time together in the studio, in the space together in another sphere, without demanding a layer of social interaction. Sharing deep individual corporeal experiences after this practice brought us gently into a common verbal plateau.

Event of “Purpling”

Erin Manning’s texts have resonated with my tuning towards choreographic practice I have wanted to be engaged in and I got drawn to her texts with a similar undertow as with Cixous. Manning often describes sensorial experiences and analyses art works with theoretical outcomes. Reading them was what reminded me of my sensorial memories and reframed them. This reframing and new vocabulary to talk about these experiences seemed helpful for practical work. Manning presents another time period than Cixous, as well as surroundings – Canada over the last 20+ years. Why I felt this draw was perhaps a movement I feel while reading them. They are poetic and playful with words, rhythms, and they stay determined but softly introduce sharp criticism. A more-than comes through in the soma of language. Sometimes these texts help me to navigate back and remind what kinds of wordings I resonate to. When a process gets shaky and I am in a foggy place a familiar text might function as an anchorage point, in this case, it functioned as a beginning.

“Purple traces, color-lines cut across the tremulous center, vibrate in a quiver of surfacing that creates an incessant foregrounding-backgrounding. Feel the vortex and you cannot but see the purple texturing, the purple pushing through a background of open quasi-colorlessness into a tremulous foregrounding not of purple per se but of an intensively affective purpling, a force of light shimmering. This purpling is an activity more than it is a color, a trace or a line. It agitates the fold. It surfaces it, layering it with potential shapings, affects on the verge. Barely felt, in the seeing.” (Manning 2013, 175)

I interpret “purpling” of Manning as a matter’s manifestation of complexity in movement, where more-than of matter reveals. There is life and death at the same time, force that pushes through form. “Mere colour” is a life, an activity of its unfolding. Inevitably as the artistic work remained titled as *Purpling*, I might say it was a research about a question what is “purpling” exactly and how to compose with more-than of things?

In the quote Manning is speaking of a video work by an artist and activist Amanda Baggs. Manning speaks for neurodiversity and introduces works of art by people with different types and scales of abilities, ways of perception, ways of being in the world that, from a societal perspective, are defined either by their “lack” or “excess” of something. Baggs is an autistic artist, whose work Manning analyses and theorizes further. She critiques sharply neurotypicality, which articulates life as a way of living that fulfils frames of “able-bodiedness”, “whiteness”, “maleness”, “heteronormativity” together with “pruned sensorial activity”. This life determines a desired life, a leading way to ‘succeed’ in a capitalistic society. I choose the word to succeed, because individuals of any gender type and body type are more likely to be taken seriously and granted more chances if they possess these qualities. Manning works to speak for and normalise other ways of perceiving and being, physically and mentally. She includes all other types of being, calling this all other, voluminous, multiple as a “neurodiverse” life, that does not exclude other life forms (than human) either as less valuable. She presents art works of autistic artists, of deaf blind artists, sensorially hypersensitive people, of herself and tries to present richer ways to perceive and widen our perspectives. Ways of perception are far more diverse and nuanced than what we are accustomed to think. The socio-political body is not asked for to sense too much, rather,

it is sublimated to numb itself. Excessive sensing threatens the speed of consumerism and productivity as a violent storm cloud with the time and slowness it calls for.

Working with Soil

“*Gaia is ticklish and that is why she must be named a being*”, quotes Mette Ingvarsten after Isabelle Stengers in Ingvarsten’s *Expanded Choreography: Shifting the Agency of Movement in the Artificial Nature project and 69 Positions* (2016, 3). The sentence attached itself like a tick behind my ear. In the same chapter, named as *1) Nonhuman choreography: Attributing to inanimate things the capacity to express, act and affect*, she recites some more points from Stengers’ lecture of *Catastrophic times*. From these points I could mention how *Gaia*, named after Greek goddess and so humanised, is unconcerned by human’s tendency to flounder and hit it while passing, be it then exploitation, overwhelming care, or viewing her as savage nature. We scrape, punch, drill, kill, scorch, scratch the earth underneath human feet, after which we caress, revitalise, glorify it in aftermath. Sometimes I imagine humans as killer ants scratching little by little at the peel of the earth. Gaia wins inevitably. However, there is a Posthuman call to exit the prevalent era of Anthropocene (that I am keen to join through this work) and look for other ways to intra-act with nature than the ones mentioned here. When it comes to choreography, it stands in one of the front lines to imagine other possibilities - to try out possible ways of drawing our attention away from the human as the centre of experience, power and its fancied omnipotent flair.

I wanted to work with soil because we must find other ways to imagine and practice our relationship with Gaia. It is old in a scale I cannot come close to comprehend. Working with that kind of temporal relation feels vital – its temporal existence is so fundamentally different from mine so I need to spend time with it. How do our temporal spheres meet, in what kind of activity? I am driven by my temporality, and there are scenes in *Purpling* where the human temporality can be seen stronger, called *Stone wave*, and *Frrrhhee*. However, what we noticed while spending time with boulders and stones, is that we entered a state where time slowed down and our own daily measured,

scheduled grid never seemed to be enough. I still don't understand many things about the boulders we spent nearly two months with. As another aspect, I felt a draw to our other fundamental material differences, which might be described in somewhat similar ways as the temporal sphere - texture, mass, different ways of feeling et cetera.

Beside working with boulders, stones and broken concrete pieces that we found from wastelands, I was drawn by an artificial alternative that could be perceived as soil without being it literally. An artificial choice might trigger varying neural connections regarding the matter, that the original one would not. To imagine and see matter in other textures, shapes and forms expands its poetic potentialities. With this kind of expanding the notion of soil to arrive to a richer plateau of meanings, I refer to the possibilities in the polysemy of matter. Options for bodily intra-action increase as textures are dealt with in different ways. It becomes matter of composing *together with matter*. How can we variate with this matter, playing, constructing with it, and observing earth's own ways to reconstruct? What changes, when the material is changed? As a prisoner of my human mind, I can take advantage of its assets. Imagination that reaches to both individual and collective realms, possesses a great power for enriching thinking habits. Hence, variation in chosen matter.

The set designer Teija suggested working with old newspapers. They become waste soon after their 'premier date' and are ductile into big masses with various forms. Big amounts of newspapers could provide a landscape and enable playing with scale. It offered an opposite textural feel from rocks, that were hard and full of tension.

We faced a situation where we were inside a constructed space, a black box. As I wondered how to call this place, I had vague memories and notes from lectures and workshops about site-specificity. I found a following notion:

"Anthropological place encompasses those locales where there is an established knowledge of the site, where locals come together in a social network that defines and distinguishes the site" (Augé quoted by Hunter 2015, 249) – such as Theatre Academy as an institution. It is a human constructed space for certain types of activity, experiencing, talking, practising, trying, following cultural activities that are under umbrella of faculty of arts. On the other hand, a Theatre Hall is also a *non-place*:

“Non-places are the architectural realization of supermodernity: they are sites through which the main mode of experience is travel”. (Augé according to Hunter 2015, 249) A performance (/place) offers a place for experience for generally short period of time. They are constructed in a way that the place will be ripped down to its initial empty state after a process, for next performance to camp on its field. Performances, people involved in them, audiences, travel thorough those places. If I think of the choreographic state of mind as wandering, a place reserved for that is never a fixed place but rather always on move, never quite a place due to its ephemerality. We decided to follow the logic of constructing in space of construction, as we became inspired by old construction sites and gathering material from wastelands, lands for hospices of “unwarranted, dead matter”. Death seemed to linger on the edges, or even through our choices of matter. Boulders’ humanistic view of death was carried along in possibility of using them as instruments with which to execute one, or as they are “dead” matter without mental activity. Paradoxically boulders felt extremely vibrant and full of energetic tension.

Translating Cixous

While I have engaged into an attempt to conceptualise my choreographic thinking during my time in Theatre Academy, I realised that I connect choreographic work to an act of translation. An act of translation as an artistic method was introduced during our first year of studies in choreography by our professor Kirsi Monni. We had a joint course together with choreography, dramaturgy and fine arts students, and we researched translation as a method together. After the course the thought of translation stayed dormant. I worked with reference to Cixous’ *the Laugh of the Medusa* for three times in a row and I wanted to keep a connection to her also in this thesis work. As a rather slow discharge a question reared its head: Am I translating Cixous?

What I translate in the thesis work, is my interpretation of a reconstruction of new subjectivity that derives from spinal cord of *écriture féminine*. In short, I have named the practical outcome of this theoretical frame into >matter joining subject<. I think of a

subject that actively engages into a practice of joining matter as an existential tuning, a state of mind that then manifests in action. Subject here, is that of Cixous from a *Discourse of Hysteric*, where the human subject suffers in an existential manner from a division into language and body, system of symbols and matter. It derives from a psychoanalytically analysed subject. I will focus on Cixous' interpretation while taking a little from Lacanian thinking, and even less from Freudian thinking. *Écriture féminine* searches for a new subjectivity, where this division does not occur and subject meets language in its materiality. Hence, language is thought of as matter, which was a significant point in translation for me working with matter. A >matter joining subject< functions both ways - *matter joins subject and subject joins matter*. This reversal is important, because it makes both parties active and takes intra-action as a constitutive element and invites this matter joining subject from a second wave of feminism in the 1970s to our current era.

When considering the work of translation, even though Cixous has been my recurrent reference, I do not want to stay too attached to the original text, namely *the Laugh of the Medusa*. What is fundamental to translation is its difference from transcript. What it means in practice is an action of detaching myself from her text, to free up space for the material research in studio with bodies, sound, matter, light et cetera - the concrete material I work with. This means staying open to artistic process. What is “carried across”³ as in the etymological meaning of translation, from *écriture féminine* to my work?

When we translate, it is something tickling, that what escapes, that we want to translate. There is poetic power in Cixous' texts. It doesn't mean full agreement nor blind following bewitched by the poetics. I want to spend time with her thematic, remake and understand it through another modality – that of choreography. Benjamin adds: “*One can demonstrate that no translation would be possible if in its ultimate essence it strove likeness to the original*” (Benjamin 2002, 256). He suggests the definition itself to divert, transform, even play at the expense of the original in order to become something else. It suggests a level of impoliteness, as does Victoria Perez Royo when talking about translation in art as “act of perversion” (Perez Royo in Monni and Allsopp 2015, 116).

³ Other etymological meanings I have come across are “to move from one place or condition into another”, “express sense in another language”, “convert something” or “to be converted to something”. These meanings hint to the nature of transformability by translation.

This act comes from a place of contortion. It needs twisting and turning, dropping the vase on a floor and then picking the broken pieces up with excitement attaching them again in an ugly, unfitting, beautiful - subjectively desirable manner.

To describe the leap that happens in translation, there is a couple often paired together art and philosophy, that offers a fitting example. They tend to feed each other what the other part lacks – speculative phrasings or concrete flesh. I take this example, because *The Laugh of the Medusa* is a literary work. As a choreographer Jenni-Elina von Bagh works with translating philosophic concepts, she offers a reference from this “place of displacements”, and writes followingly in her thesis work:

“Methodologically translation could be approached as an aspect of nomadism, a state of in between, a place of confusion, which is at the same time a moment of concentration but also a moment of risk-taking, a grey zone, which means crossing a threshold. This crossing a threshold of a specific meaning system is actually necessary as a creative aspect itself.” (von Bagh 2018, 17)

What I translate from von Bagh’s quote, is that translation essentially includes not knowing and acceptance of it, which is part of most creation processes. In the event of crossing a threshold the original interest is left while the other end appears scattered. This is a point of discomfort, fear and excitement where something itches in the wrong spot – an artistic process. This state of not knowing appears at times to be an underestimated, yet fruitful state. It consists of vulnerability, precarity and insecurity, which are easily seen as negative attributes. However, they hold a strong opposite power of a slingshot. I bumped continuously into not knowing while working with stones during the process. But if I had known already, there wouldn’t have been a process.

