

Acting Towards a Sustainable Society

Psychogeography as an ecological action



Figure 1: A large excavated cave in Mustavuori nature reserve, Mustavuori, Helsinki, Finland in 2022 August. Photo by: Simo Räsänen

Niko Nordström

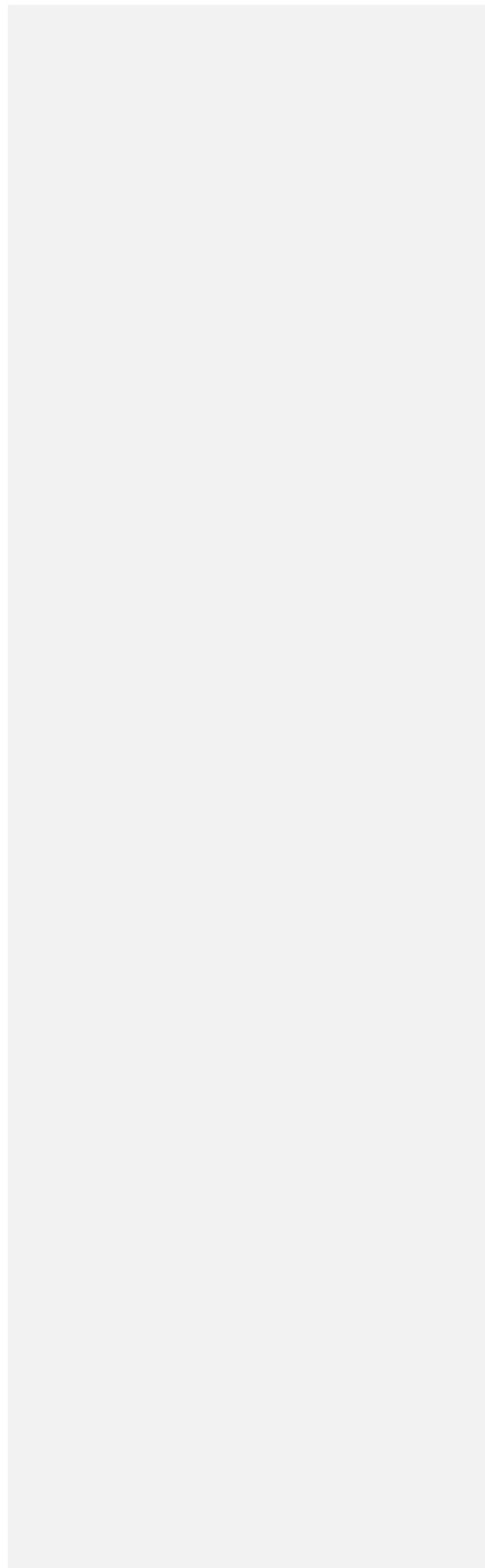
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Abstract

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The aim of this thesis is to find a personal and collective practice to deepen the relation to nature through methods I've found useful as an actor. The means to achieve that are twofold, first personal explorations which I then reflect upon and a shared practice which I open through facilitated case studies involving a focus group using methods that derive from an acting practice.

The philosophical grounds I root this research aim in, is Deep Ecology.

I use the concept of situated writing together with reflective writing to first find out how places affect me and how the experiences linger on in reflections. To achieve this, I've maintained a writing practice of blogging. I then enter a dialogue with my blog posts through the academic reflexivity that the process of writing this thesis offers.

It is by using the knowledge of my profession and education as an actor, through the combination of the Chekhov technique and Viewpoints in relation to site-specific outdoor locations, in a practice I've coined eco-Chekhov, that I aim to create new meanings and stronger bonds with our surroundings. The exercises are also practical for opening the research and as a methodology to survey the distinctions between places and their affects.

I've used discussions during and after case studies and written surveys as feedback gathering methods to map out how a collective ecologically rooted acting practice could seem.

The combination of writing and acting practices found have personally shaped a sustainable method to use in my career post-graduation.

Key words: Ecology, Chekhov, somatics, Viewpoints, blog, urban exploration, psychogeography

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“The physical landscape is baffling in its ability to transcend whatever we would make of it. It is as subtle in its expression as turns of the mind, and larger than our grasp; and yet it is still knowable. The mind, full of curiosity and analysis, disassembles a landscape and then reassembles the pieces — the nod of a flower, the color of the night sky, the murmur of an animal — trying to fathom its geography. At the same time the mind is trying to find its place within the land, to discover a way to dispel its own sense of estrangement.” - Arctic Dreams, Barry Lopez, 1986.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is both to find a way to unite my personal practice with ecology and facilitate other peoples, from other fields relation to specific places.

In the follow thesis I will attempt to sketch out ways how I can as a professional actor assist in a larger societal structural change towards a more sustainable future. One sustainable for the existing and emerging ecosphere. The same future is tied to a more sustainable individual future, in terms of a sustainable method for working with my profession, as one can see of studies regarding how stress affects consumption patterns, which themselves, as in overconsumption are fundamental obstacles for global sustainability (Rosenqvist, 2023). Inevitably one has to confront questions such as what is an actor (to me) and what are the main skills I've learnt during my five years of studies. This artistic research will seek to find a synthesis between the knowledge an actor/performer is bestowed during studies and a will to share and practice my profession in a more societally and ecologically conscientious way. The aim of the thesis is twofold, to find a personal practice to deepen my relation between practice and ecology, and secondly to find methods to facilitate such relations amongst co-citizens. It is also the result of an urge to bridge gaps between art, research, science and nature.

“Conservation strategy will be more eagerly implemented by people who love what they are conserving, and who are convinced that what they love is intrinsically lovable.” – Arne Naess (1986, 33-55)

For my thesis I take on two writing roles, both shaped by their form. This thesis, demanding a certain academic perspective, amount of academic references, following guidelines such as the Harvard system of referencing and also containing associations or stereotypes in terms of expression (language) formats my character into an academic one, largely following the standards set by the western scientific and artistic research canon. Another consequence of this position is the inclusion of others, in order to do empirical qualitative studies, reaching for quantitative results.

The other is that of the blogger, imitating the kind of academic journal we've been pushed to maintain throughout our studies and largely are suggested to use as referential material for our academic thesis, where the emphasis is on the personal experience of

things. This has been my personal practice to deepen and gather material for deepening the relation between my profession and ecology.

2. Situating the writer

I have to get out before I start writing and perhaps affect pedagogical structures. I have a sense that whatever I write down must happen after I've let my intuition lead me somewhere. An influential discussion, due to its probing nature with a teacher, Immanuel Schipper, whose pedagogical approach has been a huge inspiration provokes me to write down my thinking process. We arrive there as I struggle to find a coherent research question for an essay, instead Schipper takes me to the root of the word essay, which means to try, to attempt or trial. He encourages me by saying that it is even interesting for the reader to follow my line of thought and how the knowledge is shaped through the process. I never finish the essay but pick up blogging. I approach the thesis through a blog which is essayistic in its nature and a writing/analytical approach inspired by the origin of the word essay: to attempt, a trial, to try.

Or should I already start answering the When, what, who, why, and where? Questions I'm inclined to inquire due to my interest in journalism and also previous interest in Stanislavski's acting methods. I might be able to answer the first four already from this place, the space of my home.

When? It's March 2026. I'm in my final year of studies at the Master's degree programme of acting in Swedish at the Theatre Academy of Helsinki. As part of the academic guidelines, I have to write and submit a master's thesis for dissertation at the end of the month if I hope to graduate on time and gain the economic benefits of having the state pay 40% of my student debt.

What? I'm writing about places and how they affect us. As a general red thread, squeezed by timeframes and the general way of bringing forth knowledge at our academy, I will use my own personal experiences to find a path so I can share observations and directions to perhaps open up this research to others.

Where? Writing by the writing desk in my wooden house, the same specific organic, musty scent that reaches your nose in old wooden houses brings me to Embracing Darkness, a voluntary course ending the 2024 winter semester around the winter equinox. On the course I read *In Search of Lost Time* (Proust, 1913-27). The main character famously takes a bite of a cake and is reminded of a time and space

somewhere else. Like that I'm sent off reminiscing vividly the place where I was reading about a guy remembering the surroundings of his childhood and imagining the mansion room of the lead character's childhood home.

Throughout my studies and part of my writing process, a steady redose of nicotine through cigarettes have been a steadfast routine. As part of the time when I was sketching the outlines for my thesis, I was inspired by the essay by Tim Ingold regarding walking, how we perceive the world and how those experiences are treated in the western socio-cultural literature sphere. Ingold writes, that how we've constrained our feet, to the degree that the physical shape of these body parts have adapted to shoes is also seen in how we treat journeys in literature. Often what's considered worth writing about are the destinations, the sights and not the way there (Ingold 2004, 315-340). During a writing session I decided to smoke without my shoes to get inspired. I'm instantly bombarded by sensorial experience through my feet. How many different temperatures fit within a 4x4m radius when taking steps. I step on the stairs, down on pebbles, onto mud and up on the grass. The pebbles feel the warmest, the stairs, human designed for ease of walking ironically the coldest. That's where my thoughts go. And only that far I think.

The reason for including the cigarette smoking as a method is not to reproduce the harmful, romanticized vision of a suffering artist behind the veils of smoke, but rather because it has been a constant pulling force to situate myself outdoors, in contrast to many classmates and colleagues. This constant resituating, blending in thought and emotional processes, I dare claim effect the results in ways one might not be able to pinpoint, yet deserves to be mentioned.

How many times are those cigarette breaks simply a desire to breathe fresh air and meet the weather? Throughout my studies one of my personal pet peeves and structural frictions with the academy and society in general, has been frustration regarding having work and studies centered in specific rooms, locations built or purposed for that specific activity. A squared room, which then renders it necessary to use technology and loads of resource consuming materials to achieve the effects we deem necessary to tell the stories we want to tell. It feels unsustainable, unnecessarily stressful and complex. Luckily to me, it seems the alleviations consumers look for in response to symptoms of stress are experiential (Zhao Y, et al. 2023). The product to be consumed from my

profession of acting is also more experiential than material. To start my research and potential change in pedagogical structures, I need to get out to write about being out.

Why? To get there, we must go to failures, fears and the moment of realizing that one is in a situation one doesn't want to be in. In the autumn of 2025 I do my first big stage production, in the play *Ronja Rövardottern* as my internship and artistic thesis, jumping in the role of Birk Borkason. There is a scene which gains feedback, where Birk and Ronja's characters are jumping over a huge gap. The feedback comes from the choreographers, who notice time and time again that the gap starts to lose the illusion of "danger", since our bodies naturally jump off the shortest distance and one's focus is inclined to deviate to the contact with the other human being, rather than the imagined danger.

I have gone to the Mustavuori cave (for location, see Appendix) to brainstorm my written thesis. I wonder how I could unify the two parts, the artistic and written. I sit by a cliff there, trying to be aware how the real risk feels at the location, standing controllably by the fall, but letting my imagination run wild how it'd be to jump to the other side. I discuss this with Schipper, the lecturer facilitating the essay course, who insists that I would probably come to be disappointed on stage, since the experience has now transformed into a linguistic memory and will always be something different from the bodily language. I'm inclined to agree, for the first few empirical times I do notice some similarity in heartbeat and tightening of my chest, but it wears off.¹

I give up on an attempt to use my interest in places for the knowledge gathering for traditional expressions of my profession. I divert direction. Arne Naess's philosophy of Deep Ecology becomes a fundament when looking for systems of thinking to anchor one's desire to places in. It also echoes my gnarly dreadful feelings regarding the way that we live, produce products, culture and values and its unsustainability. The dread was furthered by the challenge posed by novelist Amitav Ghosh, in *The Great Derangement: Climate change and the Unthinkable*, where he scolds the arts and culture as much as the economists, industrialists and others for the incapability to handle the ecological crisis. Ghosh (2016, 8) asks "Are the currents of global warming

¹ This is elaborated on in chapter 2.0

too wild to be navigated in the accustomed barques of narration? ... If certain literary forms are unable to negotiate these torrents, then they will have failed and their failures will have to be counted as an aspect of the broader imaginative and cultural failure that lies at the heart of climate crisis.” He asserts that part of the failure is that many skilled writers, whilst using the topic in nonfiction, refrain from handling it through fiction.

As a person born in 1999, after gutting results of many ideologically enticing collective revolutions, personal, individual revolutions, which might sometimes converge and find each other in small, autonomous groups, is the sole thing I can muster up faith for during my lifetime. This thinking finds resemblance in Édouard Glissant’s “archipelagic thought” (Glissant, Obricht, 2021, 19–32, 121–133, 185-204). At the core a grand, transcendental hope lies that microcosmic actions cause ripple effects into the fabric of the broader society. So the research question I start to formulate is How can I take my profession to nature?

Part of the acting profession is performing many roles. This thesis is no different, I’ve divided my writing practice into two types of performing through text:

For my thesis I take on two writing roles, both shaped by their form. This thesis, demanding a certain academic perspective, amount of academic references, following guidelines such as the Chicago Manual of Style referencing system and also containing associations or stereotypes in terms of expression (language) formats my character into an academic one, largely following the standards set by the western scientific and artistic research canon.

The other is that of the blogger, imitating the kind of academic journal we’ve been pushed to maintain throughout our studies and largely are suggested to use as referential material for our academic thesis, where the emphasis is on the personal experience of things. The blog also works as a cyberspace and artistic documentation medium. The form also allows for a balance between the western orthodox academic research and a knowledge production that I feel is underrepresented, easier to achieve from my position of an artist; that of stream-of-consciousness, tying my interests with Ingold’s (2004) text on feet, the journey’s, wa(o)nderings themselves and the root origin of essay, to attempt.

2.1. Terminology

The zeitgeist of society always encapsulates buzzwords and hot topics. From the morning news to studies in the University of the Arts, in course descriptions, essays and circle discussions, in the artist life of lunch cafeteria jargon, in synopses for performances and in grant applications one learns to use them for one's own or more bodies benefit. Of the words that have been most prevalent, sustainability is one. As I mention the current working title of my thesis, Acting Towards a Sustainable Society a cohort laughs, and says that it's great because it can be about anything. But what can we mean when we talk about it? What am I aiming for when I'm Acting Towards a Sustainable Society?

The Oxford dictionary offers the following definitions for **sustainability**:

1835– The quality of being sustainable by argument; the capacity to be upheld or defended as valid, correct, or true.

2.a. 1953– The quality of being sustainable at a certain rate or level.

2.b. 1980– spec. The property of being environmentally sustainable; the degree to which a process or enterprise is able to be maintained or continued while avoiding the long-term depletion of natural resources.

In my thesis I attempt to reach towards something in the 2a and b definitions, throughout which I feel that it will validate the first definition of validity.

Deep Ecology: a philosophy outlined by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, which basic aim is to change the values of our societies and how they're organized, seeing an intrinsic value in everything that's part of nature. It stands in contrast with "shallow ecology", which according to Naess is born from anthropocentric actions with the benefits of humans in the forefront. (Naess and Sessions, 1984)

Situationism: in psychology, situationism claims that the situation a human being inhabits, or takes herself to inhabit, better predicts and explains her behavior than her putative traits of character (Upton, 2009)

Situationists: Situationism or the Situationist International was a radical European artistic and political movement of the 1950s and 1960s. It critiqued and sought to subvert capitalist consumer culture by creating disruptive "situations", spontaneous, liberatory events, to break the alienation and passivity fostered by modern society. (Philosophyball)

Situated writing: gives great weight to the geopolitical and intersectional dimensions of the situations and location the writer is in, the locations for information and knowledge, with the aim of shedding light on and exploring the complex networks our social lives are happening and have happened in, discarding the idea of a "neutral" or "outside" researcher/writer.

Dérive: The dérive, or "drift," is an unplanned journey through an urban landscape where participants let go of their usual routines and social ties. A way to quickly move through different urban settings, aiming to study the city's layout and induce emotional disorientation, potentially leading to new experiences called Situations. (Debord, 1958)

Détournement: a technique developed by the Situationists that involves taking existing artistic or cultural works and using them in a way that goes against their original meaning. This is an interesting term to consider in terms of filling the pages of the traditional academic thesis with a blog full of personal interests, journeys, leisure-like time and association. (Debord and Wolman, 1956)

Reflexivity: self-awareness of the writer

So why the blogger alias/character of Psychogeographic (re)actor?

Psychogeography: exploring cities in a way that focuses on personal connections to places and wandering without a set route. Guy Debord defined psychogeography as studying how the environment affects people's emotions and behaviour.

Reactor (Merriam-Webster, 2026)

“1 : one that reacts

2 : a device (such as a coil, winding, or conductor of small resistance) used to introduce reactance into an alternating-current circuit

3a: a vat for an industrial chemical reaction

b: a device for the controlled release of nuclear energy (as for producing heat)”

My interpretation of a **Reactor** and the definitions above:

1 = Me

2 = The Actors body

3b = This thesis as the transformation and controlled release of energy, as knowledge gained through practice and theory, worded as awareness and deepening relations with our environment.

Energy / ἐνέργεια as summarized by lecturer Katalin Trenscényi

“The word energy comes from Ancient Greek ἐνέργεια (énérgeia), meaning activity, operation, or being at work.

en- = at, in

ergon = work, that which is wrought; business; action

So, energeia literally meant working within, active power.” (Trenscényi, 2026)

Acting according to Niko Nordström’s abridged, simplified and semantic dictionary of misty generalizations (2026 ed.) =

1. The activity of self-expression or facilitation of storytelling through observing stimuli and being in a state ready to respond

2a. Working with actions

2b. Reacting

Semiurgy: “The production of new meanings by the creation of new signs; the expansion of the semiosphere.” (Wiktionary, 2026)

Eco-Chekhov: a neologism coined by me, the researcher, for the purpose of distinguishing between the traditional Chekhov and the adaptation of it within the context of this research AND as a buzzword to catch the attention of people for case studies or future research. |

2.2. Introducing the blog

<https://insearchofsceneries.blogspot.com/>

I’ve chosen to include blog posts as a documentation of my research as screenshots that I enter a dialogue with. The thesis writer will react and format the texts of the blogger to fit the requirements of an academic text. These two performative writings will thus enter a dialogue, which will end up synthesizing a conclusion. I will also conduct interviews and case studies with fellow actors and alumni from the theatre academy.

I feel a need to defend the role of the blog within a master thesis, due to the unconventionality of it through a multitude of arguments.

First and foremost, diary writing has been both the method of documentation and archiving our education programme has supported us in, through regular check-ups and requirements of sending in “semester reports” throughout the bachelor's studies, underlining the importance of notes when a student is to write their thesis or work with research. The functions of which the French professor and specialist in autobiography Philippe Lejeune has named as follows, as cited in Livholts (2020, 33-34):

1. “The first is to express oneself, which allows one to release emotions and thoughts, and to communicate. Making use of writing is an act of expression and separation that connects the body (hands, fingers) with the pen, or the keyboard, into a form of meaning-making through words...” and “The well known beginning, ‘Dear diary’ is an act of communication towards the paper, the machine, and/or the self that may end if there is a communication in real life.”
2. “The second function is to reflect, which potentially has an analytical and deliberative effect. The diary allows the writer to develop thoughts and

Commented [BF1]: detta underkapitel kunde du dra upp, kanske enda till föregående

reflections, make notes on the everyday, and/or write about crises and difficulties. The writer is also a reader of the diary, and in this way creates a distancing from the self.”

3. “The third function is to *freeze time*, and Lejeune (2009: 195) writes... ‘For the diary writer, the writing occurs in the present, documenting the past and can be a powerful tool for memory against forgetfulness.’”
4. “The fourth function (Lejeune 2009: 195) is to take *pleasure* in writing through a ‘flow of energy that courses through the practice of writing’”

The blog conveniently situates me physically, as a student of acting, a practice deeply rooted in embodiment, to my subject of study, places and possible relations to places themselves. It also offers a lens to approach the surrounding world and the research subject through a familiar state-of-mind for someone who’s an actor. As Mona Livholts describes her writing process in her seminal *Situated Writing as Theory and Method, The Untimely Novella*, “The writing and the text accompany me when I walk the streets... I feel that my life is shaped by the existence of the novella, as if I am both that woman in the text... and at the same time watching this story.” and “I am both writer and reader in this situated writing project and become emotionally involved in the context of the storyworlds I create in dialogue with my imagined readers.” (Livholts, 2020, 27, 33)

As a blogger, I rely heavily on the Situationists theory and praxis, as well as urban exploration blogs. As a form of text, taking the form of situated writing into this thesis, as formulated by Mona Livholts in the aforementioned book it even broadens the thesis form to just slightly encapsulate the diversity of its themes, localities and how its actor-writer thinks, is affected and thus researches.

Situated writing, or life writing (Livholts, 2020, 20), “is a form of non-fiction with the ‘capacity to invite feeling responses and to evoke readers’ empathy’” (Livholts, 2020, 24, Keen, 2016, 9). This form of writing and the attempt to both use one’s knowledge, and evoke forementioned qualities through the knowledge one produces or shapes,

seems to go hand in hand with the frequent goals of my practical profession and graduation title, acting and master of arts (theatre and drama).

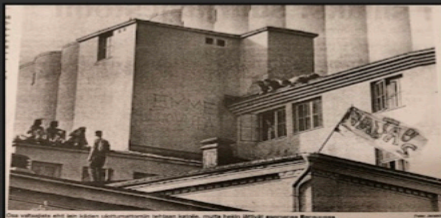
In Search of a Scenery

Psychogeography = the study of the effects of the geographic environment on the emotions and behavior of individuals. Acting = Reacting The Psychogeographic (re)actor journals journeys, following streams-of-consciousness meandering into their essayistic, reflective, logbook-like blog post finale. I hope that this will be a ladder to and fro my Master's thesis in Theatre arts.

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

Alluringly dilapidated

Warmly welcome dear reader, you may have a lot of questions starting with the letter "w" and wonder who I am, why I'm writing or you're reading, what this blog is about and where it will take you. I will start from *when*. I have, until this point, been in your position, a reader of blogs. Right now I'm in my final year of master's studies within the field of theatre art and acting. Part of the academic streamline, or depending on the day, meandering river is to write a thesis so you can be approved to graduate. My only problem is that I don't feel particularly inclined to open my notes and reflect upon my experiences statically. My comfort zone is also outside the attention of an audience so I'm hopefully done with performing physically for the time being (at least 'til the fire to express within becomes too frustratingly glaring). After four and a half years of ingesting theory and practice... The whining schoolboy going unwillingly to school, creeping like snail with his backpack, MacBook, scribbled notes, books and repulsive reflex at the thought of sitting in a library, synthesizing read theories with practical memories to deliver more text and then rehearsing further under gazes. I have tended a growing frustration arising from a need that seldom has gotten relief, that of moving outside the square spaces of our academic institution.



Our institution before it was one, occupied on the brink of demolition by Oranssi ry in 1990. Idag är tillträde på taket förbjudet.

I have, until this point, been in your position, a reader of blogs. The only starting point I can suitably find for changing roles and perhaps indirectly give you glimpses of answers is to direct you to my all-time favorite blogs, some of which I've followed and come back to since I was a tender child exploring internet for the first time and some diverging paths which I've found later on only thanks to treading the path which the cursor a long time ago set my journey upon.

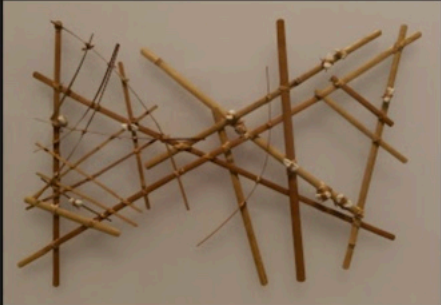
At first the infant... interested in abandoned buildings and their scary but yet intriguing atmosphere, offering unlimited world's, safely watched within mind's eye from outside. But I guess either my parents were too afraid of the dark, to let me go or they didn't feel particularly pulled towards the risks and inconveniences that trespassing into such spaces often requires, nor did I have the courage, stature or belief in myself to express my desire to be taken to such places credibly. From the web searches emerged Wormwood, Mortus, c8h11no2 and Nila, a collective who call themselves the [Trestalkers](#), [hinterlands](#), being one's urban explorers, another's trespassers, posting their logbooks online, opening doors to spaces in transformation across the nation and eastern Europe. I spent hours clicking on images, reading, getting exhilarated and dreaming to one day, maybe as a teen, have my own group.

One of the multiple "urbex" blogs I ended up on is much more. The *Esoteric geography and periphery-therapy* contains rather against the conventions of the culture more text than images, often zooming out to wide symbolical allusions and metaphorical tangents that I scroll by to find more locations and images, I remember skimming past the multiple posts about nature and non-built landscapes, which I found boring on my quest to find bigger, vaster abandoned industrial sites, such as that of [the behemoth lime mine](#), where I one day hope to set camp.

I can't pinpoint the time when I became curious of the history of places. I guess the imagined pasts always were born when seeing something old, but the in-depth local history that was ingrained in each of those blog posts soon had me devouring text at paces that would have gotten my elementary school teachers jealous.

As time has moved by, a lot of the domains of the "urban exploration" sites I used to visit have been frozen in time, such as the [Trestalkers](#) or [Syrjäseutu](#) mentioned above, some have changed hands and appear as eclectic mixes of advertisements (compare [this](#) to [today](#)), or been lost to the bit bucket forevermore. I have occasionally found my way back to the Society of Esoteric Geography. The blog has also been updated, albeit less frequently as time goes by, and not as frequently as I have been visiting, which has made me go back to old posts with a new focus on the content of the texts and their relation with the images.

The places, the histories and speculation about things we cannot know of, the zooms between the micro- and macrocosm that appear in the relation between image and text arouse the imagination and awake the spiritual hunger of a young atheist adult who's grown into a materialist nordic urban environment and is trying to figure out channels for creativity.



Micronesian stick chart, made by the native Marshallese to navigate the dynamic tides at the Marshall Islands. Built as an open framework, they were memorized before the trip, during the trip consultation would be sensorial, by feeling the canoes behavior on the ocean swells. "The charts, unlike traditional maps, were studied and memorized prior to a voyage and were not consulted during a trip, as compared to traditional navigation techniques where consultation of a map is frequent and points and courses are plotted out both before and during navigation. Marshallese navigators used their senses and memory to guide them on voyages by crouching down or lying prone in the canoe to feel how the canoe was being pitched and rolled by underlying swells. Individual charts varied so much in form and interpretation that the individual navigator who made the chart was the only person who could fully interpret and use it." - wikipedia

"The sense of place is not rational. It is a spontaneous, holistic psychophysical feeling, that pulls towards a certain place or repels from it - or in some specific cases doing those both at the same time. The feeling doesn't need reflections, but afterwards it might be good to analyze. It can teach a lot." - Marko Leppänen, founder of the Society of Esoteric Geography on his blogpost "[Why Places Matter](#)" (translated)

It strikes a chord. This is what I hope to graduate with: going out, alone, with groups that change and dissolve, absorb, vanish, accidentally get frozen in frame from time to time, following methodologies which happen to impulsively poke my curiosity during the day, or the one before, about ones before that, drifting, finding sceneries, serenity, safe hunger, shifting, thoughts and their translations, cold, bridges, passages, situations, derivations, theories, scales, breathe fresh air. Imagine. More images!


at 13 January No comments: 

Figure 2: Title and description on the front page of my blog *In Search of a Scenery*. Figures 3 and 4: Blogpost *Alluringly dilapidated*. 13.1.2026.