What philosophy or a theoretical starting point offers for me, is a frame, a way to situate myself - which *all* do I converse with? Different mediums offer potentiality of change. Then again something is always lost in translation.

Cixous’ texts are also political and philosophical. I suspect that in my work an existential philosophical wondering strikes out stronger than what I perceive her texts to be per se. This transformation might depart from my personal likes and dislikes, enjoyment of ambiguity, as well as simultaneous infidelity in reaching out to other

philosophers at the same time. To translate Cixous, I visit other philosophers and “vole” = ‘steal, snatch, fly with’ other thoughts. I visualize *the Laugh of the Medusa* moving like streams - stopping sometimes, roaring softly, echoing, halting abruptly, fluctuating, smiling. I feel like carrying across corporeal impressions, feels, premonitions - a movement force that exudes from the intentions and colours of the text – the soma of the text.

Cixous’ divided suffering subject has invited me to imagine: What kind of subjectivity is one that is leaking, spread, in many places, incomplete, affected, undivided but plural?

Beside translating Cixous, I am wondering whether I translate several other things at the same time? The corporeal memory presented in the beginning of this chapter, for example, scaling it extra-large into the realm of a performance shareable to colleagues and audience members. As in a scene from *Temporary Title* by Xavier LeRoy from 2018 at Pact Zollverein in Essen, where around 20 performers form into rocks and boulders on a seashore as a variation of different modes of life *Temporary Title* unravels. This scene is extremely simple as the performers take a position of forming a round lump with their body and stay still for several minutes. This simplicity is juxtaposed with all other mobile scenes. Lastly, do I translate Manning’s description of “purpling”? I am observing that a process of translation weaves simultaneously with several ongoing microprocesses of translation. These microprocesses, however, touch the same topic of subjectivity reconstruction in their own ways. And there is a moment, when all those original references are left behind.

BBRRRZZZZL

I stopped on my way home for two reasons today. First one was a glittering shimmering vibration on the surface of the lagoon. Delicate, alive, beautiful. The other was a flock of fishes jumping suddenly altogether three times above the water surface, on their way who knows where. The water was extremely low, and it was right next to the shore. I had sat down but on the verge of leaving. The fishes came and I stayed for over an hour.

16/5/2019 Brazil, Florianópolis

This chapter locates itself in Brazil and intertwines with certain points miles and months ahead in time to a moment in the process or in a performance of *Purpling*. I have been pondering, what is this chapter going to be about, as another paper of its own could be written about the trip to Brazil itself. The trip appears as a premonition for the piece, now that I look back in time. I have decided to focus on those corporeal and sensorial experiences I engaged with in Brazil which affected creation process with the group, thought processes these experiences initiated relating to this process, as well as present some practices I engaged in as result of these aforementioned factors.

After I left my preliminary plan of thesis, I left for a study exchange of three and half months to the Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina in Florianópolis, Southern Brazil. I attended seminar series *Fabulacoes de Paisagem* by my supervising teacher Bianca Scliar, some short courses, daily practice of Brazilian Jiu jitsu and individual work. I travelled to the North-East of Brazil to Southern Bahia, Salvador, and Foz Iguacu on Argentina's side.

This travel to Brazil was driven by my curiosity and recognising a tickling opportunity. If I believe that environment affects and builds us, I need to face other realities than the ones that have already extensively built me. As a sentient being, the more I experience different places, the more they dissolve in my body in distinct ways, as I dissolve where I go. Some things simply cannot be read. I wanted to be bodily, mentally in a place of curiosity and confusion.

To start a work on another side of the world created both a contradiction and an exciting place to start. Being far offered time to reflect on my ways of creating, desires and expectations. I filled many evenings with Brazilian documentaries, movies and series or listened locals explain the political history of Brazil. I observed and studied relations between countries, their cultural habits and histories, norms, the ways in which societies function in different environments. I worked slowly. The amount of information rushing over me was so immense I felt that I have no other option but to slow down if I want to digest even some of it.

Wandering, frictioning, dusting, layering

When I enter a new place, it takes a while to function. I am filled with uncertainty. Speaking is tricky. Colours, sounds, smells, visuals form an overwhelming tidal wave. I am poached in a stew with an overflow of sensorial information. Everything inside needs rearrangement. I love transformative pouching. I need to move there and then, elsewhere and else... when. It seems to be nomadism now and then.

20/5/2019 Florianópolis

When I entered Brazil, I felt a rush of things. It was nerve racking, exciting, bubbling. What helped in this anxiety, was to stay in movement, or have a possibility for it. I familiarised with my surroundings at my own pace and if I stayed still, my thoughts stayed gyrating. This feeling resonated with my initial wish to create a performance space, where people can be freely. To walk, lay, sit, position themselves as they feel comfortable. When you are bodily free it is easier to relax, tilt your head, lay upside down if you wish, or just sit straight. It was curious to be in the spot where that need concretised in an immediate way I had not expected. In the performance space the audience was sprinkled around and surrounded by a performative landscape.

I name this state of moving around in physical action or in thoughts as wandering. I will ponder now on how the state of wandering concretised in experiences in Brazil, how it actualised in the working process for the performers, and what we suggested to an audience.

Wandering may be bundled with walking, even limited to it. Walking tends to be driven over with vehicles, although it is gaining back value with a silent opposition towards the speed, pollution and over-stimulated environment of cities many people live in throughout the world. Walking, or perhaps advancing in one way or another, is a simple way to be in movement, staying open to the environment around.

As I preferred to work with a mobile audience, it made me look closer at *Pindorama* (premiered 2014 in Rio de Janeiro) by Lia Rodrigues. Rodrigues and her company work in favela of Maré in Rio de Janeiro. In *Pindorama* space seems to appear free and informal. (I saw this performance 2015 in Brussels, but I returned to it many times in Floripá.) She explains that *Pindorama* in Tupi language means “Brazil” as it was called before the Portuguese arrived and colonised the country brutally. Brazil is and was invaded by heavy immigration from Europe which has had immense impacts on the history and development of the huge country, talking about mass wandering. In *Pindorama* there is a big piece of plastic that appears as water, where naked bodies are thrown around in the waves, alive and then dead. There are water balloons all around the space, and performers empty a water bottle on top of themselves as a performative gesture very close to a randomly chosen audience member.

Pindorama touches me on several layers. To begin with, free spacing feels essential in this piece. Audience’s free wandering in space provokes micro-clashes when people don’t want to get wet for example or they get little intimidated by sudden explosive force close-by, or the audibly nearly violent hitting of the plastic reaches a quality of becoming extremely anguishing. It is tightly woven with history of Brazil, and what constructs daily dynamics in Rio de Janeiro (for example). It reminds us how the highly rich and extremely poor clash constantly in a tight space, how inequality splashes in everyone’s face. In Brazil, you cannot avoid seeing and observing these clashes and frictions in tight or wide spaces. What then seems like a free space raises a question, *is it* free in the end and whose space is it - formally or informally? The friction reveals abrasions of territory. Territorial questions are not a negligible topic in a wider scale in Brazilian architecture either. Centre of Brasília is designed in a form of an aeroplane, where in the centre of power it is possible to observe any movement that happens around the symbolically heavy concentration of power. Favelas do not follow a clear, readable logic but are built from found materials and to function for the inhabitants.

They fill a special need to fool and mislead outsiders, such as the violent police. I bumped constantly into a phrasing “*We like to work with frictions. It’s the element of Brazilian society...*”, as one artist put it.

Analysing this aspect of Brazil made me look at my choice of a free space for the audience and recognise other aspects about it. Even that *Purpling* actualised as very soothing and even meditative of its atmosphere, I became aware of the possibly stressful or hazardous aspects of a free spacing. Without a specifically appointed order of seats, audience members personal space augments or diminishes physically, voluntarily or not. Proximity is a double-edged sword. It pacifies but is also stressful. We worked with huge boulders and sometimes they accidentally fell if hands became slippery. An audience member said to one of the performers of *Purpling* in September: “*I don’t know if I should relax or stay alert. One minute it’s all peaceful and the next there is a huge boulder floating on top of my head and I’m terrified my head will get smashed.*” This might be my interpretation in after-taste, but the comment stayed, itching as mosquito bites that were my constant companion in Florianópolis. The mosquito bite concretised the atmosphere of Brazil’s current political situation. The right wing ruling military leader Jair Bolsonaro’s impact on the common spirit spreads like a lethal gas that lingers through all bodily layers, until the most visceral, where it settles in the deepest darkest fold. I was embraced by warmth of people and lushness of nature, while I would simultaneously feel the spikes of the political thistles scratching hope from peoples’ sight.

When it comes to building setting for this fluctuating space of freedom and discomfort, the experiencing body was offered different options: to lay freely on islands that were built in different parts of the space, sit on benches towards the edges of the space, where you were veiled by shadows and could lean into a wall. Many people sat or lay also on the floor. When body is liberated from a seat where it is supposed to be to experience dance art, the mind starts to wander freer too. As we observed audience’s wandering in *Purpling*, we noticed certain patterns that repeated. The movement was more active in the beginning of each member’s experience (as they entered at different times), after which it settled. When the performers engaged into a scene that we called *Stone wave*, that flushed through the space from one end to another, the same flushing action

happened in the audience repeatedly. After the wave, dust was floating in the air for some time again and after some time it would fall on the ground. The atmosphere of the performance was built from rather subtle ingredients, which made small physical or energetic movements in space palpable and affecting the entire space. Moving of the energetic dust was an important aspect of the performance. Wandering seemed to be a way to enable that.

The performer's perspective for wandering was structured specifically in the beginning of the piece as a scene for the performers and spaces to discuss and converse with each other. This mobile scene was built to encourage the arriving audience to join the state of wandering. The scene was called *Frrrhheee* and it began the entire piece as well as each loop. Each performer had different tasks and the space was busy with sounds and slight pulsation of light. Kinetic sound objects that sound designer Atte made, were spinning and purring. The space was in a living situation. Each performer had a matter they were in relation to, moving around the vast space – Anni was diving headfirst into newspaper piles, Krista was bouncing like a ping pong ball from one kinetic sound object to another, and Geoffrey was either shaking his boundaries with lavender or being affected by every single thing he met on his way. Kalle was in a pit joining pieces of concrete – he practiced joining the materiality of magma under the ground, literally under concrete pieces, a state that these concrete pieces had been in as when they were molded. It was getting to know the surroundings anew each time. This beginning scene was a state where the performers could tune in and sniff around what was their energetic state of the day and channel it to the rest of the performance. The movement in the beginning was supposed to circle dust, energy, make heads turn towards many directions and enable a feel of multiplicity in and of the space.

The multiplicity of space, which manifested precisely in the beginning, was also found in the construction of the space itself, as it had several layers that are described more in detail in the chapter *Description of the piece*. What can be pointed out here however, is that my experience in Brazil was, as can be imagined, to many directions and very layered. In my bodily practices in Florianópolis I worked with different layers of earth; on the earth as such, in pits, on sand, on grass, building an artificial earth in the studio of dead seaweed, and brick constellations, I was constantly accompanied by the

mountain in the middle of the island and wherever I practiced, I felt as though I were in a cocoon or a kettle, and aside of something larger. On the walls of gardens I was observing many layers of paint that got revealed as the top one and the second one peeled off. In some classes we went to sambaquis, which are beach formations with very specific layerings of sand, shells, grass, earth and so on through immense lengths of time. These experiences were shouting at me: Layered, layered, layered!

Part of a Topological Field?

What did this atmospheric sniffing, practice of wandering and constant accompaniment of layering lead into? Wandering around, I am directly in relation to the topology of the surroundings. I define topology here as formations, deformations, connectivity, continuity and disruptions in spatial surfacing that is always special and constructed in multiple, complex ways. Topology is essential to how an environment, (and) a body is built. It is concrete, matter, and too complex as well as affective for metrical, mathematical measuring.

As I was growing up, I would find myself the most comfortable in a tiny forest behind our backyard. I would play with canes and pine nuts, follow ants and just sit on the rock, look at the wind in trees and listen to the birds. I have held an interest to the surroundings all my life. I connect easier to colours, textures, consistencies around me, than social situations. Perhaps that is why I have gotten wildly excited about Erin Manning's *Towards a Politics of Immediation* and *middling* as its central concept, an activity where we intertwine with complex processes inside our own body, which leak out to the environment, as the environment bursts or drips into our world (Manning 2019, 1). A subjectivity is emergent. The article is critical about the concept of a ready individual, that is the protagonist of our neoliberal societies. The article was part of my studies in Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina. It introduces process ontology of Alfred North Whitehead, how the world happens through complex processes, and how there is no one kind of subject position – that of human – as we are accustomed to think.

I remember one day in Florianópolis we had a class at a sambaqui, where we focused on hearing, sensing with skin and smelling, and observed our middling together with the environment. I noticed myself thinking how my subject position of human felt like a disturbance and I wanted to melt and reform it into one of the layers of the sambaqui, to become mud or shells. I thought of lines from Manning's article:

"We know the subject because the subject is given to us again and again as the leading feature of experience" (Manning 2019, 2). She wants to resign from a logic of "simple location", which comes from Whitehead and means a self-contained existence that is localized with a passive, static network of spatial relations (Whitehead 1938, 188 quoted in Manning 2019, 2.)

These thoughts made me think of another kind of protagonism - active, leading subjectivity. I suggest dividing the leading role, because if we would merely take it away, it would provoke passivity. It encourages us to think that a leading role is spread out to different modes of existence. Protagonism as we know it should have other options of manifesting. Can it be of nomadic nature, not fixed to one character and move between a stone, ray of light, human? This led me to think of *deconstructed protagonism*.

In deconstructed protagonism I am a part. It tears down the subject construction, our western upbringing and praise of individuality that it is built on. Are we able to coexist heterogeneously and generously? This thought became one of the building principles in *Purpling*. How is each element in the space valid, important as part of composition? Deconstructed protagonism shouldn't be confused with equality through measuring. What a thought of protagonism offers, is the possibility of shining, stealing focus. However, this does not need to remain as a fixed given and it can bounce between parts.

One place where I tried to practice deconstructed protagonism was in my *owl practice* in Brazil. "Why exactly and why an owl?" we might question critically. It seemed easier to be immediate in movement through owlness and fundamentally affect my way of perceiving. It offered immediate poetics in comparison to my going around by foot. It felt like by going away from my habituated movement spectrum I had to also change my way of relating to the environment. My way of perceiving felt different. By

choosing another mode of life, somehow it made it less about me. If I was moving, it was as if the owl was moving, or at least an owl moving me, not to get too ideological. One day, as I was observing the landscape I inhabited, a big bird flew over me in a blue unending sky. It highlighted the fact that I always see a landscape from the level of my eyes, even if I move them up or down. How would it feel to be a bird and dwell in a landscape? This a reflective and analytical practice, and it was a lot of fun. The owl itself, is a spiritual symbol in Brazil, for seeing with heart rather than eyes, and I kept on bumping into drawings and paintings of owls everywhere. Essential to the practice was not to bluntly imitate but really *feel* and reflect, what is it like, what in me changes? I did this practice outside accompanied by other birds, and in a studio by myself with bags of dead seaweed as my companion. Practicing outside on a deck of a lagoon felt at times absurd, with local pigeons staring at me from the same deck. Then again, wasn't that the best accompaniment possible?

What I noticed about the practice of an owl, was a state of alertness it encouraged. It provoked a state of hyperawareness, multidimensional curiosity and a rhythmicity that appeared as hilarious on a human, as we later practiced being an owl with performers in studio in August and September. We played with scaling, being a 110% of an owl, and having only small traits of 'owlness' left in the body and mind. We watched owl documentaries, analysed them and constructed compositional games of the owl practice. In the end, the owl practice got left out of the final performance since our focus narrowed down to minerals. However, it left an interesting trait in the performers. They were extremely sensitive to everything that was around them, and they learned to use hearing for scanning the environment in an unusual way. They remained using advantages of the owl practice consciously for the performative scores to feed them.

Besides being an artistic practice, deconstructed protagonism turned out to function as a net of support in social situations and as a constructive method for handling confusion when you don't speak the language. At Udesc in Brazil, I was overwhelmed by the speed and amount of verbal information in the beginning of the classes. In the beginning I spoke no Portuguese. I listened to intonation, singing, interrupting, colours and temperatures of the voices. People talk on top of each other, do not let the other finish, ask and already answer. Dynamics of conversation was quite different from what

I am habituated to or comfortable with. I let Brazil flood over me, sting, tickle and caress with its wind, to feel it bodily. Before I spoke Portuguese, the experience in Brazil was extremely sensorial and corporeal. After I learned to talk, it is another chapter. In the confusion I spread roots and rested on thicknesses, textures and melodies of Brazil. I sat chatting with shells and gathered quite a bit of mosquito bites that sometimes got infected. What stayed with me all the way to *Purpling* was a craving for atmospheric sniffing, bonding with materiality of things and tranquillity in not knowing. Everything was in movement and out of my controls reach anyway.



Karoliina Loimaala on a class of "Fabulacoes de Paisagem" - Picture: Bianca Scliar

VIBRANT LANDSCAPE

In this chapter I will observe and articulate why I chose to work choreographically with the concept of landscape, how I perceive it to be essentially more-than and how that was dealt with in practice. A landscape that is vibrant, buzzes already with energy and relational auspiciousnesses and reaches out to what cannot be seen or felt directly, that which is uncovered in more complex ways.

A vibrant landscape appeared as a fruitful frame where a multi-layered sensorial experience could take place, where nothing is an 'immobile corpse' and where to practice deconstructed protagonism. This all goes under the umbrella of 'breathing space', presented in the introduction.

Land + scape

How is landscape written about and seen in theoretical artistic discourse around me?

The etymology of the word landscape seems to have sprung from England in the 17th century. It has meant 'region', but within visual art and painting, an aspect of spectator and viewer has grown to be essential to the term;

"Central to landscape is the role of the spectator. In the case of direct observation, landscapes require a beholder to set the parameters of scope, depth and details within the vista. Generically, landscape is a term that refers to the visible world and "a particular landscape is that portion of the world visible by an observer from a specific position." (Lorch 2002)

In this specific definition there is a sense of a static position of the viewer, a partial viewpoint, the importance of visibility and sense of sight as elements defining the concept. These draw my attention. A similar vista is offered in positioning of a proscenium dance stage in the history of dance, that is still the most popular seating arrangement in dance performances. Audience members are offered a fixed seat, from where they are invited to observe a selected viewpoint, a vista towards the stage where events occur. The further away you sit, the steeper the bird-eye perspective in an

ascending seating. Looking from diagonally far above offers a state of separation and distance that makes a gaze remain on top of itself. The biggest focus stays in looking/viewing/observing – namely the sense of sight accompanied by thoughts in the dark. What interested me with *Purpling*, was to intervene with this spatial separation by letting the audience to be swallowed by space – to be *in and part of* a landscape rather than to look at one. So being, the word ‘landscape’ needed to expand from this notion of it, as ‘land’ (land/ground) + ‘scape’ (extensive view/scenery) does not cover it.

In light of this, Annette Arlander categorises some controversial viewpoints on landscape in her doctoral research edition, *Performing Landscape* 2012, where the title of the research gives a hint about happening *with* the landscape:

“Cultural geographer John Wylie begins his book Landscape by asserting that there are specific tensions related to the concept, which are crucial in current debates. He names them as proximity/distance, observation/inhabitation, eye/land, and culture/nature. To exemplify the first tension he quotes Merleau-Ponty’s idea that observer and observed, self and landscape are intertwined; in embodied experience eye and land rest in each other’s depths, “landscape names a perceiving-with-the-world”, and a painting can “make visible how the world touches us” (Merleau-Ponty, 1969, 244, quoted in Wylie 2007). As a contrast he presents Raymond Williams’s view that “the very idea of a landscape implies separation and observation” (Williams, 1985, 126, quoted in Wylie 2007, 3) and Jonathan Crary’s claim that “to visualize is to set at a distance”. (Wylie according to Arlander 2012, 13)

I resonate with the phenomenological view of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. To perceive-with is an activity to shatter distantism that Crary’s and William’s views seem to suggest. What strikes me, is that Williams’ and Crary’s viewpoints are historically not that old. There seems to be a detachment of a relational tuning. I wanted to offer a landscape where the duality of these sort of oppositional divisions is shattered and juxtapositioning of two options is fragmented. This could encourage a space of more immediate relativity.

Purpling’s landscape consisted of many layers. Those of the steady structures of the space, the matter we brought there, the moving performers and the audience, the sensorially stimulative, atmospheric and energetic layers. Since everything is relational, each layer is connected through nets where perceiving-with-world manifests, and particles inside the layers affect the other ones, keeping this relativity dynamic.

Streams, colours, affects

I wanted to work with landscape because I felt the concept allows space for crossing sense experiences, layered existences and experiencing of different materialisations and un-materialisations. At some point in the process I began to list that which had become important and essentially determining ‘landscape’; streams, intensities, rhythms, colours, resonance, vibration, directions, textures, pressures, affects, porousness, energies.

Things that escape a corraling eye and refuse to take permanent form. There is a quality of “more-than” that describes their fleeing nature. Some of these elements are rather easy to detect, such as direction, texture or rhythm. However, sometimes they manifest in a sense that cannot be as easily packaged. By this I mean when they happen as a non-linear product of something else and appear as an echo, when rhythm does not appear as rhythm but as something else.

How then to work with such things?

On a level of perception, these fleeting aspects might be detected or lured out through *feeling with world* that comes from Erin Manning as a suggested synonym for synaesthesia. It is essentially a *relational* way of being that detects a ‘more-than’ of things. The more-than appears simultaneously which makes it overwhelming. *Feeling with world* manifested in *Purpling* as a multifaceted attunement of relating with surroundings. Inhabiting a landscape with this attunement became our existential orientation in the world.

Most of our sense experiences entail a kind of crossing, being synaesthetic to begin with. Differentiated sense experiences don’t exist. In Erin Manning’s article *Not at a Distance: On Touch, Synaesthesia and Other Ways of Knowing*, she introduces that everybody is potentially synaesthetic (Manning 2017, 8). To dwell in a vibrant landscape offers a base for relating around with nonhuman and human matter and sensitise towards complexity of sensations. We do not tend to train our synaesthetic capabilities and alertness to be consciously available to multiple, which leads us to forget this part of us. Furthermore, in the anthropocene era and its most shining asset of

rationality, multiple sensing does not seem too convenient to blur the rational puzzling. There is a natural sprucing that happens in the brain of most so called neuro-typical children, that makes the brain able to concentrate on a chosen sense stimulation one at a time, as well as channel connections consciously little by little⁴. This sprucing is then reinforced through education, code of conduct in classrooms, geometrical city spaces, powerful marketing in capitalistic structures and system of valuing individualism. Individualism essentially spruces the unnecessary out, since to be an entire individual (and understandable for others) you must have clear qualities and behaviour. One reason why a sprucing happens to this extent is a widely spread accreditation of speed. To make a harsh generalisation, there is no time for multiple, over-flooding, rich sense experiences. Simultaneously, our synaesthetic abilities are used in the advantage of marketing products. An ability to spruce information is encouraged and conditioned through an appealing, alluring advertisement toward a certain product, by guiding humans desire(s). Simultaneously the actual hooking happens through utilising multi-layered sensorial capacity human naturally has, through rich sensorial stimulation. (Notes from Mette Ingvarsten's lecture as part of *SideStep* festival in Zodiak 8.2.2019 under a title *Red Pieces*.)