It is through the discussions with teachers, my mentor and situated writing, that I now manage to format my wish: to shape knowledge through, as Livholts (6) paraphrases Laurel Richardson (1994) "writing with creativity and openness, then it becomes a

method of inquiry from which we find out things”. With this I also hope to shed light throughout my research on “issues around the multitude of power relations...”, both that of student and administration, citizen and politics and as an very privileged individual, white, cis-identifiable young healthy male from a northern welfare state (well, for now that is), having the possibility to perform this research at all in the way I do (Livholts, 2020, 6). By showing the referential spheres I use I hope to offer a possible critical reading of this thesis and me as a writer, if someone were to analyze the reference material. What one refers to tells of the person referring and offers a view into who and what are influencing the writer.

I’ve chosen to use the Chicago Manual of Style with in-text citations due to how it to clearly incorporates other thinkers' effect on my line of thought within the text and knowledge that is shaped in this research. (Uniarts, 2026)

I am aware that readers with a different set of neurological wirings may have a very different opinion, but to me the traditional thesis format is very unstimulating. The blog also works as a particular cyberspace, a place containing knowledge with its own aesthetic effects. The photographs, videos and visual material within it have the potential to extend the analytical creativity and reflexivity (self-awareness of the writer) which is why I’ve decided to incorporate it as screenshots of the webpage (Livholts, 2020, 30).

Photographs and the blog also operate both as memories itself and a way to write down memories, a sort of diary, which has been our main way of archiving studies throughout our acting education. The blog/diary develops by reflecting on and reorganizing them. Sociologist Frigga Haug regards memories as artefacts (Ibid. 28), and the process as a form of inner “archaeology where we ‘discover fragments of an architecture that we then begin to reconstruct.’” (Haug, et al. 1987)

Livholts also references sociologist Ken Plummer, who has pondered upon the selection and the way we make meaning of memories. “Personal memory is related to psychological processes of remembering that include what and how a particular person recalls and does not recall. Narrative memory is shaped by our motivations to select particular stories... memories contribute to shaping how we feel... listen... touch... smell... breathe and live in the world.”(Livholts, 2020, 28, Plummer, 2013, 2001)

Through including these reflections on memories of site-specific experiences, I both create space for a critical reading of me as a privileged writer-body/actor participating in the university-institutional knowledge production system for future analysis and offer my individual and perhaps inspiring perspectives on natural phenomena we recognize and are exposed to between our work and leisure. "Writing about concrete situations allows us to note fragments and scenes from the flow of events in everyday life." (Livholts, 2020, 29) To paraphrase Livholts (32), as a blogger "I am a (periodic) diary and letter writer who makes use of these blurred genres to document and communicate events and situations from my academic and private lives. I view my writing as interlinked fragments that... respond to the world, rather than represent it".

Whilst certain limitations will affect the blog pasted into thesis format, such as video clips, links and interactive site design not being operable, I attempt to still retain some of its audiovisual qualities. One of the inspirational aspects of blogs are, that you as a reader are free to jump to any post from any time, without the need to read it chronologically. In fact, you're confronted with the latest blog post. If scrolling as usual from up-to-down, you'd end up with the first post as last. This offers lucrative potential towards a more rhizomic reading and knowledge formulation, as hypothesized by Guattari and Deleuze in *A Thousand Plateaus*, a form of writing where each chapter works on its own (Lin, 2022). I've decided to use secondary sources here and elsewhere, where the philosophies referenced are easier to understand digested, through someone else's reading of them.

The spatial consciousness in their work is also very attractive as a way to approach the subject I'm dealing with. They formulize the term nomad space. "Smooth or nomad space lies between two striated spaces: that of the forest, with its gravitational verticals, and that of agriculture, with its grids and generalized parallels", distinguished by qualities of non-hierarchy, intensity and hapticity in contradiction to the striated, fixed and gridded spaces which it exists between (Deleuze, Guattari, 2010, 49). The meandering quality of the blog and explorations exist in a similar unfixed, nomadic state of tension between the rigorous, set forms of academic text and literature expectations of total fiction. Together the explorations, situated writing of the blog and the academic reflexivity in this thesis function as nomadic waves interacting with each other in the shaping of knowledge. "Nomadic waves or flows of deterritorialization go

from the central layer to the periphery, then from the new center to the new periphery, falling back to the old center and launching forth to the new.” (Deleuze, Guattari, 1987, 49).

Through integrating the writing practices of situated blogging and academic reflexivity, I approach what I consider to be the joint function or potential in the praxis of writing and the profession of acting: namely that of semiurgy. Semiurgy is a neologism coined by the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard but also used in the context and approach of magic (Chappell, 2025):

“... the creation or manipulation of signs, linguistic or otherwise, to cause specific effects within the psyche of the magician. These effects can then be reflected in changes in the world of the real; i.e., the objective universe of matter, physical laws, and other self-aware inhabitants each seeking to understand and affect their surroundings through language and other systems of signs.” (Ibid.)

2.3 Introducing the Actor

Amongst the wide palette of different approaches to being on stage our studies are based on, rather than having a fundamental method or technique with a name as its core, one constant we’ve had are short courses intertwined through study semesters in somatics which is “an innately improvisational, playful inquiry into the body and its inner and outer relationships. It is a practice of tracking signals and sensations, becoming aware of how my perceptions are tuned with the environment - and how I process and respond to these suggestions.” (Palokangas, n.d.).

I believe that starting our studies, and following through with this psychosomatic movement practice, which also requires communicating around and finding words to express one’s experiences, which can be deeply personal or “irrational”, has opened up linguistic and sensorial resources to that which is beyond what could be conventionally classified as our bodily limit and that the purely psychological or chronological.

In one of our last courses this spring, *Ecosomapoetics*, after an exercise where we were to embody an imaginary plant, a student questioned the discourse around talking about plants. The friction was born out of how it easily gets blurry when we speak of our own emotions and interpretations, which we can’t escape, and become unclear that it is our

Commented [BF2]: här kunde du igen dra upp stycket

projections on the plants, since we as inherently humans can't have an understanding of how the plants equivalents of thinking, communicating or feeling are. That worry being voiced was a relief. It led on to inspiring thoughts upon how these tasks, done consciously as a human interpretation of things can still deepen our relation to things around and widen our own experiential spheres.

I hope that by pouring what I've come to consider the core of my acting practice, as a blogger into my blog, could open a pathway for mutually beneficial exchange between places and a very anthropocentric, individual interpretation of them. The cores of acting for me being as follows; being in a situation, opening senses to be affected, listening, reacting, observing, constantly solving problems, often on an intuitive level due to the demands of a fast rhythm and "authentic" response from the outside, followed or preceded by character work outside of the live situation, namely that of psychological analysis of the persona, event or phenomena.

An approach I've used for creating performances and approaching roles has been one I hypothesized about in my bachelor's thesis:

1. Become aware of a phenomenon that personally interests you or from your childhood that still exhilarates you.
2. Read and get acquainted with the theory regarding the subject
3. Start to incorporate it within your daily thoughts and routines. This includes finding space and time to explore how you would embody it. Maybe put your ideas in practice through physical exercises as proposed by Chekhov, Stanislavski or Grotowski etc.
4. Use the Reverse-method acting, a term I coined in my BA-thesis, that is, make whatever you performed or worked with artistically a part of your non-professional private life (Nordström, 2025). Put in other words: Continue your involvement with the phenomena you became acquainted with in your artistic process beyond the project and its deadlines or performances themselves. This will hopefully lead to mutual reciprocity and individual integrity.

Through the act of blogging, I also hope to open up for the reader my individual process of acting, one that has been shaped by 5 years of studies at the Acting in Swedish programme at the Theatre Academy at the University of the Arts and a year of

performing and working with my artistic thesis at Svenska Teatern (The Swedish Theatre) in Helsinki, after multitudes of courses, pedagogues, meetings, directions and situations which can't be named within the limits of a thesis work.

In my acting research practice, I rely on my interpretation of Mikhail Chekhov's theories and exercises on acting, particularly those regarding atmospheres and psychological gestures.

“...atmospheres are limitless and to be found everywhere. Even landscape, every street, house, room; a library, a hospital, a cathedral, a noisy restaurant, a museum; morning, noon, twilight, night; spring, summer, fall, winter—every phenomenon and event has its own particular atmospheres.”

(Chekhov, 1953/2017, 48)

I find that the accentuation on atmospheres and reliance on the performer's senses, interpretation and fantasy to be fruitful in this area of research regarding space. I share the enthusiasm of Chekhov regarding this technique's insistence that creative impulses and source material can come from outside us. Thus, acting becomes a matter of being perceptive (Ibid. page?). To rehearse this sensitivity, the book contains multiple exercises with focus on the quality of objects, movement and images.

I will also appropriate the psychological gesture (hereby sometimes shortened as PG), which Chekhov differs from natural, everyday gestures such as pouring coffee or lighting a cigarette. He insists that everyday gestures are too weak, limited and habitual for them to evoke our will, necessary in acting (on stage). The psychological gesture, or the archetypical gesture, in its big simplicity (see figures 5 and 6 below from the appendix of the Swedish translation), he postulates grips our psychosomatic whole, involving the body, the psyche and soul in its task “to summarize the intricate psychology of a character in an easily surveyable form, to compress it into its essence... A true PG will resemble the broad charcoal stroke on an artist's canvas before he starts on the details.” (69). This gives birth to a foundation to build a deeper story or character on (66-69).

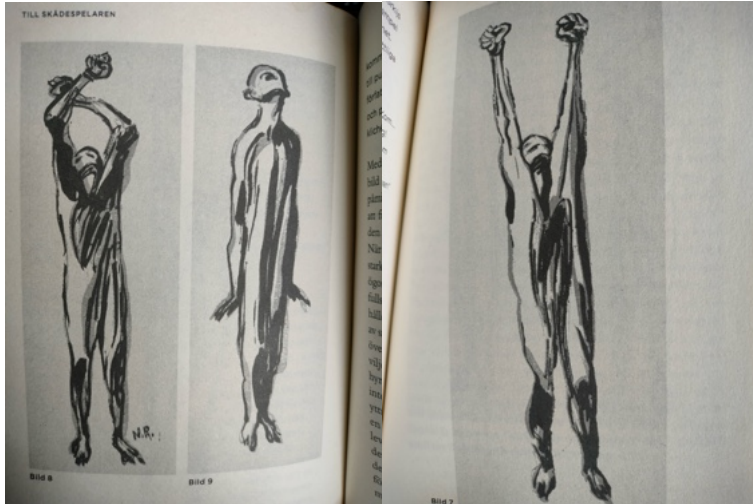


Figure 5 & 6: Illustrations by Nicolai Remisoff, from the appendix of the Swedish translation of *To the Actor* p. 229-230

It offers a starting point for storytelling and narratives through embodiment, affected by the chosen experiment locations within the research. It also offers a more traditional and western canonical reference within the theatre field for linguistic accessibility.

I also lean on the viewpoints-method, written about by Mary Overlie and then added upon by Anne Bogart and Tina Landau. This method offers multiple starting points to approach surroundings through the acting body, offering more contemporary and transdisciplinary propositions for a performing or reacting body. While the book contains more exercises specifically within the technique, my emphasis in this research has been to pinpoint the sources of attention, that of the Viewpoints of Space, which I will explain below:

Shape: the body in space and in relation to architecture, stationary or in movement. One can think of lines and curves.

Gesture: "... is Shape with a beginning, middle and end" (Bogart, Landau, 2014). They are divided into behavioural gestures, which are everyday actions, such as waving for the bus or paying the store clerk. The Expressive Gesture is similar to the psychological

gesture explained above, in that it “expresses an inner state, an emotion, a desire, an idea or a value. It is abstract and symbolic rather than representational.” (Ibid. 10)

Architecture: “In working on Architecture as a Viewpoint, we learn to dance with the space... to let movement (especially Shape and Gesture) evolve out of our surroundings” (Ibid.)

The focus can be divided further into:

Solid mass: the walls, the ground and ceiling for example.

Texture: are you in contact with wood, stone or water surfaces etc.

Sources of light, the shadows that emerge from these and their relation.

Color: Being inspired by colours in the environment. Bogart and Landau use the example of movement and choreography, and “how one red chair among many black ones would affect our choreography in relation to that chair” (Ibid 11)

Sound: Sound emanating from the architecture or physical qualities of the space.

The book also suggests incorporating spatial metaphors, such as “I’m up against the wall” or “high as a kite” within the work and verbal activity.

Spatial relationships: distance between things

Topography: “The *landscape*, the *floor pattern*, the *design* we create in movement through space... To understand floor pattern, imagine the bottoms of your feet are painted red; as you move through the space, the picture that evolves on the floor is the floor pattern...” (Ibid.)

What is all this, if not semiurgy, i.e. the creation of new meanings through perceived signs? The semiurgic activity which the profession of acting and performing body gives possibilities to, whether it’s challenging social conventions by subverting the usual urban choreographies, gender performativity, class expectations or exploring ecologies

through different senses, is at the core of the potential positive outcomes of this research, our profession and academic writing thereof.

“The idea of a play produced on the stage is its spirit; its atmosphere is its soul; and all that is visible and audible is its body.” – Chekhov (2017, 48)

3.0 Sketching the Stages for Experiments

Commented [BF3]: här är det en hel tom sida emellen, detta kapitel kunde börja på s 28

I begin the research process solo. For that reason too, I find Chekhov's To The Actor book useful, as it presents the reader with acting exercises which can be tried alone.

I've curated some exercises, which one can try on their own or in groups, which to me feel fit to be performed at site-specific locations and seem intriguing juxtaposed in nature rather than traditional performance spaces. The practice of situating myself in different places, sensing them and writing my blog, is the start.