How can both assets, analytical mind and over-flooding sensorial experience be worked with? To be available to more complex unfolding, a slower rhythm is required. What would happen if we would free up space for allowing us to feel more at once, rather than less?

A third scene in *Purpling* is called *Vibrating space*. It is a moment when the focus spreads mainly to light, sound, vibration that happens through the floor and islands and energy dissolving from things before. Atte built sound installations that were hurring, Sofia the light designer constructed light that was pulsating between yellow and purple ending in complete darkness that lasted enough time for eyes to get used to it and start to see in the dark after seeing echoes of light as they had just dimmed. Performers engaged into meditation. In this scene I felt there was a moment for only the space to be happening. Streams got unattached from human movement, porousness became tactile, and a more-than of hearing reverberated in my consciousness, as it had been piling up

⁴ I remember this developmental pattern from development psychology classes I enrolled in for personal interest some years ago at University of Helsinki.

making my body very full and now it exited to a dance on its own. Energies that were perhaps gathered or condensed got released or attached somewhere else. I felt quite full of what had happened before and it appeared as a moment of discharge. It did not ask me to follow but to be. *Vibrating space* was my attempt to offer a space for feeling with world without forcing, where an energetic discharge could function as a catapult for recognising streams and energies that had filled the space.

All in all, the entire duration of over two hours was essential for offering enough time for a full sensorial experience. With hurry and tension, it becomes difficult to relax and let the environment flood. Furthermore, with enough time, there is space for reflection and keeping the analytical mind with if desired.

When it comes to over-flooding sensorial experiences we tend to think that if we are highly open to the ‘outside’, we lose something from our ‘inside’ which results to an articulation of a “loss of sense of agency” (Manning 2017, 12). When we practiced *feeling with world* with performers, no articulations appeared that would have stated a loss. What was specific in these articulations, was how the experiences were full and it was difficult to track everything down. *Feeling with world* brings challenges in terms of how to consciously practice it and furthermore how to possibly offer it for the audience without falling to a trap of representation. We discussed synaesthesia together with the working group, and it came to be a companion throughout the work of performers without trying to ‘sense very synaesthetically’. We found out that it was important to stay tuned as precisely as possible to what was going on and let it affect or let it be. We worked concretely in tasks with streams, affects, porousness and other elements and some arrived by themselves or as a result of another thing.

Practicing feeling with world

Feeling with world was a realisation of how to work on a question; How does a vibrant landscape as an environment affect our tuning, and how does it actively manifest in the affected bodies? As a preparatory practice, for *feeling with world*, we worked with a perception practice by Deborah Hay as a start for the day. We called this practice *bodymind in worlding landscape*. This means that body and mind happen as one, together, think and feel together, happen together. This perception practice created a relational tuning in our dancing. Worlding landscape refers to the dynamics of a buzzing relativity. The space is differently vibrant for each one, since each performers dance is affected by their own *feeling with world*, their own way to experience time, their own manouvred scalings of layered sensing, that would then be challenged with specifically added questions. They related with equal importance to piece of paper, foot of a colleague, or a stream of wind and energy someone left as passing by.

The questions we had as a daily practice in the space:

Bodymind in worlding landscape

What if all my millions, billions of cells would perceive time and originality of each passing moment simultaneously?

I live and die every instant

All in me listens to joy and sorrow at once

All in me smells light and darkness at once

What if everything in me sees, least my eyes?

What if I don't know, what determined means?

What if scents, odours and smells are unbearable whilst all embracing?

What if none of these sentences is more important than another one but they all ascend and descend?

My bodymind is multiple, manywhere everywhere herewhere elsewhere

My happening is a celebration and mind curious

Wondering, drifting, roaming. I'm on the way

Some of these questions are borrowed directly from Deborah Hay, like the first three questions, perhaps as rephrased. What I perceive essential in Hay's practice, is a mind

that wanders free, makes jumps, stays actively curious and doesn't follow a set hierarchy. An important change of paradigm in history of dance in the 20th century is visible in this practice: to see dancer as an actively thinking, feeling person while dancing, rather than an instrumental machine. Using this practice as a base, we needed to critically discuss, what it meant in the context of this piece, to borrow Hay's questions? These questions above at once allowed a platform to challenge a customary way of sensing. We agreed on finding favourite questions, getting stuck, forgetting, repeating, being slow, and so on. This agreement made the practice more 'awkward' and less fluid which made it extremely enjoyable in a surprising way. These questions allowed the performers to find their own ways of relating with the space and they all worked differently in this practice. The days when it became homogeneous, we discussed why that happened. We discussed how to deal with a mental image nearly everyone had of Hay's dances, and how to avoid the trap of falling into representing that image. We found out as one aspect, that staying with one question that resonates specifically with you a longer time, listening rigorously to your own way of relating to it, it cannot become a representation of someone else. The depth of work seemed to be a crucial point here. This might seem to be self evident now, but at the moment it was not.

We used this practice to find an agile, curious attunement of being. The performers became rather alert with the practice. During this practice surprising events came up and a richer variety of relating to the surroundings took place. It offered seeds for what was then reworked and reframed inside the performance score.

Kalle's solo was one of these seeds. One day he was intra-acting with a stone on top of his head and had a face that he had never had before. He was shaking, twisting and turning his face. He was simultaneously somewhere else and very present. It seemed like he found an entirely new way to be in relation to the stone, that was peculiar, listening, delicate, remaining with himself but in tune with the other part.

In the end, the stone was as a parasite to him and he to the stone, which made them inseparable from one another. Kalle worked with tasks of embodiment and being affected, as well as relating to specific questions.

Kalle's score:

What energies are inside this stone?

How do the energetic tensions manifest?

How does history of this stone affect it now?

How does my historicity affect me now?

Balance

Stoneness of a stone, boulderness of a stone

Bonus tasks:

All in me listens to joy and sorrow at once

My happening is curious and mind a celebration

The solos of Krista and Kalle overlapped a little. Krista was the first one, more agile and urgent and Kalle slower, as if gathering and releasing tension inside of 'him-stone'.

This contrast between them created other crossing tensions in the performance space.

Krista's score:

Being affected by:

What has gathered in the body during a meditation

Embodying of:

Forms and matter, weight, depths around her

(pockets of paper, foot of Kalle, fishing lines, bricks, smell of air she passes through)

Relating with:

Intensities, energy streams, rhythms on the voyage across the space

Bonus tasks:

"What if scents around me are all embracing whilst being unbearable?"

"I live and die every instant".

In Krista's dance it seemed like she was writing bodily poems, relating to multiple things and it poured out in her dance. As a difference to other solos she didn't have any material attached to her body during the dance. She was in contact with multiple materials simultaneously and worked through another kind of notion of proximity in distance as if swallowing insides out and throwing outsides in.

Geoffrey's solo happened during the second loop at the same spot after meditation. He worked with two smaller stones. These two stones reminded us of possible weaponry, but they changed completely during his dance. This interpretation will have an anthropomorphising effect on stones, but I have to admit they seemed to have different characters.

Geoffrey worked with a peculiar embodiment and researched what relativity with stones provoked in him. During his journey, he embodied, was affected by and worked in a foundational relationship where stones were part of him. Geoffrey's score functioned like a catapult relation him wandering and playing with the chosen verbalisations.

Game Elements in Geoffrey's score:

Distance (which scaled and related him differently with stones each time)

Reciprocal parasite relation

Variation in speed and rhythm

Intensities

Characterisations

Looking at these scores, they are rather simple in terms of content yet busy with options to relate to. These opposite aspects seemed both necessary to activate a rich *feeling with world*. When *feeling with world* felt sometimes rather unsettling, confusing and hard to understand, clear tasks or operational fields helped to guide in that confusion. When these oppositions were combined, it created a playground.

When there is a difficult theoretic ground as part of the process, it helps to work with simple tasks. They enable free wandering of mind and entail concrete suggestions what aspects to play with. What needs to be added, is that there was already a sack full of silent knowledge in the bodies, that was only possible through a working process together. These scores here are rephrased for sake of presentation. Added plainly like this, the final result would probably be different.

It seems that as a choreographer I enjoy and feel nourished to work with tasks of this nature. It enables co-choreographing, negotiation, and rigorous collaborative work.

What feels important is to colour the choreographic landscape where we operate in as detailed manner as possible, and then work with freedom inside that. This freedom is fundamental for heterogeneous dwelling in an artistic work.

Being (with) mineral

In *Force of Things*, Jane Bennett says the following:

“*In the long and slow time of evolution, then, mineral material appears as the mover and shaker, the active power, and the human beings, with their much-lauded capacity for self-directed action, appear its product.*” (Bennett 2010, 11)

Reading these lines after the amount of work and time we had spent with stones felt like a gentle earthquake. We had created, or observed, an all mineral landscape. If we take into consideration a really long time of evolution as Bennett suggests, “*We are walking, talking minerals*” (Bennett 2010, 11) as she says. This thought is playful and comforting and it frames this performance under an umbrella of *becoming mineral*. With the practice and thoughts of feeling with world, matter, stones, we were trying to find ways to meet them in another way and go through a transformation of some sort ourselves. We experienced clashes of fundamentally different time scales and mere physical qualities.

Stones, concrete, bricks and papers formed the loose layer of our Gaia -focused landscape. They were transportable (more or less). In this chapter I will concentrate on the work with the mineral, except for the paper soil, which I will analyse through the framings of the next chapter.

We engaged in the work with stones through a tuning awakened by practices of *feeling with world*. This created both contradiction and fruitful moments, since feeling with world spread multiply in space, while stones demanded a clearer focus. What was created was a simultaneous existence of several differently layered focuses. As a help we used scaling and navigating through different chosen emphasis to find specific ways of relation and being (with) minerals, as with the owl practice. What is presented here represents the other side and findings of the practices with stones, that feeling with world completed.

Stones entail great reserves of cultural connotations. It is no wonder I guess, because human is greatly dependant on them and has been widely inventive when it comes to functional ways to use minerals, not to mention a bloody diamond trade. But what does it mean to get acquainted with them in another way, than to focus on their instrumentality, or on collecting them basing the interest on the ownership of minerals? How is it to spend time with stones for their stone-ness – feeling *with* stones?

When stones and humans differing temporalities are put side by side, they enhance one another. We had a practice where we joined time of the stones. This practice took a long time. It was slow, and the performers entered another sphere, accompanied by a particular state of being. They described it as soothing and pleasurable. They described changing temperatures with the stones, and how with time the stones would start to feel soft. A metric clock time vanished and what was forty minutes felt like twenty. We called this the somatic time referring to the importance of time felt. It included abrupt falls, bumps, or explosions cut the slow floating of time. The practice condensed lot of energy, that was then needed to release suddenly or in otherwise uneven bursts. It stayed on the skin and insides as an itch.

It felt like different temporal ways of being derived to the piece from the time spent with boulders. Each scene has different temporality, according to the somatic time. It felt like the entire length of over two hours was appropriate in sense of respecting the stones. After all, they demanded time.

We practiced with finding out what are possible actions, activities of being with boulders. What came out, was that hitting with them, standing on top of them, any instrumental activity felt unfitting. During these practices we found a so-called *stone dinosaur*, an event where Anni is constructed as one together with stones during a second loop, aided by Kalle. A stone dinosaur created a layered aspect of earth and a form of hybridism in a simple way.

It was difficult to point out and name the poetic multi-layered unfoldings building those events, since what I would witness and feel had neither predetermined vocabulary nor descriptions. Luckily we met somewhere in the middle. The state of not knowing was a frequent companion in the process. It felt liberating to be able to say more than once, “*Guys, I don’t know yet what this is but there is something very captivating here...*” We would together search after it, and with time a concrete aspect would unveil.

In addition to stones, we worked with concrete, and material feelings and states it shifted in us. In the beginning of the process as I would cycle to the Theatre Academy, I had a day I stopped at a wasteland of soil. I was called by a messy pile of concrete laying on the side of the road I was cycling by every day. Now as an afterthought, as I found myself reading Lepecki, he mentions an aspect about things, which states how objects are never “inert entities”, but they carry potentialities that go further than their mere functional, instrumental value (Lepecki 2016, 32). I realised that as the concrete I bypassed had been torn off from its original duty to offer a base for me to walk on, other potentialities radiated off its surface as it lay smashed and forgotten in its own quirkiness some distance away from its original residency.

In the studio, we started with laying on the floor with pieces of concrete on our chests. I felt like being under ground with the heavy piece of roughly broken concrete laying on my chest. I became softer, like magma and the concrete grew in dimensions bigger than me, making me part of the floor. Still I didn't vanish in an esoteric sphere. What kept on reoccurring was a need to place ourselves under the concrete, or next to it. We felt symbolically, culturally, and as a relational action a reluctance to stand on top of them. It reminded us of their instrumental use. We wanted to meet soil constructed or “natural” as something bigger, which it is.

With time the concrete provoked a craving for vocal activity. It repeatedly opened vocal channels. We worked on a vocal scene but it did not continue to the performance.

The sound designer Atte worked with bricks, building kinetic sound installations with them, fishing lines, metallic objects and one wooden ball hanging from each fishing line. There were four of these installations in space. He would then manouvre timings of these sound installations coming to action and they would function and produce the sounds as they randomly did according to their constructed physical qualities. As the wooden ball hit bricks and the standing metallic plate, different types of sounds were produced due to the thickness, heaviness, porousness and other qualities of the bricks. The detailed varying sound became affected by slight gusts of wind and the infinite permutations of how it hit the bricks.

Working with materiality of minerals revealed some of the powerful dynamics that are inherent in every landscape. Without these aspects a landscape might appear remote and two-dimensional. Landscape feels now even more buzzing.



Process of Purpling, Sound installation and Picture: Atte Kantonen



Process of Purpling, Kalle and Geoffrey in Mustikkamaa – Picture: Karoliina Loimaala



Process of Purpling, Anni Kaila and stones as a “stone-dinosaur” – Picture: Karoliina Loimaala

CHOREOGRAPHING WITH CIXOUS' HYSTERIC AND A LACANIAN GRID

In search of a new subjectivity

In this chapter I will go deeper into my translation of H el ene Cixous' construction of the Hysteric subject, that is driven by feminine principle. I will engage in this through analysing her texts, and through Heta Rundgren's analysis of Cixous' first published novel *Dedans*. I will intertwine this analysis with examples of the artistic process and observe how the artistic process has impacted on the process of translation. Framed by the realm of choreography, I re-articulated the translation of Cixous' hysteric into >matter joining subject<. I will exemplify how the merging of this new subjectivity became primarily about becoming mineral in this specific work, as our choice of working with soil has greatly impacted my understanding of >matter joining subject<.

Cixous has strong roots in the theories of psychotherapist Jacques Lacan (1901-1981). Cixous objects him but uses his concepts in her own desired way. The base of Lacan's work builds upon the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) but has evolved and changed throughout his lifetime and work. Specifically, Lacan built upon Freud's theories with a theory of the unconscious structured as Language, the grand *Other*, a structural reality of a human being (Lacan 1992, 32.) Cixous' biggest critique toward both the system of language and psychoanalysis as a whole is that both exclude the woman and the feminine. This urges her to find a new writing that is not based on juxtaposition and control, nor one which derives from a male syntax. For her the unconscious is as relevant as the conscious part, and often mystified as a dark and inaccessible place.

Cixous redefines and rewrites language while her medium is language. I try to define my choreographic work as I work inside the terms and rules of choreography. This leap in translation creates some confusion for me. However, since traditional writing with black ink and pen on a white paper intertwines with the phallus in her thinking, I take that as an invitation to write through other means, which in my case means choreographic writing, writing with space and in specific *matter*.

What was revealed during the process of *Purpling*, was how the *relation with stones and space* became the most important focus point, together with *what kind of subject is formed in that earthmoving relativity*, essentially together with *subject's materiality*. I realised, as I work with matter, I need to dive headfirst into it. If we had worked with a lingual register, in my case that would also need to be worked primarily through its *materiality*, together with the semantic content. However, Cixous lives specifically in the soma of language, its way to come to being in the mouth, its colours, rhythms, qualitative nuances, polysemic, homonymic words, its temperament of jumping off the page and its silences. This fact makes the sphere of Cixous' alluring and approachable as a field for choreographic operating.

In terms of Lacan, I developed a choreographic grid, a tool for composition work from his theoretical parsing. His division of a humans' way to perceive reality in realms of imaginary, symbolic and real, as well as some other specific concepts were alluring in terms of windows through which to construct composition, or lenses through which to analyse it.

A subject joining matter - moving subjectivity

What kind of subjectivities do we practice in the dances we engage in, from our human perspectives that we are tied to, even when we are becoming momentarily something else? A thought awakened from reading Heta Rundgren's line of thought in her thesis research *Minästä toiseen. Lacanilaisen subjektin syntymä Anaïs Ninin House of Incest'ssä ja Hélène Cixous'n Dedans'ssa*. I was fed by her analysis of Cixous' *Dedans*, since it gave more angles to my analysis of Cixous in relation to Lacan and the psychoanalytic tradition. She unveils how in a Lacanian net of the symbolic, a net of language, a subject is knitted. This subject is defined by each signifier it meets along the way, meaning, it does not stay purely as itself, but changes constantly depending on what it is attached to, moment by moment. She states that this kind of subjectivity is *moving subjectivity*. (Rundgren 2007, 13) Cixous criticises vehemently the system of signifiers in the symbolic because for her the signifiers grab and swallow the subject.

Here could be an instance of what Lacan calls “*word kills matter*” (Lacan according to Rundgren 2007, 130). As I understand it, for Cixous it is not enough that signifiers redefine the subject, which for her is another hierarchical mechanism – subject holds more within it that we cannot know, nor recognise, and remains in its own materiality even while becoming something else. This seems important to my work and I would have to state the opposite – the word cannot kill the matter.

What can *moving subjectivity* mean in terms of choreography? In *Purpling* the subject travels and is knitted through meetings with matter. In these meetings the materiality of both subjects and space transforms. Through the feeling with world that I introduced earlier, subjects in *Purpling* manifested their affectivity physically in the topology of time, as well as form variable meanings through merging with matters ductility and polysemic quality. Could a tracking of moving subjectivity function as a guideline while forming tasks for subject joining matter to actualise?

Score on Paper was a second scene in the temporal structure of the piece that we built. The old newspapers as artificial soil we had decided to work with, were sewn together or otherwise formed huge masses where to drown inside. With papers, time, different improvisational scores, trials and errors we ended up in a compositional game. Most of it was set in the end, but some elements for certain performers stayed free to preserve an element of encountering new things and surprising oneself.

Score on paper:

What kind of ecologies do we form together – me and the paper?

How do the formed ecologies stay with me after I lose physical contact with the paper?

What do we transform into?

Being affected by materiality, texture, forms of paper soil

Doubling a form (rock, boulder, one another)

Combining actions

Possibility of character

Embodying the paper rock

How does my overall transformation throughout the entire performance manifest?



"Purpling", Kalle Lähde – Picture: Karoliina Loimaala

From these tasks inside the compositional game, we built individual scores upon each one. When it came to the characters, some were repeatedly born during the process. Krista frequently found a hybrid character between herself and an owl or another bird, that would be shaped out of her and the paper happening together. The form did not however seem to exhaust itself because the paper stayed alive falling from on top of her, and moulded every time in a different shape looking a bit different. What was constantly included in the score was simply resting, staying open to what else was happening in space and staying playful.

What materialised specifically in the paper scene, were hybrid forms that developed from activity between performers and papers. Papers had their own character and time of happening, specifically in sound, as they would constantly crackle, rip, and behave in all uncontrollable ways which made it impossible to get them “behave like you would want to”. That could not be the goal either. Performers and paper soil became something else together, a hybrid of human and mineral, staying with qualities of soft, hard, something imaginary, slow in time, suddenly explosive, staying with affects these giant rocks would offer. Kalle became a kind of mudslide, rolling from a pit in one end of the space to the other end with each cycle of the work. He attended to his hybrid journey with paper in the pit, then joined the bigger space making a change in energy streams by rolling through nearly the entire space as a thing, that looked like a soil

monster. I felt he was gathering energy and letting a mud-ball roll over, growing bigger and bigger, that then freed up in the final roll.

Kalle's process with papers was very intriguing to follow. There was a point when he spent quite a bit of time under the soil and he was describing experiences of feeling like one layer of the ground, how light changed, time slowed down under the soil and how would it feel to live in such a place. In that version, when he would appear partly from under the mass of soil, I often did not understand right away what appeared from under there. Sporadic limbs that appeared formed together with the paper something fundamentally different than a person lying under newspapers.

For me the paper scene meant joining a *thingness*, of actively becoming something else through a welding with material. It expanded my perceived subjectivity to something I had not experienced. As I observed the tonus and bodily beings of the performers, they kept on constantly changing when they were spending time with the newspapers. The subjectivity seemed to change so rapidly it was hard to understand what to grab during the process. They often described strong sensations of a relaxing or itching tactility that papers transferred to them. A sonic aspect of the papers, crickels, crackels, rippings and caressings tickled their skin and insides, layering their tactile experience from the surface to the visceral and between the two. It urged them to suddenly fall or explode momentarily when there was no more room for tension to gather. An example of these sudden burst happened again with Kalle, as he engaged in becoming a stone geyser in two rounds, the moment his mudslide had ended and the dust had settled.

In Paper scene, becoming mineral actualised in another way than with stones, because of the softness and artificial nature of this particular soil. Erosion of the papers made constant reformation and they seemed to demand a lot from us. The work towards thingness was not easy. In the process we stayed long in this stage, where we were joining the matter, but also sticking with a pedestrian human shape, from where a transformation would begin. We were remaining too tightly with the human subjects we were and erring in moving from an individual subjectivity to another while remaining intact, we were not moving subjectivities. What had to be changed was what which suggested the pedestrian behaviour, since it pointed exactly to an opposite direction of

thingness and action of radical joining. We needed an actively imaginative happening, where transformation would happen immediately. What was contradictory to this but important was that while joining thingness, the human is still human. Affective, inconsistent, conscious, imaginative, a body full of its own historicity. Hence this humanity needed to have freedom to appear, in fragmented bursts, and wander *in/with/while* the activity of joining with paper soil. What needed to remain from the human creature was what Lepecki calls the "defect of human" (Lepecki 2016, 86) that I presented in the introduction, and how it manifests specifically in each performer.