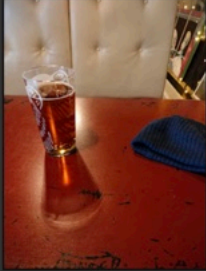
“Start with the observation of life surrounding you. Look systematically for different atmospheres which you may encounter. Try not to overlook or disregard atmospheres because they happen to be weak, subtle or hardly noticeable. Pay special attention to the fact that each atmosphere you observe is actually spread in the air, enveloping people and events, filling the rooms, floating through landscapes, pervading the life of which it is a part. Watch people while they are surrounded by a certain atmosphere. See whether they move and speak in harmony with it, surrender to it, fight against it or to what extent they are sensitive or indifferent to it.” –

(Chekhov, 2017, 53)

I propose that the *dérive* practice of the Situationists is of suitable nature, due to the focus on observing your surroundings through architecture, traffic flows and how the environment acts on social choreographies and the nature of places. I document one such endeavour and ponder upon the theory in my blogpost below:

Friday, January 23, 2026

A derivé, on Situationists



6,00€

I return to the ending location of my derivé, a bar and restaurant with 3,6 stars on Google Maps (which I wouldn't go to usually when navigating with Google review stars) but an exterior exactly to my liking. I've had an interest to tour bars off the trodden path, whether due to where they're situated or not being on the popular bar crawl list. The thirst for beers and "tuning one's hearing to the local bandwidth" have existed since I found <http://ostarhelsinki.blogspot.com>, a blog that's been on an indeterminate break since 2007. It follows a blogger touring different suburban malls, detailing them and usually ending with a review of the local bar.

Drama at the counter, someone comes back, proving the barkeeper that they've been billed "in the morning due to the shit machine", showing their bank account. It ends in laughs and resolution. Receipts are shown and a new beer is bought with cash.


I've decided to dedicate this post partly to a movement which is responsible for me being here and of inspiration for my attempts to combine geography, psychology and art into a shareable activity.

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About Me

 **The Psychogeographic (re)actor**

I'm Niko Nordström, a Master's student at the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts, Helsinki, Finland. I hope to take, find and make paths towards a more geographic, ecological and meaningful relation to nature throughout this writing practice and my acting profession.


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Artists of the World, randomize!



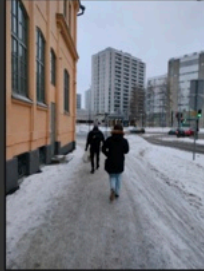
At crossroads, an opening for a choice I've willingly given away.

To make this blog post, I've asked each individual present at the university course to give me a direction. This is my method to create a random path and distance me from my personal inclinations for an experiment in *derivé*. For a different experience, feel free to follow the directions given in any way that suits you while reading this post.

Since our society has a propensity to pinpoint and attribute a lot to single personifications, usually in the "genius guy" archetype, "The Guy" of the movement, Guy Debord (who did publish A LOT, and very self-confidently) defines it like this in his *Theory of the Dérive*:

"In a *derivé* one or more persons during a certain period drop their relations, their work and leisure activities, and all their other usual motives for movement and action, and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there."

My first question question (hereafter Q) was left/right?



First answer: Left.

I end up in a brief afternoon rush, walking behind two other persons, with an adult and a child having just brushed past me before taking this picture.

Next question: Up/down?

Up.

I know the spatial surroundings well enough, that I instantly zoom for the stairwell leading up to the residential area of Merihaka. I do scan around just to be sure that nothing else rises around, but I'm right.



Our technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances is briefly altered by the red light.

While walking, I wonder which method I should use for documentation. I'm tempted to record the whole drifting but quickly run into problems of limited memory on phone, so I end up taking short clips.

I'm stepping to my next question: North or South? North.

Commented [BF4]: rymd denna del på föregående sida?

I'm stepping to my next question: North or South? North.



There is only one way north: down.

"The spatial field of a *dérive* may be precisely delimited or vague, depending on whether the goal is to study a terrain or to emotionally disorient oneself." Guy Debord, *Theory of the Drift*, published in the *Internationale Situationniste* #2, 1958

Trying to navigate according to the directions, without my usual reasons for moving in familiar locations, having occasionally to go backwards to make the next step jolts me into a semi-confused state. On a journey which starting point is our campus, all directions are familiar, but the ways, order and reasons of moving are different and make me feel like a stranger, especially with my camera. I feel a need to "fit" in, wear a double layer of the "ordinary citizen" on his way somewhere he knows, just happening to forget the phone in hand on a busy day. Occasionally I pretend to just have missed some GPS direction.



Commented [BF5R4]: om det inte är viktigt att ha bloggdelarna var för sig, kunde du försöka sätta ihop 2-3 på en sida.



Screenshots of graffiti on the way down. Do the shapes of the stairs affect their style, and in turn my camera angle? It can be such a bodily art practice, with each movement, from hips to shoulder to elbow to the flick of the wrist affecting the result in combination with time sprayed and the form it's imposed on.



You might just need one experience making graffiti to feel the images kinesthetic reverberations.



The Guy of the movement.

Northwards.

Question: R/L?
Answer: L

Upon a bridge I've walked many times, I get the impulse I regret as I start it, to record my *dérive* as a vlog.

<https://youtu.be/sPh9-r9vqk>

The ironic, not completely dedicated actor takes over (and yet very genuine, I feel vulnerable in a way I haven't in a long time sharing this). That's where my attention largely is for the rest of the trip. What I found immensely challenging, something vloggers often do, is being so open with the bypassing citizens, or in a bubble of their own, steadfast in their Vlog-universe. I usually end up looking around, silently whenever meeting fellow citizens.

Northeast or Southwest?

NE

Amongst the private property and high-rise office spaces it's hard to constantly follow a specific direction, so I end up taking turns at crossings when available. I end up on an inner yard that feels "imposing", towering heights, but doing a 360°, does offer a nice space to take breaths.

Q: Continue or go back?

"If in the course of a *dérive* one takes a taxi, either to get to a specific destination or simply to move, say, twenty minutes to the west, one is concerned primarily with a personal trip outside one's usual surroundings. If, on the other hand, one sticks to the direct exploration of a particular terrain, one is concentrating primarily on research for a psychogeographical urbanism." Ibid.

Continue.



*"Chance is a less important factor in this activity than one might think: from a *dérive* point of view cities have psychogeographical contours, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes that strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones."*

Situationists were a strongly subversive, political marxist movement, against the status quo of the society and culture, on the prowl to create situations which could offer other ways to live. On a *dérive*, in terms of urban exploration and acting on the street, it offers a sensibility for where the currents of the urban landscape are and then having a choice of breaking the routine or consciously following it.

Q: ↑ or ↓?

↓

Q: L/R?

R

Q: Go back or go on?

Go on.

Southeast or Northwest?

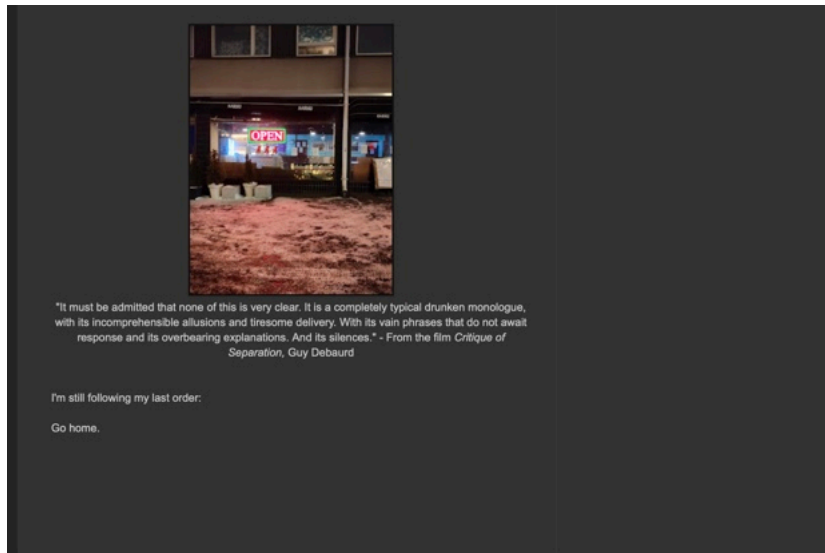
Northwest.

I end up by the prison. Active prisons within cities, on the rare occasion one meets them, offer an uneasy, anxious feeling; to be locked in, limited within such a small area, knowing the city bustle goes on so close, outside the walls.

I revert to vlogging, this time with an even stronger character, emulating the stereotypical gestus of popular vloggers. I feel it to be slightly tasteless close to the prison, but that's an interesting part of vlogging too: being in spaces and combining them with your own brand for exposition.

I'm reminded of a obnoxious, controversial blogger, Logan Paul, who made a stir by vlogging at the [Aokigahara](#) (commonly known in west as the Suicide forest) and showing a suicide victim on the video.

I do some Chekhov exercises, reflecting later on that it might be interesting video content of an actor preparing. I go back to record a re-enactment of them the following day, also stopping by the bar which felt adequate with the situationist movement.



Figures 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 from my blogpost *A derivé, on Situationists*. 23.1.2026.

"Consciously and deliberately try to submit to certain atmospheres, "listening" to them as you listen to music, and let them influence you. Let them call up in you your own individual feelings." – Chekhov (1953/2017)

The attempts to dissect in text and image format in the blog, discerning thought processes and chains of events that lead to emotions arising is very much a project of situating oneself and wrapping the head around locations and their qualities; atmospheres. This is a sensibility of processes, an awareness that one studies in-depth in the field of acting, to hopefully find own pathways. Those pathways could be summarized as means of genuine and concentrated expression that are effective despite multiple distracting factors, such as nervousity and the artificiality of most performance stage-settings (a voice that needs to be heard and articulate in a big space despite "happening" in an intimate scene, light and sound devices, the fourth wall or conscious breaking of it, risky scenography and safety harnesses as in *Ronja Rövardottern*). These processes start before and continue during the moment one meets an audience. To find what works for one's own personal bodily and psychological tendencies is crucial for a sustainable, healthy long-term professional career.

Science is univocal on that leisure and activities outdoors, in nature promote health. (Jimenez et. al. 2021, Koistinen 2024). I experience the profession of acting to be on the taxing end when it comes to physical activity and stress. The effects of storytelling, which usually both traditionally and contemporarily involve compressing time and space, along with the physiological requirements of the performer - audience relation (such as the expressions being heard, seen and broadly understood) compound. As someone who, long-term, tends to feel more drained after social activities than charged, acting as a profession, from the auditioning process, to the devising or preparation phase, to the rehearsals, until the final dress rehearsals possibly under the scrutiny of spectators eyes already, to meeting anything between a dozen to hundreds of people coming to observe your working hours, it has been an incredibly taxing journey mentally and for the nervous system.

Thus, I don't see a reason to not try to bring my practice to physical spaces which both anecdotally, empirically and quantitatively have been proven to balance out stress amongst others.

“The ecological field-worker acquires a deep-seated respect, or even veneration, for ways and forms of life. He reaches an understanding from within, a kind of understanding that others reserve for fellow human beings and for a narrow section of ways and forms of life. To the ecological field-worker, the equal right to live and blossom is an intuitively clear and obvious value axiom.” (Naess, 1973)

Taking my practice outdoors, to deepen ecological relations, I aim to find out whether my practice could lead me to what Naess describes as an ideal ecological field-worker.

In the first chapter, titled *The Actor's Body and Psychology*, Chekhov (1953/2017) says the following:

“IT IS a known fact that the human body and psychology influence each other and are in constant interplay.... Because each field and profession is prey to characteristic occupational habits, diseases and hazards which inevitably affect its workers and practitioners, it is seldom that we find a complete balance or harmony between the body and psychology. But the actor, who must consider his body as an instrument for

expressing creative ideas on the stage, must strive for the attainment of complete harmony between the two, body and psychology.”

As an actor-body alone in a cave (pictured on the front page of the thesis, located on the last page), I “begin to move and speak in harmony with the different atmospheres you [I] encounter. Then choose cases where you can fight with a specific atmosphere, trying to develop and preserve feelings which are contrary to it.” (Ibid. 53).

Moving with atmosphere’s doesn’t feel hard. I’ve found great help for this through the aspects of the Viewpoints-method (Overlie, 2016, 83). In our viewpoint studies, we have used the topography of a classroom, the space, time and material surroundings as guidance and impulses for movement. Once one becomes comfortable with it, I can’t feel truly alone or empty as a creative artist.

It is the speaking in harmony with the place that is hard. Here I must note, that speaking has been a personal challenge for me as an actor from the beginning of my studies. It requires special attention and effort, either through warming up or spending conscious and bodily concentration on it on stage. It usually habitually requires for all changing or new elements, such as the rules of improvisation games or the emotional underpinnings of a scene, to land in my bodymind before I start working with it.

This habit unintendedly works as a way to break the atmosphere for me. Trying to fight against the atmosphere is an interesting emotional experience. As I try to delve deeper into breaking the silent, brooding atmosphere of the cave, only penetrated by sounds of water droplets dripping I grasp an impulse to be noisy. I notice a huge resistance in me, to not be loud which feels “silly”. The next problem for the acting bodymind to solve is what to fill the air stream being pressed from my lungs with. I trust my intuition, as is often the case on stage, singing jollily the tunes of the Moomin theme. It feels like entering the space with another mood than the one I perceive from the dark, brooding cave with leftover burnt out candles. The action, singing tunes familiar from TV, and learned by the consumption of mass media from the couch, is in opposition to less representational expression of incoherent vowels punctuated by consonants I would have felt more fit in the cave, which I perceive to call for sounds chasing associative, impulsive, imaginary trance-like states. But within a short period of time, it’s as if anything I do whilst singing, the initial belting of the Moomin tunes descends into a

more respectful, compliant humming and is absorbed into the cave's atmosphere. The actor in me, attempting to fight the atmosphere is not satisfied, sensing a humbling defeat approaching and a slight nervousity that this research might not be applicable at all. I surrender the battle on the acoustic front, but not the war.

I sense other possibilities than those limited by my body and clothing (I refuse to get wet in this weather and the cave ground is flooded). I bring out my phone, using the flashlight as a lightsabre as if stabbing the atmosphere the cave is suggesting. I perform the movements in a *staccato* manner. Sooner or later the light hits the water on the ground, reflecting ripples from my lightsabre fighting choreography on the cave roof. It's beautiful. I surrender in rhythm, becoming smooth, *legato*, squat and observe how small movements create proto-psychedelic patterns all around me. I want to abolish my flashlight, serve the cave and it's atmosphere by bringing candles next time.

It gets my mind going, the magic "What If" is born out of a curiosity of the natural forms that are reflected. Are they organisms? Like frog spawns? Or are they rocks that reach closer to the surface?

I don't get an answer before my focus has shifted on another thing. I need waterproof shoes that reach the ankle if I want to study deeper, comfortably.

Next, I decide to interact with the surroundings as my character would. I shut down the light, do a breathing exercise for warmup that I do to get in character. I Imagine that I'm the character Birk Borkason, in his dwelling that just wakes up in darkness and goes to sit upon a rock by the entrance, which offers some light.

I have a hard time being within fiction, my body is very aware and in readiness to respond to every potential deviant sound and movement around. I give in to just think as myself, on what to write down from this experience. It is also a weird feeling acting alone, without human audiences.

I go up, to prepare as I would for a scene where I'm about to jump between an abyss. My heart starts pacing, even as I know I won't jump. Even the what if, supported by the real risks of the environment around which is completely interactable, gets adrenaline going. I look down; I feel the pupils lock in to assess the depths below. I try to

remember it, store it away and hope to keep the bodily memory with me next time on stage.

It is hard to keep being in character alone and in a dark forest alone. Perhaps it is not a fruitful way to approach this.

Another note I take afterwards is the experience that the cave feels like it can contain anything within itself. How does one contrast the atmosphere of nature, when we are part of it?

We haven't had a course in Chekhov's techniques per se in our curriculum, but if anything, it seems that all methods regarding acting seep into each other, and ultimately revolve around putting words for being, being with others, sensing what is born out of that togetherness and having the tools to express it. One can see Stanislavski's cores of focus (see fig. 3 below) in somatic movement, when one is tasked to embody their evolution, open the eyes and witness others in movement.

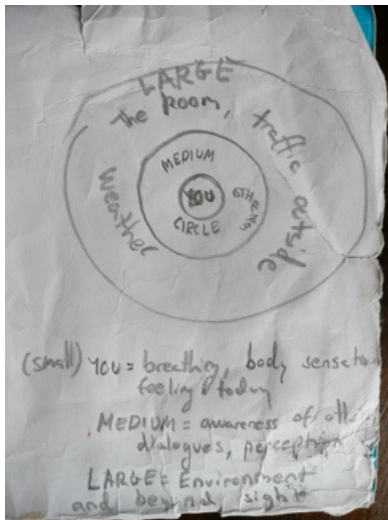


Figure 18: A drawing from my notebook from the course *Skådespelartekniska metoder 2*, in autumn 2022, when we studied realism in theatre in conjunction with information about Stanislavski's methods.

The small circle (YOU), entails awareness of your physical body, the medium contains objects, other people and stimuli from the room you are in, the large goes beyond the

borders of the room, sometimes described as the building, but also possibly the traffic outside and weather behind the window.

I return to Chekhov's book and ask our bachelor's students for remarks, as they've had the privilege to enjoy a course on the technique named according to him. I get to hear, that they used Tai Chi in combination with the technique. This is a not so surprising contemporary fusion, considering the *To the Actor's* content of working with imaginary energetic centres, objects in relation to directions (2017, 16-21) and Tai Chi's philosophy of working with the, and moving of energy. Both also accentuate to not put unnecessary strain on the muscles while doing the movements, encouraging active relaxation instead.

One of the most exciting parts of the research is spotting locations for research. It can either be a location, such as an abandoned house (as is often the case in urban exploration) one sights on their way somewhere, as I did when coming home from the cave, which we then used as part of the video material of our final artistic project at the Theatre academy, or one can design a method for a *dérive*. I am equally, if not more excited than most times when I'm going to see a theatre play or performance at the prospect of exploring a new location. The question regarding why a place matters or calls us, is eloquently speculated on by my favourite blogger, Marko Leppänen in his blog which translates from Finnish as *Esoteric Geography and Periphery-therapy*:

“The sense of place is not rational. It's about a spontaneous, all-encompassing psychophysical feeling, that pulls towards a specific place or repels from it – or in some special occasions doing these both at the same time. The feeling doesn't crave wondering, but in the aftermath it can be good to analyze. One can learn a lot there... The sense of place (or should I say hunch?) is an ancient and honed skill. It still needs rehearsing, use – that's what it downright thirsts for. The human, always, their 350 000 generation continuum and their early ancestral ape forms and the precedent distant fore-fathers who where part of other living organisms have relied on different places. It is not for nothing that a reward mechanism has developed in the brain: a dopamine fix is offered to them, who go and explore their environment. The mind is attuned by searching – even more so than by finding.” - translation by me

(Paikkataju ei ole rationaalista. Kysymys on spontaanista, kokonaisvaltaisesta psykofyysisestä tunteesta, joka vetää kohden tiettyä paikkaa tai työntää siitä pois – tai jossain erityistapauksissa näitä molempaa yhtä aikaa. Tuntuma ei kaipaa pohdintoja, mutta jälkikäteen sitä voi olla hyvä analysoida. Siinä voi oppia paljon.

Paikkataju [vai pitäisikö sanoa –vainu] on ikaikainen ja hiottu kyky. Harjoitusta se silti tarvitsee, käyttöä – sitä se suorastaan janoaa. Aina ihminen, hänen 350 000 sukupolven jatkumonsa, ja sitä edeltäneet apinamuodot ja näitä edeltäneet muihin eliöihin kuuluvat kaukaiset esi-isämme ovat tukeutuneet erilaisiin paikkoihin. Suotta ei ole aivoihin kehittynyt palkitsemismekanismi: dopamiiniannos tarjotaan sille, joka lähtee tutkimaan ympäristöään. Mieli virittyy etsimisestä – jopa enemmän kuin löytämisestä.) – (Leppänen, 2023)

3.1 Case studies alone

Outlining a method for a *dérive*, or approachment to a specific location is an equally important factor if one wants to work with the situationist principle or site-sensitive in their artistic work. As my next *dérive* I performed a childhood dream hobby, that of jumping on a random bus and riding them out until their final stop. I have outlined the journey and aftermath in my blogpost's covering three acts, as is the Aristotelian dramaturgical tradition.

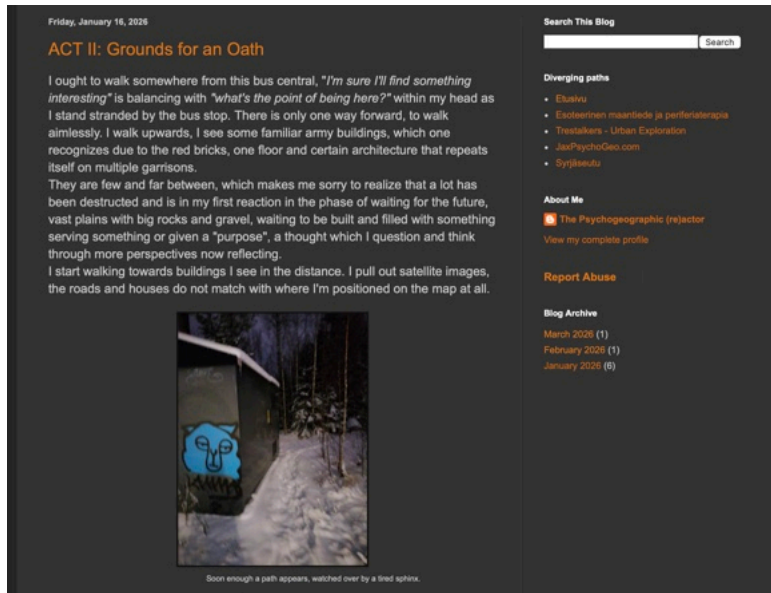


Figure 19: Screenshot from my blogpost *ACT II: Grounds for an Oath*. 16.1.2026.

I postulate, that this outtake from the blog covers what I deem to be one of the foundational skills one can gain from the acting programme: That of being constantly thrust into situations of not knowing whilst under observation. It is rehearsed through improvisation, warm-ups, in the material devising period of rehearsals for performance productions and in the detailed, traditional forms of the art such as clownery or commedia dell'arte. Through time, one's nervous system and brain learns, that not knowing is not dangerous, but rather a place to sense possibilities in, where potential is waiting for those who become aware of it.

In the next passage, I justify the means of transportation, and perhaps indirectly also point towards the benefits of making one's working place or pedagogy nomadic. It creates more support for sustainable and emancipatory public transportation systems. As an analogy to the private car, locking oneself into a specific building for pedagogy and professional activity, one excludes the multitude of beings outside the closed off building the witnessing and sharing of information. This is a problem within politics at the moment, when there is not awareness or a relation to culture, it's amongst the first to be cut in budget cuts.

Writing practices are involved in the transportation of information, some publications and medias are closer to the information highways and others stay more hidden or remain opaque, such as thesis's only accessible behind the University of the Arts Taju workstations at the library. In the blogosphere, the observing gaze is that of the blog readers, while here it is that of thesis inspectors and, if I may positively dream, future academic readers, whom I'm afraid to disappoint or be misunderstood by.

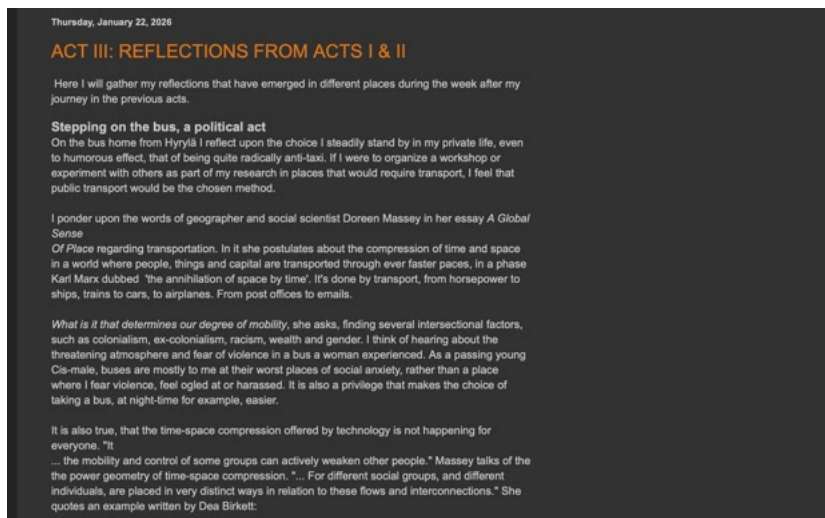


Figure 20: Screenshot of my blogpost ACT III: REFLECTIONS FROM ACTS I & II. 22.1.2026.

By exposing oneself to places, one also needs to journey. The method of approaching is worth examining itself, does the place invite us in or are there signs that point towards repulsion? Do we walk in the footsteps of others or are we the first human visitors in a while? Reflecting upon what is evoked by these visits can at a later point open up positions within the larger socio-cultural frame, such as my reflections of myself and my relation to the bus. This in turn can open up new ways to approach the embodiment of a fictional character. Now one can place oneself or the character within the social hierarchies and have information which can inform one how that character could act in a multitude of other situations.

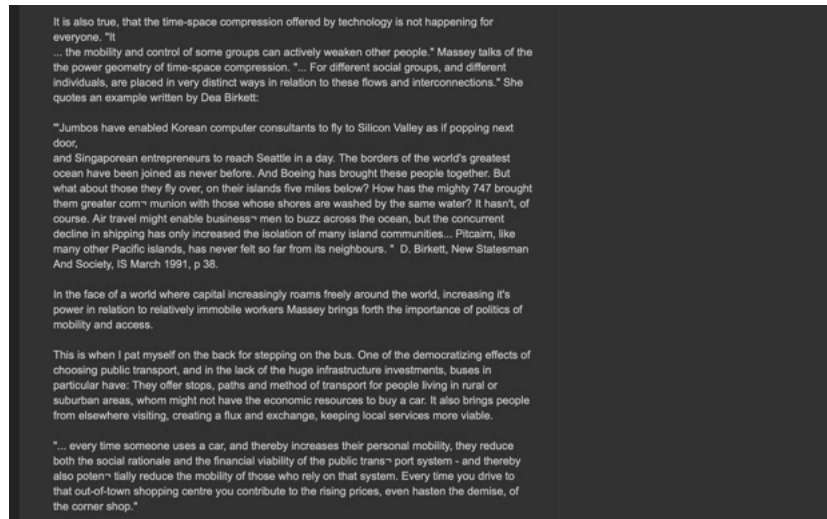


Figure 21: Ibid.

3.2 Synthesising a method: Embodiment of a Place and the Psychological Gesture

I tackle this topic in my blog post where I also struggle with the questions of how to give proper weight to polycrisis, or ecological changes through artistic practice (Ghosh, 2016).