There is a quote in the very beginning of this paper by H el ene Cixous where she understands she is not all but her specific incomplete self:

“A commencer par dedans, je ne sais pas qui nous sommes, mais je sais tout ce que je suis, et je ne suis pas tout, car je connais beaucoup d’autres  tres qui ne sont pas comme moi dedans.” (Cixous 1986, 172)

“To begin inside, I don’t know who we are, but I know all who I am, and I am not all, because I know a lot of other beings that are not like me inside.” (Cixous 1986, 172, My translation)

In *Dedans* there are no names pronounced but there are many I’s and We’s that are affected by what is around. She resigns from an idea of being all, the point of departure as man is in patriarchal canon, as man is for Lacan and for many theorists beside him. A body is a place of and for diversity, rushing through environments, states, and emotions, letting them flush and flood over it.

A body that is a place for diversity, is a place for many, plural. If body is a place for plural, and it is scattered to the surroundings, as I wondered in the chapter about landscape, could the acceptance of many and practice of being a place for plurality create a collapse of an individual as a closed entity? There is a lot of information while being in contact with many of an ‘I’ since it seems to suggest a deconstruction of oneself, or perhaps only acknowledging our deconstructed possibility. The deconstruction becomes helpful when meeting another mode of life. While practicing moving subjectivity, playing with intensity, perception of time, texture and density become important tools in letting different subjectivities access and exit the body.

Streaming Thing Power

“Toinen, autre, saa Cixous’ n kirjoituksissa kaikupohjansa kahden Jacques’ in, Lacanin ja Derridan tavoista käyttää kyseistä sanaa. Derridan mukaan länsimaisen filosofian logosentrisessä ajattelussa erilaisuus palautuu aina samaan, identtiseen. Länsimaisen metafysiikan toisilleen vastakkaisten käsiteparien logiikka (läsnäolo/poissaolo, oleminen/tyhjyys, sama/toinen, identtinen/erilainen jne.) on hierarkkinen mekanismi, jossa vastakohtaparin toinen, negatiiviseksi koettu osapuoli palautuu aina ensimmäiseen, positiiviseen käsitteeseen – näin erilaisuus palautetaan samaan.” (Rundgren 2007, 15)

“With Cixous the other, l’ autre, echoes from Jacques Derrida’s and Jacques Lacan’s ways to use the word. According to Derrida, difference is always returned to same, identical, in logocentric logic of western philosophical thinking. In the western metaphysics a dualist juxtaposition of concepts (presence/absence, being/emptiness, same/other, identical/different, et cetera) is a hierarchical mechanism, where the other, the negative, always returns to the first, positive concept – in this way, difference/unknown is always returned to same/known.” (Rundgren 2007, 15, My translation)

I will name Derrida’s line of thought presented by Rundgren as *concept coupling*, since essential in it are concept couples that construct logocentric logic, based on linear reasoning in western history. Cixous boldly announces that this mechanism of signifiers, where female has never stood on its own feet (as it always returns to male) needs to be exploded and reinvented (Cixous 1976, 887), we can observe the movement of a reinvented mechanism from a choreographic point of view.

If we would divert the linear concept coupling theory while considering transcendental practices where you “exit your boundaries” and join something else, that it does not return to where it left from, but pauses, changes, frees up to wander to other places. To break the idea of difference that returns to same, is to break the system that maintains this mechanism. What if there is no beginning or ending point and a linear line in between? Neither ‘parts of’ nor ‘finishes at’ in either. Can this happen through movement, like that of an active stream? One that doesn’t stagnate, hold on to territory or keep rigid borders but moves as it needs to. A stream that follows this circular movement she presents, that is of feminine logic, including going in and to many directions rather than one.

This provoked a circular time and an alternating loop structure in *Purpling* as I wanted to resist a patriarchal linear time that has a point of beginning and end. The major structure would each time change regarding the events, since 'same' in our micro practices didn't exist. Time cannot be lived twice. Structurally and compositionally there was some repetition that functioned as an energy creating mill.

I would like to observe *Stone wave*, the second last scene in *Purpling* to analyse this movement that does not follow a linear logic. It moved across space towing everything along that was gathered in the space from one end to the other. It moved in a manner of rewinding back and forth and once finished, it liberated another energy back in the space with change in bodily tuning of the performers, light and sound.

What we worked with concretely was weight of stones, lifting them above ourselves which was an important aspect. We then continued following the weight, listening to the event of human and stone middling together and where that was leading towards. There were many options to move with stones with different weights and rhythms, being affected by and taking queues of fellow travellers. Walking backward and forward, crouch down rapidly or squatting, making big swings or stopping abruptly. There were clear actions that could be taken in relation to stones. It was interesting that a simple action of lifting stone as high above your head as possible seemed very powerful, even when repeated many times.

The *Stone wave* provoked a question from *Myth of Sisyphus* from the Greek mythology, where a man rolls a huge boulder up on top of a hill only for it to roll back down again for all eternity, as a condemnation by Hades. What do we carry these heavy stones for? (This was an actual and entitled question by probably everyone who was carrying them.) Still, even though the stones were heavy, the performers described there was a feel of clarity and an energy recycling nature with *Stone wave*. The more playful they got with the stones, the richer was the experience of following them and the more the more energy was created. Sometimes they would fall, and in the last round Kalle always chose the biggest boulder possible, and Krista the smallest one. The juxtaposition of these two was just funny to watch.

For the question, what do we carry these stones for, I want to invite Jane Bennett into discussion with her concept of *Thing power*. Celebrate the thing power! Thing power

exists equally in humans and minerals, it is in *everything*, clashing and riding in intra-action⁵. As we remember from before, “*We are walking, talking minerals*” (Bennett 2010, 11). To throw Cixous and Bennett into the same pot is an attempt to build a bridge between the texts of 1970s and 2010s, even though they have different focuses. What I find rather playful in Bennett’s yield of “Thing power” is how it reaches to humans by recognising them as amazing, radiant thing power themselves. Neither human nor stone can return to either since they are made of same atomic parts while remaining their fundamentally specific selves. There is no hierarchy. To happen actively with stones, celebrated a possibility of higher energy in intra-action, shaking an idea of stones being still, slow and forgot in wastelands. What stone feels when it flies attached to human hands through the air, is impossible to know. We can still observe this scene through a lens of brisk dancing minerals.

“Each human is a heterogeneous compound of wonderfully vibrant, dangerously vibrant, matter. If matter itself is lively, then not only is the difference between subjects and objects minimized, but the status of the shared materiality of all things is elevated. All bodies become more than mere objects, as the thing-powers of resistance and protean agency are brought into sharper relief.” (Bennett 2010, 13)

For me, Thing power roared in *Stone wave* cutting a linear hierarchical mechanism, that doesn’t give credit for the wonderful multiplicity of this radiant power.

If we are minerals, might stones partly in their *stoneness* remind, and so represent, the unknown in us or elsewhere, that scares us to death and creates these exact hierarchical structures? Unknown in concept coupling returns to known. In *Stone wave* it doesn’t return but continues, frees up and laughs. I will call this way of moving *streaming*.

Except being unknown, reading material qualities or poetic meanings from the stone, it can be waste (as in this case it was by some), thousands and thousands of years of time, a material concretisation of existence that is not easily understood, it can be the human as the stone and the stone as the human, my history, a weapon, explosive power, call of siren, my head, the meaning of life, or simply the weight of 10 kilograms.

⁵ I did not consider performers/humans as minerals at the time, but I got widely excited about this play of thought during this writing process

Choreographic Grid – Lacan

I got interested in Jacques Lacan, as he was a contradictory source for Cixous. I will now introduce my understanding of how Lacan sees a human perceiving a reality around. This will aid in understanding some of the field where Cixous operates. Lacan's reality of psyche is divided in a way that posed a question for me; can the division of human psyche by Lacan be used as a choreographic grid when I work with human performers? Human is a psychological creature, and it brought another intriguing aspect in terms of situating human as well as for reading emerging meanings. Can a grid help me to understand meanings that are born from the materiality we build with? I tend to have a messy mind and I think of all things at once in a creation process. The thought of a grid, that still held poetic, open and ambiguous possibilities in it, gave me a structure, through which I could analyse or even name things easier. I tested this strategy while working on *Purpling*.

What I present here is my own understanding that has evolved with time and through the combination of many sources, Lacan, Cixous, Rundgren, Zizek and several online sites that offer varying definitions of Lacan's ideas.

Lacan divides the reality of a human psyche in realms of imaginary, symbolic, and real.

For me, *imaginary* is where a world is perceived through images, imagination, and illusions of synthesis, similarities and dualities. (i.a. Johnston 2018) In the development of a human child, imaginary period is said to be the earliest one where a child is not able to distinguish limits or boundaries of her own body. She is attached to the mother, and the mother is needed to affirm the symbiosis. (Notes from developmental psychology class). I imagine this field as one where many zen practices aim towards, a unity with rest of the world. In this dimension of *imaginary*, there is a small other, *objet petit a*, that human is said to seek, a lost counterpart of one's own ego so to say, a speculative image. This lost part causes a lack in human, therefore a desire, and therefore friction.

Symbolic is a world of differences, a dimension of language, where a child is growing into a cultural being. The symbolic involves both imaginary and real. This dimension is affected by language theory of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) (i.a. Johnston 2018). After Saussure, there is a triangle between a signified (an idea), a signifier (a vocal act), and a referent (what is referred to). Lacan says that language is the grand Other. There is Other L'Autre, and other, l'autre. The big Other is unconscious and a system of differences, belonging to the symbolic. (Rundgren 2007, 15)

Real, (different from reality) Lacan defines as impossible, since it is impossible to imagine, to integrate in the symbolic and impossible to attain. It is undifferentiated, whereas symbolic is formed of differences. It resists symbolization, and it can be referred to as a traumatic reality, where language does not reach (Rundgren 2007, 18). It is something where words cease, and categories fail. Theorist and philosopher Slavoj Žižek talks about entering the Real in the paintings of Mark Rothko, in his book *Soft Revolution*. Rothko's colourful abstract paintings are lingering between a reality of our socially constructed world and the Real, where anything is possible. Žižek analyses paintings further by saying that this lingering between these two worlds and simultaneously inhabiting them was what led Rothko to a nervous breakdown and finally to suicide (Žižek 2009, 21-22). As an example of this lingering I think of the experience when I meditate in front of a work of visual art, or when a piece of art fundamentally changes some blocks that constructs my reality.

How to use these divisions as choreographic tools?

I decided to name parts of the performance to go under umbrellas of imaginary, symbolic, and real. Under these umbrellas I could fit small or bigger parts, moments, driving forces for the performers, or as a division inside the entire dramaturgical arch. There could be one moment that was under the umbrella of imaginary, while at the same time there is a layer of symbolic present throughout the piece, since everything is tied to meanings in one way or another with a work of art. All three options would sometimes layer up. I realised I can play with tilting the amounts of these three possibilities in relation to each other, and that will affect forming the composition.

I want to analyse a solo of Anni through the layer of the Real. It happens during the third loop. Just before there has been a vibrating space and a massive wind machine has blown lavender all over.