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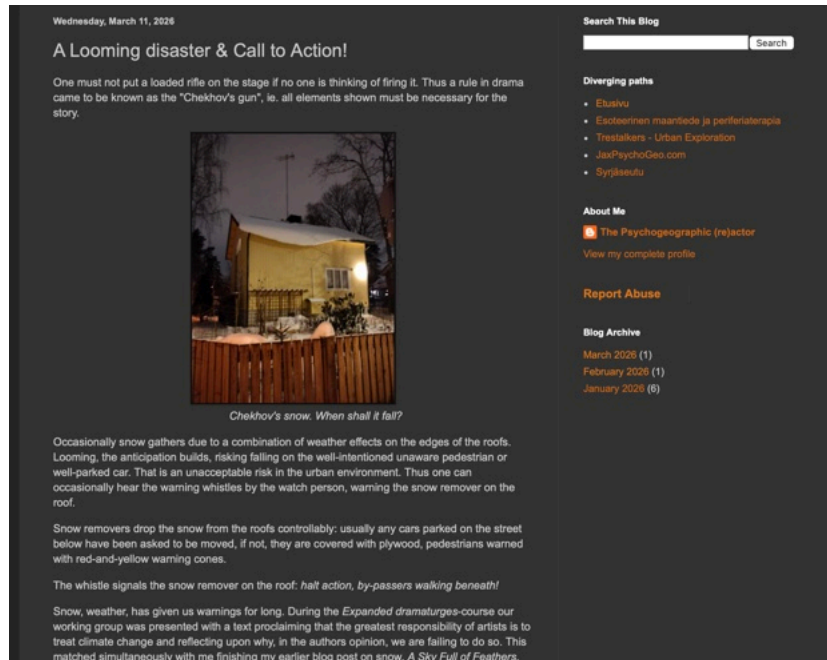


Figure 22: Screenshot of my blogpost *A Looming disaster & Call to Action!* 11.3.2026.

My interest in embodiment of places and ecological phenomena's go hand in hand with Mikhail Chekov's psychological gesture, and conveniently also how I process knowledge regarding the theory postulated by his nephew, Anton Chekhov's theory of the Chekhov's gun when I'm affected by the snow on the roofs in spring.

This knowledge shaping through the interaction between being practically situated in a place, sensing the weather through an actor's lens (interpreting the sensorial stimuli through a dramaturgical perspective and then reacting by analysing the effect and what I wish from/what my goal is in this situation) and theoretical knowledge of dramaturgical tools, is at the core of what inspired me in wa(o)ndering, and the broader pedagogical approach to the term Universitas and learning whilst moving in nature.

Here I begin to postulate one exercise for case studies and workshops: How would one embody the place, which in this case is snow above the edge of a roof?

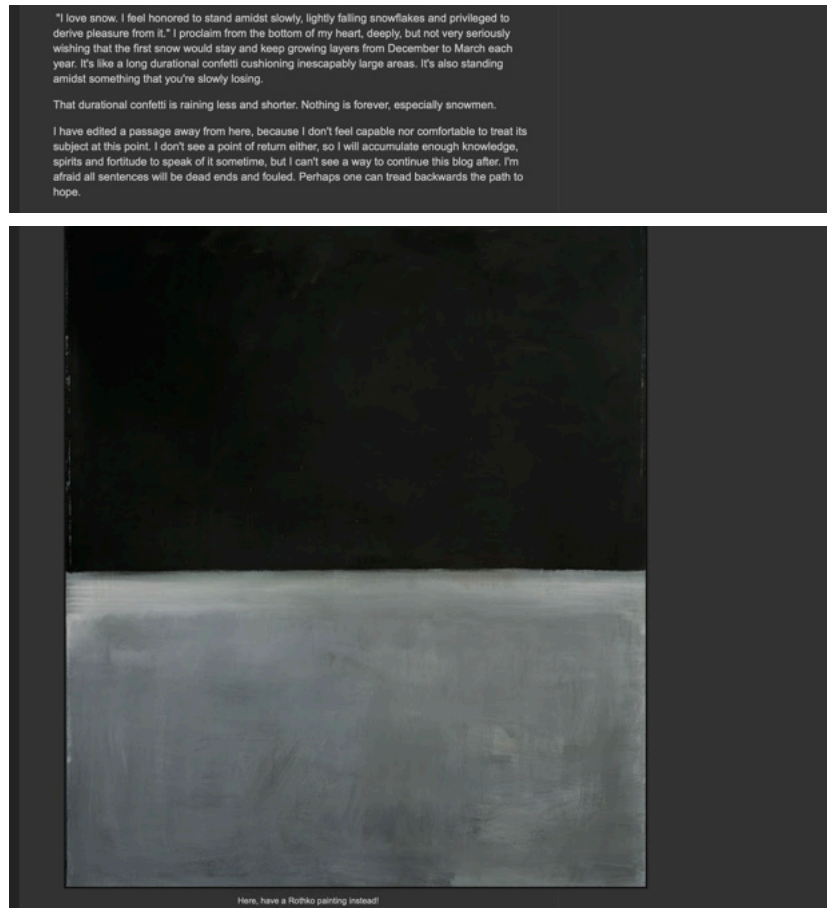


Figure 23 and 24: Screenshots of my previous blogpost on the weather phenomena snow, *A Sky Full of Feathers*. 23.1.2026.

3.3 Case studies with others

"... a materialistic world outlook has been reigning, with ever-increasing power, in the sphere of art as well as in science and everyday life. Consequently, only those things which are tangible, only that which is palpable and only that which has the outer appearance of life phenomena, seem valid enough to attract the artist's attention... Thus, as he sinks deeper and deeper into this inartistic milieu, his body becomes less and less

animated, more and more shallow, dense, puppet-like, and in extreme cases even resembles some kind of automaton of his mechanistic age.” – Chekhov (2017/1953, 12-13)

This ties into Arne Naess view on the unsustainable society growing out of a detachment or alienation from values other than materialist and economical. In our performative, or especially theatrical contexts and general pedagogy from kindergarten to university, I feel that the anthropocentric focus on human drama and bodies are alienating emphasises.

My focus group has been selected largely impromptu. This fits the situationist approach of allowing randomness and spontaneity. This also led to a focus group that by large and initially included only classmates (4 classmates, 3 non-classmates, 1 of which partook only partly in the case studies). I hypothesize this happens quite naturally due to the time we spend together and sharing similar time schedules. In the context of this study, the effect of sharing the same location, place of study should not be overlooked. We also share the same language (Swedish) and after all the years of studying together are well acquainted and share some form of trust. Thus, as a researcher, I'm more comfortable and have a lower threshold for inviting them or accepting their curiosity to join as participants. I also tend a wish that since the trust exists, their feedback would be honest and earnest, perhaps offering different perspectives regarding my predispositions as a person and facilitator. Towards the end I opened up the research, first for cohorts of my classmate, the primary participant and lastly two participants who aren't classmates.

I ask my participants to either choose a location that is “special” to them, the Mustavuori cave which is my chosen location or to jointly take a randomizing *dérive* (drift) to a random location.

I structure the site-specific visits followingly through a selection of exercises from the book *To the Actor*:

1. Expansion and contraction.
2. Directional stretches.
3. Lifting, throwing, pulling and pushing imaginary objects.

4. Going through the previous motions with the imaginary centre point in chest as a preparation for the following exercise.
5. Picking a quality (radiating, swaying or forming) and repeating the previous motions with it.
6. Creating a Psychological gesture which I then document as image. Improvisation with a set beginning and end, which are communicated beforehand.
7. Improvising with a set beginning and end.

Case study A: Site-specific emotional memories with Walter Öhman (classmate)

Walter proposes Munkkiniemi, a city area and beach by the sea, on the western coast of Helsinki. I gladly agree, not least because I have a special relation with the place as well.

On the way to the location, I ask my participants why they've chosen this location.

For Walter, it's revealed that he grew up and lived there for 10 years. "The place contains a lot of formative memories". As we get off the tram at Munksnäs allé, he reminisces on one childhood memory, where he and his cohorts had been tricked by schoolmates in a game of Cops and Robbers. The game is a version of hide-and-seek, where the opposing team had broken the rules by hiding in their homes, against mutually agreed upon rules regarding space limits and when Walter's team found out, and returned the favour next round, they got scolded by a mother of one of the members of the opposing team who refused to believe their child could instigate such a thing, instead giving a scolding and placing the blame on Walter and his group of friends. It worked as an adolescent glimpse into an unjust world, where people evaluate each other by different standards, through hierarchies, not believing that their prioritized ones could have done something wrong.

As we walk towards the beach, we choose our path due to a park "where one can see over a distance of around 1,5km", ending on one side at what Walter recalls being popularly called "Jammu-forest" (Jammu was an infamous Finnish child murderer and sex offender). From that, we ponder upon the emotional effect places already induce in us before visiting due to unwarranted or true rumours. It's not the first time an innocent

forest or house has been whispered amongst the children and youth to have been a place for murder or worse.

What is it that pulls us towards these rumours? A desire for emotional experiences? I posit that it's a desire for an element of suspense, similar to what Leppänen (2013) and primatologist, anthropologist Jane Goodall, known for her work with chimpanzees (2011) theorize about why we visit powerful places such as waterfalls. The pull or repulsion of geographic locations, and our desire to posit ourselves to them, scratches an intuitive feeling that the reason for that is nearby the core reasons I chose to be an actor: Being affected by the environment.

To open up the doors of perception we as actors undergo training (Chekhov, 2017, 12–13).

“But no need to be dismayed. Every actor, to a greater or lesser degree, suffers from some of his body's resistance. Physical exercises are needed to overcome this, but they must be built on principles different from those used in most dramatic schools... the body of an actor must undergo a special kind of development in accordance with the particular requirements of his profession... First and foremost is extreme sensitivity of body to the psychological creative impulses. The psychology itself must take part in such a development. The body of an actor must absorb psychological qualities... so that they will convert it gradually into a sensitive membrane, a kind of receiver and conveyor of the subtlest images, feelings, emotions and will impulses.” – (Ibid.)

At the beach I propose us to do the Chekhov expansion and contraction exercise (see fig. 23 and 24 on the following page). I guide us to take up as much space as possible in the expansion phase, to take in the view and see if we can extend beyond our bodily limits to see how big we can become and how it feels. I also underlie that one should strain the muscles only as much as is necessary (Ibid. 15). We repeat this segment several times, taking moments to just breathe in between.

In the contraction I suggest that one can imagine oneself to get smaller, escaping within one's bodymind. As an assist, one can imagine the landscape closing in upon one's

bodily boundaries. Here again, one is to avoid any extra muscle straining. I paraphrase Chekov (15), “*I will breathe new life into my muscles and tendons and use them.*”

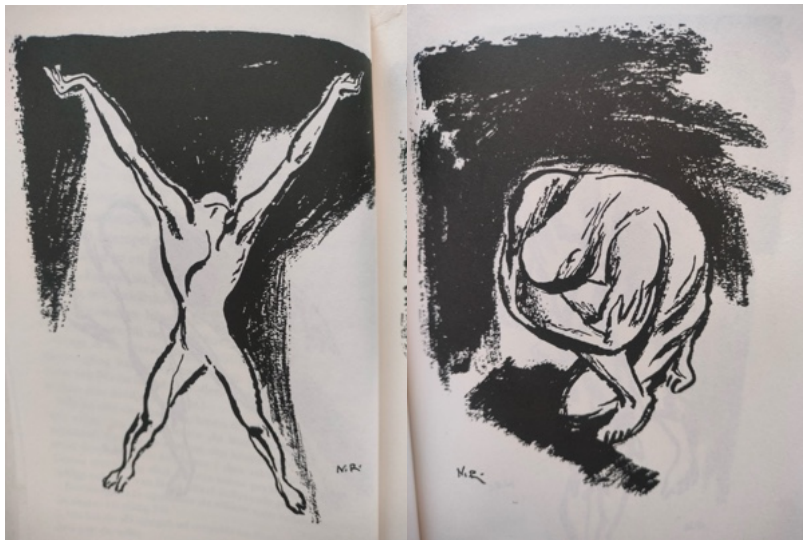


Figure 23: Illustration by Nicolai Remisoff in *Till Skådespelaren: Om skådespelarkonsten*, p. 96 **Figure 24:** *ibid.*, p.97

Then we do the exercise involving directions. We take a step forward and stretch with our arms and upper body, reaching south. Then we reach towards right, west, then left, east and finally, as my own addition inspired by the awareness of the back, backwards up north with our arms behind our back, taking a step backwards.

Then we imagine objects and start lifting them above our head, pulling, pushing throwing them in different directions. For me, out of the site the imagination of a volleyball emerges. Walter first imagines a table, which he then discards as it starts to be a handful to imagine how one would lift it and throw around.

Then we choose according to what we sense is suitable for the location from the three propositions of movement qualities forming, swaying or radiating (Chekhov, 15-20). We pick radiation. We imagine a centre in our chest, which radiates and acts as the point of departure as we move through the same movement segments. Midpoint I propose that the centre can be moved, from chest to the fingertip, one can imagine that the radiation springs forth from any body part of liking and out into the landscape

around us. Slowly the imaginary objects can be exchanged into everyday, behavioural gestures such as putting on a jacket or showering.

Then we move into an improvisation, sensing how it would be if each movement flowed harmoniously into the surroundings. I see a shower with a sandal. I try to radiate showering into the beach landscape, occasionally achieving eye contact with Walter. We connect, play imaginary volleyball, smile and finish up.

I ask us to create psychological gestures for the site. Here it becomes clear how different our memories and associations with the place are:



Figure 25: Walter's PG Figure 26: the author's PG

Walter's gesture is simultaneously pushing out and protecting. One hand for representing keeping the police away, the other protecting a bag of beers. My own gesture is a run with the quality of ease towards the water.

My own gesture is born largely out of memories, this being the closest beach to swim at while growing up, usually impatiently running to the water as a kid or later letting the gravity pull me down the beach for a refreshing swim after a jog.