Anni drags two halves of a stone across the floor, slowly, accompanied by a strange high-pitched minor key sound that echoes in the tired space. Energy and the dust of two and half loops are on their way to settle down, floating heavily in the air. She stops dragging the stones, but starts to float them on her hands, wrists balancing them up and down in an irregular rhythm. She floats sitting on the floor. Floating on ground that is dry and firm. The stones seem to become liquid inside. I become very conscious of my own head, and the muscles behind the back of my skull relax, which makes my jaw drop and my head start to balance weirdly, I start to follow her rhythm. It is as if all intensity is sucked into one tiny spot from the vast surrounding space, as if there was a vacuum where she is sitting with the stones. Followed by her tired but determined unfolding together with the stones, ground, sound accompanied by several half empty half acknowledging gazes, the ground seems to become liquid and transform into a purple lake, without physically becoming that. She balances with three floating weights, her head, and two stones, later with her feet. There is inertia together with an undertow that opens a void on the floor and the lake starts to suck the surface towards deeper layers. It is as if five different weights float on a high-pitched note, five heads wait to be crashed, to be multiplied, five stones in all their angularity flying silently away. She sits on the floor in a matter of fact kind of way, and balances with different ends of different weights far from her pelvis.

Something puzzling comes out of this middling, with the now of her juggling with the space, in relation to the history of the space.

This event mixes surface and depth in my gaze and understanding of space. A foregrounding and backgrounding that Manning talks about in event of “purpling” (Manning 2013, 175) appears, and borders seem to vanish or bend form. Something similar happens as when I stare at a visual art piece and space conforms. It is a slightly psychedelic experience which mixes reality and imagination through the mixing of my interpretation and sensorial experience. This experience makes me feel that the Real enters in my consciousness. I interpret it to be the Real, because another layer of some

kind of daydreaming, a state between asleep and awake is activated and I cannot draw firm boundaries between what actually happens and what I imagine. This twisting of reality is cut, when she smashes two halves of the stones together with a sharp clack. It is hard to say what exactly in her work as performer enables the Real to come flooding in to my interpretation. Surely it is several things. It is perhaps the imaginary that she is taking advantage of as a practice of a performer, juxtaposed together with the actual weight of things, time weighing on the situation, tension of peripheral and focus point. There are many crossing tensions that happen to meet on that spot.

When it comes to the layer of symbolic, I analyse it as the possible meanings the stones represent despite being themselves. It is again, where polysemy of matter manifests. In short, related to solo of Anni they are stones, but meanwhile I see them as heads, weight of time, death, heavy mirrors, unknown matter, thingness, pink leaking shadows. For someone else, they are probably other things. We are tied to a layer of symbolic throughout performances since we use it constantly to conceptualise and interpret the world around. Then again, something always escapes into the Real. For me the layer of symbolic also releases the polysemy of matter, that I mentioned in the introduction. As we read into things when it comes to art, what is interesting for me, is to take advantage of this rich and mobile polysemic net of things, rather than empty matter into one explanation of reasoning.

What comes to the layer of imaginary, it takes place mainly in tasks, in the form of how the performers fill verbal information through imaginary means, as well as what leaks from symbolic into the imagination of the audience members that then enable also an opening into the Real. Every scene could be analysed through this grid but that would take very long time.

As a spectator who visits this work, it is not bound nor necessary to see this 'Lacanian choreographic grid' that I worked with. As a choreographer, it offered tools to recognise layers in a singular thing, to analyse it and either enrich it towards a desired direction or surprise me in another one.

Drowning in Autre Jouissance

In Cixous' work which situates in the Discourse of the Hysteric, the subject is torn from being divided into a system of matter and a system of language, where she doesn't fully belong. In this discourse, there is an explanation about relation to *Autre Jouissance*, a paradoxical beyond pleasure principle which is located in the Real, where rules of the symbolic don't apply. This beyond pleasure principle is not sexual pleasure, phallic pleasure, but something more ravishing and entire, where the hysteric returns to (Rundgren 2007, 18).

"Symbolisen näkökulmasta Toiseen hukkuminen on subjektin kuolema, sillä Toisesta/äidistä erillistä yksilöä ei ole siinä olemassa. Kyseessä on Toisen jouissance, koska minää ei ole olemassa – ja Toinen jouissance erotuksena symbolisen tarjoamasta (fallisesta) jouissancesta." (Rundgren 2007, 40)

"From the viewpoint of the Symbolic, drowning in Other is death of the subject, because there is no individual separate from Autre/Mère/Mer in this Death. It is about Autre Jouissance because I doesn't exist – Autre Jouissance as something differing from a phallic jouissance offered by the symbolic."
(Rundgren 2007, 40, My translation

– for me the homonymous relationship (offered by Cixous' favourite play of words) with Mère/Mer as a substitute for Autre is important – death of subject in the Sea – in the materiality of Sea, as Sea is much more than water.)

I think of Autre Jouissance as a comprehensive, transcendental state where boundaries flee. In terms of the sensorial experiences as part of our process, the thought of Autre Jouissance becomes approachable for me in terms of the choreographic. It means expanding this sensorial lingering into a larger scale, for it to diminish again. Can we think of subject joining matter searching the death of subject as we know it, a hierarchical, intact upper part? In this death another type of subjectivity is freed, and the thought of death becomes less stagnant.

As an existential orientation, *Purpling* searches to travel towards Autre jouissance, and death of division that holds up separation to entities that remain hierarchical. Death, because death is a negative state that has historically returned to the positive, to life. We must take Death and make it beautiful, vibrant, plunge into many directions from it. The seabed of gradient purple floor is no coincidence to death in Autre Jouissance.

mort dans mer, jamais tous mais inseparable de toutes

But look, our seas are what we make of them, full of fish or not, opaque or transparent, red or black, high or smooth, narrow or bankless; and we are ourselves sea, sand, coral, seaweed, beaches, tides, swimmers, children, waves More or less wavy sea, earth, sky-what matter would rebuff us? We know how to speak them all. (Cixous 1976, 889)

I think of *Purpling* wandering and growing towards the Real and searching for the state of entirety, which is still simultaneously plural. What I mean with remaining plural, is that often a state of entirety is connected to oneness, becoming whole, like in meditations as part of zen practices. It is something where you ‘exit’ the body. It is a state of imaginary, as in transcendental experiences such as rituals under effect of a substance, where you join a greater force. These experiences exemplify an entity with borders, where one entity gains more content inside itself while the other one loses boundaries and herself. I want to search for a state where there is an entirety because it is inclusive, but it stays plural, because we are never isolated from the rest, and too complex for being ‘one’. In this way, there is no loss. In this state materiality of body stays and nothing hovers away.

In *Purpling*’s atmospheric dramaturgical arch, there is a different energy that grows and circles together with accumulation of three loops and gathering of time. It comes from states of fatigue, events that unfold, people crossing, some staying. As time passes by, space gets messier, there is more sweat and red cheeks, tiredness spreads and spectators’ code of conduct falls on the ground, as they start to lay in freer and more imaginary positions on islands, yawning, poking lavender and engaging into different minor activities. A watchful eye of superego - as the part of us that watches over our moral choices and good behaviour (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020) - has disappeared. In the

performers something happens through repetition. They get wilder, more energetic, more emotional, if there is an empty gaze it pours emptiness to the last drop. They let go of something and it feels like something dropped, and a state of joining matter just seems to happen in their dance. An excitement is equally accompanied with absolute boredom. This journey with some spectators throughout the total of 2 hours 15 minutes is intriguing.

Purpling could be seen as variations of becoming mineral, but not merely this, due to a tight manifestation of an actively streaming subjectivity. What was revealed throughout the process was that through the exhaustion, arriving from duration and compositional repetition, new energy was released reaching out to both matter and human. This new energy, together with different variations of becoming mineral, made evident that joining mineral is not still but vibrant and it offers a rich ground.

To complete one loop, I need to arrive to the title of the primary essay of reference, *The Laugh of the Medusa*. From a mythological aspect, Medusa is a monstress with her hair formed of snakes, that turns the one who glances at her earthmoving eyes to a stone. In *The Laugh of the Medusa*, Medusa is beautiful and laughs, she is not terrifying nor despised. To become mineral accompanied by Medusa's laughter is to laugh at the awaited stagnation, laugh at the fear in front of becoming stone, laugh at that petrifying death. It is not lethal but thing-powering.

DESCRIPTION OF PURPLING

The piece Purpling took place at the Theatre Academy during one week from Tuesday to Saturday, 24-28.9.2019 in Theatre Hall, a space of measuring around 40m x 12m x 10m. The length of the piece was approximately 2 hrs 15 minutes. The audience was welcome to enter, exit, and re-enter the space during this time, between 18:00 to 20:30, and at 13:00-15:30 in the last performance. The piece had a looped structure. There was a round of happenings of 45 minutes, that looped three times, changing slightly each time. The change occurred through happenings of other events and effects of repetition and duration that the performers were dealing with. A change because of fatigue and historicity was welcome and encouraged. Simultaneously I was intrigued in what stayed the same and how drastic the change would be each time, equally in the end of the week when the amount of repetitions had increased evening by evening.

The Space

The entire floor was painted purple in a gradient, making other parts and edges of the space darker, with the middle lighter. It reminds me of a seabed, sand that you sometimes can see with clear water when swimming. In the other end the floor was open, revealing another level nearly two meters lower, a hole 12m x 3m wide, with iron structures on top of it. This floor was painted entirely deep purple. For me the existence and use of different levels of the space was relevant as they materialised different layers of earth in addition to other layerings happening in performative scores. There were five layers all in all.

- 1) The pit — towards which there was a suction each loop
- 2) the base floor — where most of the performers' events unfolded
- 3) an upper aisle — that performers used when a loop finished to free up energy in space
- 4) another upper aisle — from where kinetic sound gadgets and many light sources were hanging from
- 5) The roof space, gigantic "floating" discs as light elements, through which different shades of purple and yellow were lit and reflected. The discs Sofia designed, were especially on in the 'free' beginning, and they gave me a funky intergalactic feel with their pulsating lights.

On the base floor there were soft, mint green islands for the audience to sit or lay on with 'old rose' coloured pillows. There were four spots for gadgets that were hanging from the upper aisles. The hanging objects were a fishing line with a wooden ball in the size of a ping pong ball hanging on the bottom. As the gadgets were on, either randomly set or manoeuvred by the sound designer Atte, they were hitting a construction of bricks, and a metallic object. As they would hit the bricks, different sounds appeared as the bricks were of different density, size, and so on.

On the floor there were piles and areas of big stones and concrete pieces from the street, construction sites and wastelands, and papers sewn together as soil/ another modality of earth.

As we talk about gradient floor, the performers were also painted gradient with purple paint from their feet and hands, and each one from somewhere else, face or back for example. Anni and Kalle had purple lenses that you could only see from close. This affected their way of seeing purely physically as neither of them is used to contact lenses and both their gazes changed slightly, reminding of something alienated. The performers' clothes were also purple gradients. We wanted purpling to purple all over.



In Purpling Krista-Julia Arppo, Kalle Lähde, Anni Kaila – Picture: Aapo Juusti



Purpling, The Space - Picture: Aapo Juusti



In Purpling Krista-Julia Arppo, Geoffrey Erista – Picture: Aapo Juusti

The Cyclical Timeline of the Piece

Frrrhhee

First part was so called *Frrrhhee*, (free start), where the performers would engage in different dances, bodily states and tasks between each other, inhabiting the space moving in all of it. Some of the performers moved more freely, such as Krista and Geoffrey, but everyone had stations that would get repeated, stations as events, or spots on space or both. Kalle was spending free start in the pit with a task with concrete. Anni was plunging headfirst into newspaper piles, with increasing intentionality, speed and wildness as the loops went on.