Analysing these gestures and their impulses, I realize that they're very tied into emotional memory regarding the place, and that the lines between behavioral and expressive gestures easily become blurred (BBC Bitesize, 2023). This study brought me back to reflecting upon Stanislavski's emotional memory and its validity; a theory he discarded in his later works, but still popular across the Atlantic Ocean, thoroughly shunned within our academic discourse, an approach to embodiment I'm still eager to explore after graduation.

In future research, the exercise of psychological gestures could offer a good starting point for a site-specific storytelling through embodiment, also offering us perspectives on how different our interpretations of spaces can be, opening our histories and see them and each other anew.

Regarding Chekov's (Chekhov, 54) "*Observe people as they're surrounded by a particular atmosphere...*" we discuss that Munkkiniemi as a site seems to give birth a certain way of carrying oneself, chest open and straight posture. The wealthiness and socio-economic status of the neighborhood in close vicinity is also reflected in the prices of the café and what could be neighbours chatting as they jog seemingly from nearby for a healthy ice swim dip on the private ice swimming area. We parasite the pier and take an *détournement* ice dip ourselves, as a final goodbye to the site.



Figure 27: After our *détournement*.

Case study B: Andreas Kvisgaard, classmate (+ avecs, only slightly partaking in the exercises)

Chosen location: Sompassauna. As a site-sensitive form, I propose that we do the exercises in the same manner as in the A case study but interlaced between sauna visits.

I ask Andreas why he's chosen the location. Because I feel open and calm there, he answers.

We go a bit further on the top of a hill from the sauna and social hotspot for focus and peace. Andreas is not entirely sure but has a vague hunch that the area is popular with the cruising community. For me, my relation is that I've tripped on and been to open-air raves on this hill.

Andreas enjoys the expanding exercise, saying it "*opens up their chest*" which can get hunched over in the everyday and during the writing process, dependent on the mood.

He also is particularly fond of the movement of throwing in different directions.

After a round of sauna, Andreas is feeling "*more open visually, present and with clearer focus on directions.*"

I remind us to be observant of how people around us move in the atmospheres and checking if they are affected or not. Andreas tells an anecdote that it's close to his way of working, revealing he could sit in a café observing people all day. He also differs between working on children's theatre or not. In children's theatre, he uses the example of portraying a crow, and if he were to do so, he'd start his work through physicality and big qualities, while for adult audiences he would start with the psychological, then move into making it bigger.

After the second round of sauna, we go ice swimming. Thus, Andreas is affected by cold feet throughout the next exercise.

Andreas and the avec who briefly joins modify the exercise to prevent their feet from getting cold by balancing on the wooden structure of a bike station, not optimal for movement range and balance, but is anything ever in perfect balance in nature, under the elements?

Out of the three ways to approach the movement sequences, we choose swaying. The swaying quality we reflect, is today there due to the site and our interaction with it. It's a physiological response to the drastic changes between heat and cold, sauna and ice swimming. The swaying seems to be stemming from the head. This time as a difference to the exercises we did before sauna, we can both pinpoint that our directions became muddier, less clear and overall movements quicker. Is it due to the cold creeping in?

We observe the atmospheres of the saunas, garden in the middle for rest and the path over the ice on the way to/from dipping.

After the third sauna session and putting our clothes on, I instigate a 3-minute improv with the site, prefacing it with my own experience that it is more enjoyable if one approaches it as if it would be a 3-minute timeframe to explore an area with a set beginning and end.

Andreas grabs a saw. I join the improv immediately, the wood cutting has been calling us the whole evening, also through discussions and winks heard previously from other sauna-goers. Quickly I realise that it's not possible to saw through a thick wooden plank within the timeframe, so I pick a very thin wood piece, one that we can easily saw, even kick to pieces. Is this due to an innate desire to cause change? Or is it a dramaturgical structure we are conditioned to in our education? Catharsis is reached as the wood splits. The outcome is largely symbolical.



Figure 28 and 29: Andreas and his avec hunched over in a Psychological Gesture.

For Andreas the reasoning of the gesture is finding a relaxed position for the upper body, weary from the woodwork we did.

For the Norwegian avec, the atmosphere and how people acted within it was more of an inspiration, after seeing so many sauna-goers sitting hunched over, red and dripping sweat in the heat.



On the previous page, **Figure 30:** Andreas 2nd PG, I interpret it as a spa-like take on the site. **Figure 31:** My PG offers a contrast.

Andreas gets an impulse to do a second pose, to convey another characteristic he perceives in the place, conveying the openness, which he locates particularly in the chest area and feeling comfortable in oneself and in the place.

In my own gesture of the place, I re-enact a bodily sensation that appeared as we walked back to the sauna after plunging in the ice-cold sea. Pulling my shoulders up, widening my chest, a pose which I felt creeping up on me while walking in the area. The reasons being the coldness, but also psychologically a stoic pride and perception of resilience one gets for the brief moment between being submerged in the cold water and the heat of the sauna, when one feels immune or entirely capable of accepting of the elements of winter or spring.

Discussing further if we were to characterize the place as a role performance, Andreas would start from a pianist or guitarist (both instruments are present at the site). The profession could be used to express through music the rhythmical qualities of the site, the laid-back murmur (sorlande is a Swedish word, tied to water that I'd prefer to use here, the English translations don't quite contain the same association).

I would use the drastic changes between extreme temperatures and elements as a starting point to build someone who shifts between extreme temperaments but bite their teeth to seemingly stoically remain collected and calm, waiting for a long-term reward.

If I were to further work with the site-sensitivity as a starting point as an artist, I would use the themes of cruising and rave culture, accompanied with the non-conforming nudity in the area, and write a blog connecting our visit with the topic of Temporary Autonomous Zones.

Case study C: Dérive with Vega Adsten

The next study takes the form of a dérive, or drift, at 2:30pm during our writing holidays.

The weather is foggy and cloudy.

We decide to dérive and achieve detournement by taking turns deciding the directions we will walk towards. My initial impulse of turning left is instantly rejected as my partner chooses a turn right. I try to correct our trajectory back to my original intention and turn right since multiple right turns eventually make a left. Vega makes noise on the steel wall sidelining the street, running their hand along it until we sight a postal worker, riding their orange postal robot machine, which somehow feels out of the atmosphere and general milieu, contradicting the transportation methods of everyone around. Vega mentions that they know postal systems work through transportation, but are yet surprised to see it in action, as it's usually hidden under unconventional hours. A football field next to us evokes clear memories in Vega of scoring goals, such as performing a bicycle kick from a sideline throw, and some shameful memories of missing a pass, or sending a pass to the opponent.

They laugh at an "we are open" sign on the street of a nearby café, I'm a bit bemused at why it's amusing, but I take an image and we walk on. Following is a dialogue excerpt from our walk shortly after.

N: Do you use place specific memories in your (acting) work?

V: No. I think we may be different in that. I'm not a method actor and don't like to work with my personal memories on scene. What about you?

N: Well I use them sometimes, especially if a scene doesn't give me impulses in itself or when it feels easier, for example in *Ronja Rövardotter* when Mattis pulls Lovis aggressively to the floor, I go back into some form of emotional and physical memory of a place, the corridor of my childhood home while my mom and dad were arguing, and the inner worlds I distanced myself to. But I have a quite privileged and lucky past, so I feel that no memory will break me. I never use emotional memory throughout a

performance though. I'm afraid that it can become an emotional individualistic masturbation and you lose contact with your surroundings.

V: Exactly.

...

We drift onwards as Vega uses her turn for a U-turn. I try to emphasize that there is no correct or predisposed way to go about a *dérive*, so it's not wrong to counter what you perceive to be the other's goal and question the assumption that I even have a plan.

We walk by Merihaka and talk about our shared love for brutalism. To me the architecture is very exposing of its aim and contains an idealistic hope of something bigger than the sum of its parts. Straight lines. Towering heights. Vega is reminded of a brutalist office building, which exists on the outskirts of Stockholm. They show it on the phone.

They prefer urban landscapes despite being grown up in a rural area, with a grandfather who was a forester and taught them forest manners. They get bored from "pondering on a trunk" as they put it. It is a fresh take. There appears quite a bit of romanticization of the nature in media and when one gets into conversations or reference material regarding the subject of this thesis. It's important to remember that even our cities and citizens are equally "nature", and this view helps us make our living areas more inviting, even ecological. (Wahl, 2026, 00:31:50).

We walk through a film set twice, once when we're on our way, and then on the way back, joking that we're ambivalent accidental extras. Walking through a film-set feels strange, reminding me of the film *Synecdoche, New York*.

I take a U-turn because I'm pulled towards a new bridge. We walk across it to Jätkäsaari. Of the construction site landscape, Vega says that they like cranes, especially dockyard cranes. We take a small square stage extending on the sea inlet. We expand and contract. We reach for different directions. Our directions and eyes meet, we talk of the Kalasatama skyscrapers and that we do, contradictory to many, like them.

We perform the movement sequences almost by routine. Neither of us say much about it afterwards.

In the following section I have boldened the objects I personally imagined during the exercise of moving imaginary objects. The imaginary objects surprise me: kitten, baby, **crow**, **barnacle goose**. Quite violent. Is it the urban landscape or our brains? Towards the end of the exercise they become more commonplace and expected in the environment: ball, pulling a bike from the sea, then a **fishnet**, pulling a **fishing rod** as if catching a fish, a box which I then scale up to a **shipping container**, in harmony with the past of the area as a dockyard.

Regarding the movements with imaginary objects in this landscape, the act of “*throwing on the ice is nice, it’s as if you see the object land.*”, Vega says.

We choose swaying as the quality to repeat the movements with. The participant finds it alleviating with the centre in chest and swaying, expanding that the swaying made the movements smoother and more flowing.

The improvisations use much topographical inspiration. It’s as if the Viewpoint frames appeared without saying them out aloud. I start the improvisation, using a graffiti on the wall as inspiration for body positions as I move along a wall. Once impulses from the graffiti end, I turn to bouldering, perhaps due to a bouldering gym being close by where my friends used to go when it was trendy. That bouldering sets in motion another site-specific memory, that of climbing on a rock in Vuosaari during one outdoor lecture part of Satu Palokangas’ Somatics-course. It then evolves into parkour, which we discussed earlier on our *dérive* and that parkour appears in our Instagram feeds. As a reaction to the surroundings, and this being the first day I see trams on the new Merihaka bridge, I use my voice for the first time to proclaim “that’s the second tram I’ve seen today!”, not feeling any bigger impulses for action, I ask how much time is left and sit by the water. I end as planned, by shouting “ECO-CHEKHOV!” proud of the term I’ve newly coined, across the sea and ice, a gesture from which feelings of childish, positive humiliation arise.

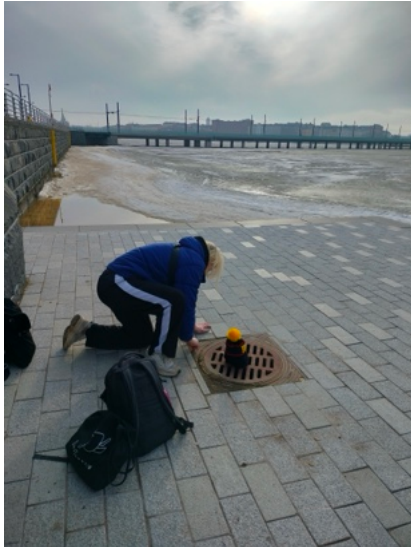


Figure 32: Exploring the topographical qualities of the manhole cover and rocks in space.

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Vega decides to start by putting her hat down. The improvisation takes the shape of the manhole cover as an impulse in the beginning, the improviser drawing curves based on it with small rocks they found nearby on the ground which then leads to dropping the rocks through holes in the cover. The topographical exploration reveals what is a shared emotional memory we discuss afterwards, we've both done the rock-dropping action previously as children. For me as the observer, the memory is evoked through the sound and echoes that the pebbles make when they hit the water in the sewage tunnel. The improvisation gains new momentum through steps inspired by floor tiles, the act of jumping on specific tiles, probably following an emerging inner logic. They then escape as planned for the ending, crouching behind a wall above the stairs. After my applause, they make a proposition for a competition, that we'd throw a rock each as far as we can; mine goes farther and through the ice.



Figure 33 & 34: Our psychological gestures.

Vega's gesture is an attempt to embody the straight lines of the buildings surrounding the landscape, whilst incorporating natural curves in the lower arm and leaning from the hip. My inspiration is a crane, since cranes are and have been ubiquitous in the area, and Vega named that she likes cranes. My upper body is leaning forward whilst my right arm is on an imagined operating stick. I begin to see scenes of this embodiment as a waitress or master of ceremonies, a social magnate from an evening festivity in Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, someone nosing in on the guests every once in a while, taking care of the logistics and social customs during the dinner.

Vegas exploration for a gesture involved the attempt to especially embody the straight lines, but they felt that the initial straight gesture was over expressive and forced. What helped them was finding the curve shape with the other arm which then lent a feeling of satisfaction of how it represents the whole view/landscape, without sacrificing the original inspiration of straight lines.



Figure 35. Vega Adsten, in Case Study C. Behind on the left, Merihaka, on right Hanasaari and Kalasatama skyscrapers.

The place is very straight and square. Almost like a scene which makes them exclaim that “I feel at home”. I wonder on, could one call it an anti-scene? It is geographically like a scene, but in distinction to the traditional performing stages lower from the surrounding mainland and thus hidden from the main paths of transport and traffic behind. Another interesting observation whilst doing the exercises: only children interact with us by saying “hallo!” or audibly wondering what it is that we’re doing.

Vega parts with the words “Thank you. It was wonderful.”

Case study 4: Szigeti Balint Barabas and Bence Huszerl

Commented [BF8]: här kan du ta stycket upp til början av sidan

I have entered the first thesis defence during the first case study involving participants who are not from my study programme. One is a director and the other has a background of education and work in the IT-field before moving into acting.