Papers

Second part was called *Papers*. We worked with newspapers that were sewn together so that they would build up huge formations that reminded of big rocks. The papers would easily get crushed, mushed, ripped, the form changed rapidly, and we had hard time to keep up with it. In the end that factor affected the different recycling system of papers that was different for each performer. Anni had the same huge newspaper each performance. As the week went on, her newspaper would be recycled to Krista, hers to Geoffrey, and Geoffrey's to Kalle. Anni had a stable score and she would repeat the same encounter with a boulder every time. This intra-action was softer than for example that of Geoffrey. We formed scores from a pool of tasks and directions that would guide the encounter with the newspapers. These tasks were ones we had been discovering throughout the process. Geoffrey for example had as one task trying to get up while holding a specific embodied form, which he had built up in a fragmented way. This resulted into a battle, since his form had become something which meant he would constantly fall back down. This made a big mess with him getting tangled, knotted and like a small hurricane with the newspapers he was having intra-action with. Resulting from this, his papers were quite ripped, wrinkly and a pile of sweet mess. They would then go to Kalle whose score had a simultaneous same exact score with Anni, (which you could only see if you were positioned to see both at the same time, close to the pit), that finished with Kalle getting out of the pit, jumping into a pile that looked quite a bit trashy, get into embodying a trash-ball and becoming a hybrid with it. He rolled through the long space to the other end. This was a cue to round up the scene.

Vibrating space

In this third part the main focus laid all over the space. Atte had built transducers under the islands where audience could lay down. These transducers vibrated throughout the structures of the Theatre Hall. I had since the beginning a question, how could we shake the entire structures of Theatre Hall? I wanted to feel the space embrace me, allowing people to float inside it, feeling a subtle vibration instead of a bass of a loud deep voice that would hurt ears. The vibration was accompanied by a slow pulsation in lights turning from purple to yellow, slowly fading out into total darkness. In darkness, the vibration continued, and soundscape was breathing. I was interested in how long it takes for the eyes to get used to the dark, what happens when they do, and how do we embrace the darkness. In the end of it there were small lights that would light up the constructions with fishing line, a ball and bricks. The performers engaged into a meditation. We had a visualisation of rooting yourself into the ground and melting certain parts of the body. We agreed that movement is welcome if it arrives.

During second loop as a part of the vibrant space Anni was formed into 'a stone dinosaur', as we called it. She started the piling, and Kalle helped to carry out rest of the event.

During the third loop, Geoffrey slowly started to move a pile of lavender from the other end of the space. For us it was another variation of meditation, a slow continuous movement that keeps on going. You hardly perceive it as the darkness arrives. There was a big wind machine that would blow intensely into another lavender pile making it spread. This turned out as somewhat humorous. We felt it to be a traditional solution to use a wind machine, so we decided to highlight the co-presence of this wind machine by blowing up the lavenders with intense, loud full power. This happened a couple of times. The smell of lavender would spread into the space, and concretely to someone's face, if they were positioned in the line of the wind.

Singulars

Fourth part *Singulars* was built from solo moments for the performers. First round was Krista, Kalle, second round Geoffery and third round Anni.

Singular events were in high part constructed by the performers, and they were moulded throughout the entire process. We had dialogue and I would suggest something, and we would choreograph and construct through negotiation and searching. My directions came from what they were offering. I felt we had a common ground with all the things we had done together, which aided in staying in the same world. I was trying to find a way to aid them find their way of manifesting in the world. How can I as a choreographer function as a supportive force, offer a world where I invite my collaborators, let them find their world in there so that from all the work a new, third one emerges?

Stonewave

The fifth part was called *Stonewave*. This was a scene that was the clearest from the earliest point, even that it would keep on changing slightly. We would start from one end of the space and travel all the way to the other ending up in the hole. During this travel, there was a compositional game for the guys. There were different variations on feeling the weight with swinging the stones, going up and down with them, feeling how it feels to shake them, go into the back space and let the stone guide where one goes. Go back and forth. Carry it on different spots of the body, fall on knees, rest with it, perhaps lick it, and other different possibilities. There was a question, how would all of this when done together gather energy in the space? How is it to serve a stone, to build a friendship with it? What does it mean to carry stones endlessly, and after jump underground? For some reason it reminded me of death. Even being inside the Theatre Hall, we were inside a stone, in one way or another. There is persistence, an endurance in minerals that we forget.

Breathing

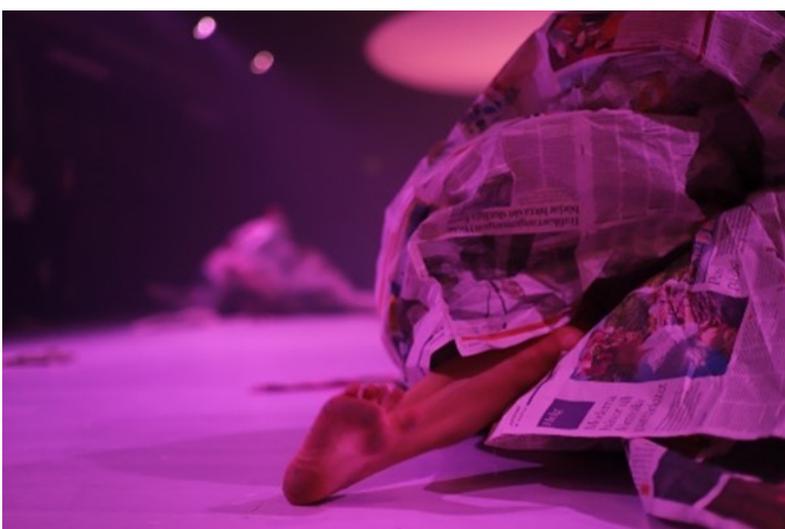
After the fifth scene there would be a small breathing moment and emptying of air. Then the free start would start again, with performers climbing back from the pit either through the upper aisles making an entire circle, or simply running straight back to the space.



In Purpling Geoffrey – Picture: Niklas Huotari



In Purpling Krista-Julia Arppo – Picture: Niklas Huotari



In Purpling Anni Kaila – Picture: Aapo Juusti

CONCLUSION

In the end of this process - and as a wish to conclude something - a question arises. How can the thematic of moving subjectivity inform us of the arrival of a new era as we shift away from the Anthropocene? As I see it, when moving subjectivities are practised, it is already another era. It is an era driven by a feminine ecology, an ecology of generous sharing and rejected egocentrism that spreads slowly but steadily. My artistic practice can be seen dwelling under the umbrella of feminist materialism as a part of new materialistic practices. Can the ecology of 'choreographing *with*' affect and expand a notion of the politics of collaboration from solely with humans in artistic processes and form new long-term economies? So far, this question has led to methodological processes of *transformation* and *becoming a hybrid together with matter*, together with *a momentary inactivity*, to respect and give time to other materials in space. I will continue to explore this question, methodologies and their development in my future artistic work.

As for my choreographic approach, I have made journeys to my childhood to enter under the layers of a very trained body, of a dancer. Slowly throughout the studies the distance between 'I' as performer, and 'I' as choreographer has grown wider – even though they still meet. A slightly deeper understanding of my way of being in the world has appeared from analysing my choreographic thinking, and this specific work.

I don't feel like writing final words. The nets of this written work still feel mobile and open to darn and release to new directions. It feels easier to perhaps return to the chapter of introduction and create a loop. I am interested in the polysemy of matter, affected body, thingness, breathing space, among other vibrant things. The era of posthumanism is rather fragmented and there is a lot that fits inside that big title. So, perhaps let's end with a poem from the middle of the process to commemorate the complexities and depths of a process, rather than conclusive answers, to continue the work.

Purpling
Vibrating, purpling
Depthing, surfacing
Meeting a world of textures
Pressure, porous, quiver with senses and space weaving
Sink in texture and float over limits, what is it like?
3/9/2019 Helsinki, home

REFERENCES

Arlander, Annette. 2012. *PERFORMING LANDSCAPE. Notes on Site-specific Work and Artistic Research (Texts 2001-2011)*. Theatre Academy Helsinki, Performing Arts Research Centre.

Barad, Karen. 2007. *Meeting the Universe Halfway. quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Duke University Press

Bennett, Jane. 2010. *Vibrant Matter, a political ecology of things*. Duke University Press Durham and London

Cixous, Hélène. 1969. *Dedans*. 1986 éditions des femmes.

Cixous, Hélène. 2013. *Medusan Nauru ja muita ironisia kirjoituksia*. Tutkijaliitto, suomennos alkuteoksesta *La Rire de la Méduse et autres ironies* 1975, Heta Rundgren, Aura Sévon ja Tutkijaliitto

Cixous, Hélène. 1976. *The Laugh of the Medusa*. Translation by Paula Cohen, Keith Cohen. Part of *Signs*, Vol 1, No 4 (Summer 1976). The University of Chicago Press. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3173239> Accessed: 14/09/2009 12:47

Hunter, Victoria. 2015. *Moving Sites: Investigating Site Specific Dance Performance*. Routledge

Ingvarstsen, Mette. 2016. *EXPANDED CHOREOGRAHPY: Shifting the agency of Movement in the Artificial Nature Project and 69 positions*. Stockholm University of the Arts

Johnston, Adrian. 2018. *Jacques Lacan*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. First published 2 April 2013, substantive revision 10 July 2018. Last Accessed: 15.3.2020

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/lacan/>

Lacan, Jacques. 1992. *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis 1959-1960. The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Edited by Jacques-Alain Miller BOOK VII, Translated with notes by Dennis Porter*. Routledge

Lepecki, André. 2016. *Singularities. Dance in the age of Performance.* Routledge

Lorch, Benjamin. 2002.

The Chicago School of Media Theory. Accessed: 15.11.2019

<https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/landscape/>

Manning, Erin. 2013. *Always More Than One * Individuation's Dance. Prelude by Brian Massumi.* Duke University Press Durham and London

Manning, Erin. 2017. *Not at a Distance. On Touch, Synaesthesia and Other Ways of Knowing.* ResearchGate. Last search 12.3.2020

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338666831_Not_at_a_Distance_On_Touch_Synaesthesia_and_Other_Ways_of_Knowing

Manning, Erin. 2019. *Toward a Politics of Immediation.* Frontiers in Sociology

Manning, Erin and Massumi, Brian. 2014. *Thought in the Act: Passages in the Ecology of Experience.* University of Minnesota Press

Monni, Kirsi & Allsopp Ric (eds), 2015. *Practicing Composition: Making Practice. Texts, Dialogues and Documents 2011-2013.* University of the Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy

Rundgren, Heta. 2007. *Minästä toiseen. Lacanilaisen subjektin syntymä Anaïs Nin'in House of Incestissä ja Hélène Cixous'n Dedansissa.* Helsingin yliopisto

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. Last updated: 6.2.2020.

www.britannica.com/science/superego Last accessed: 30.3.2020

Von Bagh, Jenni-Elina. 2018. *Choreographing in Nomadic Traces.* University of Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy

Walter, Benjamin. 2002. *Selected Writings Volume 1. 1913-1926.* Edited by Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts. London, England

Zizek, Slavoj. 2009. *Pehmeä vallankumous. Psykoanalyysi, taide, politiikka.*

Gaudeamus Helsinki University Press, suomennos Janne Porttikivi ja Elia Lennes

Other references:

Ingvartsen, Mette. 2019. *Red Pieces* on SideStep -festival. Personal Notes. Zodiak – Centre for New Dance 8 February 2019

LeRoy, Xavier. 2018. *Temporary Title*. PACT Zollverein, Essen February 2018

Rodrigues, Lia. 2014. *Pindorama*. Seen at Kaaitheater in Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels, 2015

Cover page picture: *Purpling*. Choreography: Karoliina Loimaala. Picture: Aapo Juusti