On the way to the Mustavuori cave I’ve proposed to go to, to close the circle where I began this research solo, I’m asked why I’m doing this and what my subject is.

As I’m questioned on the way, I talk about Chekhov’s emphasis on atmospheres. One of us points out the contrasts that appear as we walk from Mellunmäki metro station to the Mustavuori cave in the nature reserve. The quasi-motorway between Helsinki and Sipoo (Eastern Highway, regional road 170) is piercing the fields after the last apartment buildings, humming relentlessly. One participant remarks the contrast happens “Maybe even violently. But (the contrast is) also beautiful.”

To continue with the idea of contrasts within atmosphere, at the location I guide us to the top of the hill, on top of the cave, first standing by the cliff, which I explored in

connection with the jumping scene in Ronja Rövardotter, to feel again what is to me an instant psycho-physical emotional response to danger, tension and excitement.

Following the impulse of the participant Bence, we also take off our socks and shoes on top of the cave. It seems like a good idea to bring the foot perception into the warm-up, especially since the weathers have warmed as the research has gone on.

We go through the expansions and contractions. I interject propositions more than I've done before, proposing in the spirit of Viewpoints and somatics to maybe allow the vision to be soft, placing awareness on the peripheral vision. One participant says that the expansion was already such a total feeling, that the expansion of vision felt unnecessary on top of it.

We do the directional exercises, each in our own style, one of us having workshop experience of Chekhov and all familiar with the technique through our own way.

As one expresses feeling "closed and clogged" and the other remains silent, fears creep in. Don't all these exercises feel forced? My propositions pushy?

We then go to the cave to perform the same tasks there. For the cave, we put on our shoes again. It feels like a safety measure since it's dark and you can't really see what you're stepping on. The cave also contains traces of other people's visits.

A contrast appears according to one participant: "On top of the cave the expansion felt like it could be infinite, while being small was difficult. Inside the cave, I felt that I didn't want to become bigger than the cave. I couldn't be bigger than the cave but instead, becoming smaller could have continued infinitely." I share the sentiment, in the cave the expansion wasn't an 180°-360° experience of expansion in every direction, but bordered by the caves formations and then continuing in a non-symmetrical shape through each tunnel exit from where the light hit the periphery of my vision in the expanded position.



Figure 36: a topographical illustration of how I perceived the site. Uppermost is an illustrated representation of my experience in the expansion exercise. Below it is a topographical mapping of the place on how it feels and looks from a bird's perspective, with the entrance, aforementioned cliff, exit and surrounding views of forest described.

We all enjoy the expansions and contractions.

The addition of the imaginary energetic centre in the chest was difficult for one participant, while the other felt more at ease with it, contemplating that rather than imagining the body or centre moving ahead, they felt guided by something. They however stayed with the question of what that something guiding them in this cave was, a question none were able to answer.

Out of the three qualities, the participants chose radiance. We pondered upon the significance of radiation later, as the participant asked:

Radiation, what is it? Intentionality? Why do it in a cave?

Me: I feel like my reaction to the response (of the environment) is also more aware if I start approaching consciously with radiating intentionality (towards it).

I choose the quality of forming, or sculpting. I feel for the first time satisfied as the sculptor, reflecting that it was due to letting the cave influence and shape my positions, as if I was adjusting my body to its angles rather than focusing on actively sculpting something imaginary in the air.

The imaginary object exercise was met with resistance and then questions afterwards (I will refer to the participants as P1 and P2 respectively) and retrospectively edit in my response in cursive, which I didn't manage to verbalize in the moment:

P1: Why do this (imagining objects) in a cave, which already is such a diverse environment?

P2: This exercise is very different in studios or theatrical spaces.

P1: Even there I dislike doing it.

P2: I think the question remains for me, why in a cave?

Me: Hmm... Yeah.

To not cause unintentional harm and disturbance to the microcosmic entities which exist in the place. Mindlessly throwing and pulling actual objects there, especially over time, could disturb existing life. How many times haven't we picked up a rock to see all the small insects scuttering out and about, suddenly losing their roof, as their world is turned upside down?

One participant described their workaround regarding the imaginary objects in an environment which already stimulated them as follows; they realized that they are already in contact with air and its particles. Thus, they didn't rely on imagination but rather became aware of the process of moving air.

My interpretation is that many of the questions before and after the session are focused on the Chekhov technique and its use in this context. Since the technique relies and builds a lot on personal imagination, the question arises how that relates or feeds into my wish of emphasizing the relation with place. Some of the participants experience that they get "more" in their head trying to complete the tasks, than being aware of the environment.

I have some growing doubts regarding the suitability of the imaginative exercises within the frame I tend to explore in, while at the same time finding it a possibility to explore how the surrounding place affects your imagination and interpretation of the tasks. I hypothesize that it's inevitable for a place and its qualities to affect our imagination and realization of tasks. From an ecological point of view, I even see potential in the recurrent activation of imagination in places and how that could give more depth, from a human psychological perspective to places, thus affecting our approach and hopefully will for conservation. Storytelling, narratives and emotionally touching images have been used throughout time for pedagogical, mnemonical, propagandistic purposes. The short imaginative micro-stories that appear when one performs the exercises outlined in Chekhov's book can be a springboard to approach ecospheres through a more narratorial lens.

As a shift in my own involvement during these studies, I've attempted to also spend more time observing other bodies. Inside the cave, my awareness shifts from performing the exercises and observing the participants to the shadows on the walls. We take time for impromptu shadow play. Through shadows one can play with perspectives and scale. Stand further ahead from the projected light, and your shadow becomes smaller in relation to the body standing closer to the light source. This opens new possibilities of meetings and storytelling, beyond the physical limitations of our own bodies.

We then search for psychological gestures, and once everyone signals they're ready, I ask the participants to tell something about their gesture or process.



Figure 37: My PG inside the cave.

I find my bodily position by pondering upon the cave's shape. "How can I be contained within myself?" I'm then guided into the form through familiar positions from yogic practice and a memory of spectating dancer's thinking loudly upon the concept of utilizing negative space whilst dancing. Negative space is what is between the body. As I'm satisfied in my position in the negative space between my legs, I start to listen to the soundscape, I hear a constant drip of water, the question of embodying it is solved by me spitting, trying to imitate the rhythm of the dripping.



Figure 37: Szigeti's PG.

Szigeti assumes a squatting position, which he describes is inspired by the feeling of being “contained in something” i.e. the cave. He also underlines the experience of being shaped by the surroundings. Interpreting it as a spectator, it even accentuates the contrast between the size of the body and the concave, negative space the cave creates.



Figure 38 (on previous page): Bence's PG.

Bence reaches forward, bended in a semi-squat position. He describes the desire to reach something beyond where water starts covering the ground and incorporating something “evil” in a creature's shape.

The three-minute improvisations offer a nice freedom from the previous exercises with quite strict movement propositions. I start once again, hoping that it makes it easier for the participants. In this study, my development for this task was the wish to incorporate our psychological gestures either as a beginning or end.

I take the journey to the other side of the cave, trying to balance on top of the rocks lining the wall to prevent my feet from getting too wet. I also carry a candle on the journey, which one of the participants remarks having been beautiful and intriguing.

Bence paraphrases what I offered as an example whilst facilitating the exercise, starting with “Hello”, and ending in their psychological gesture. The path there is an exhilarating experience as an audience. The beginning with a very humane greeting, followed by a long stare and stillness, suggest to me that I'm welcomed to a place which somehow belongs to this person, which becomes a bit weird for me, a person with an ordinary home and grown up in an urban area, reflecting my conditioned

stigmas towards homelessness and cave-dwelling being something out of the norm. I perceive the improvisation to then delve even further in the atmosphere of “evil”, creepiness, as they move further away to end up in a squat, slowly reaching out towards the water again, to fill their psychological gesture, signalling the end of the exercise.

Szigeti decides to start by blowing out a candle. The journey to blowing out the candle becomes a part of the improvisation itself, they walk deeper into the cave, sit down by the water for a while before blowing out the candle. They then start to sing, the voice and steady tones ringing out and echoing through the cave. Their voice is the only communicator of their locality. It feels relieving and gives us spectators an impulse to join, but since participation in the solo improvisations was not discussed, we inhibit our impulse. He then appears from the darkness and sits into a squat, very much in the same position as in the image above.

After the improvisation, whilst packing and cleaning up the candles (and Bence picking up some more left behind by someone else), we continue yelling to the cave and singing. A noteworthy feature is that none of us use words, just vocals in long tones.

3.4 Reflections and feedback from case studies

I presented the participants the possibility to answer the following questions in the days following the case studies: Does something still live on/echo from our adventure? Could you see yourself taking your practice to nature (or other site-specific places)? And in that case, how, what would you do differently?

Case study A, ripples through written feedback:

“Our adventure lives on and well in my head! I think that a overhanging thought is that it is for me beneficial to take acting out of the rehearsal spaces and stage context when I’m not working with a specific project or a specific role. If one goes out completely cold to a beach and does unstructured (in a “professional” significance) exercises one can let thoughts flow free and let ones subconscious lead the train of thought. One

thinks of nothing and everything at the same time. As an artist I think I benefit from finding a place outdoors where to do exercises or artistic work at. Partly because i see it as an advantage to practice ones artistry in the public eye, inviting the surrounding world to the process and precisely because it takes one outside the dusty, angular frames regarding the way of thinking around art.” - Walter Öhman

Case study B, written feedback:

“Yes, the adventure is still living with me in the form of inner images and bodily experiences. I can see the view from the top of the hill where we stood and did the exercises. I reflect upon how it felt to breathe the clear air whilst having the head felt clearer and easier. Moreover I remember how open the chest suddenly felt. It gave me a light swaying in my body.

I will absolutely use places in my artistic practice going forward. Places often give me associations, inner images and emotions which I can use artistically. In this case, the Sompasauna is a place I associate with peace whilst it simultaneously represents strong bodily feelings such as extreme heat or cold. For me it also offers perspectives on life, the world and myself as a part of this all. Nature and eroticism in a beautiful combination is also something that I associate with this place.

For me it can be a great place for artistic thoughts, discussions and perspectives, whether it's in the beginning, middle or end of an artistic process. It is also a place for meetings between people and for creating a sort of sense of togetherness.” - Andreas Kvisgaard

As an actor, I think my challenges lie in environments and relations which rely so much on verbal communication. A shyness and social anxiety, stemming from reasons I've yet to pinpoint, has limited my reasoning, expression and opinion throughout studies. In the following section I will in written form answer some of the questions and critiques which have risen both in me and in the participants during the case studies.

I think upon the expansion and contraction exercise, which has seemed to be univocally a favourite. I hypothesize that it is due to the task being simple on the verbal level and involves movements which are familiar to most bodies. The task performed in a place and landscape also puts a lot of emphasis on visual information, placing less reliance on

pure imagination. The expansions and contractions, reflecting now, opens up to think beyond bodily boundaries, both macro- and microscopically. It also allows sensing the surroundings through the body and it's situatedness.

The directional stretches widen the awareness of movement possibilities and allow for a wider sensorial experience of the surrounding space. It also offers an opportunity to start performing the movements as one feels fit within the atmosphere of the place.

The movements with imaginary objects are an initiation into how bodily experiences become psychological qualities (Chekov, 2017). I find this exercise uncomfortable and considering that it was met with great resistance in some participants, I will look for replacing exercises or reframing the task. I found one of the participants response to the exercise a lucrative way to frame it in the future: moving what is already there, i.e. the air and its particles. This approach might allow for more site-sensitivity and prevent one from getting too much in one's head.

Of the positive aspects of this exercise, and perhaps acting exercises in public spaces in general, is that doing them seems to eventually according to my own qualitative experience lower the threshold for being seen silly, eccentric or weird.

That effect, and the question of breaking space involuntarily, I reflect upon in my blogpost *On water doing solid things*.

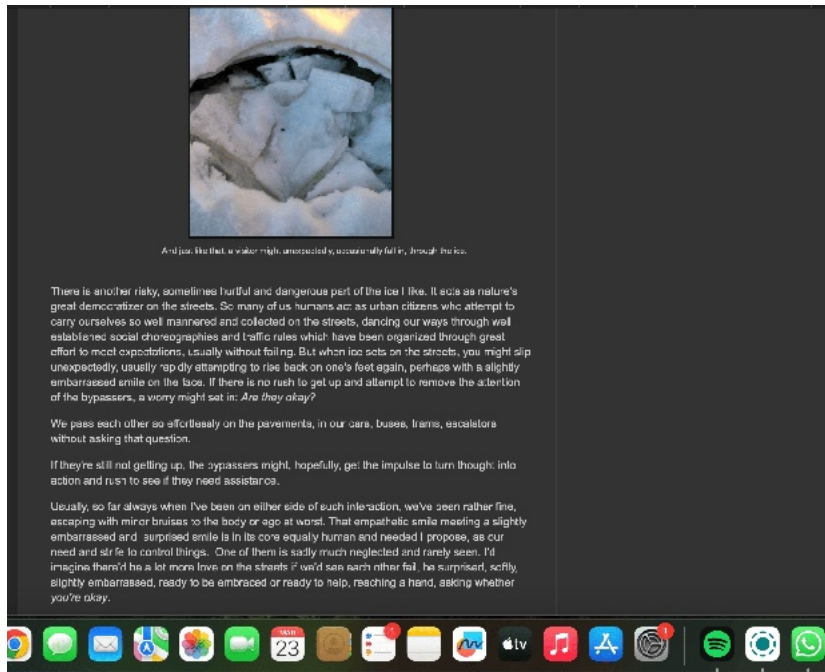


Figure 39: Screenshot of my blogpost *On water doing solid things*. Posted on 17.2.2026.

Within this thesis, the field of acting and the philosophy of ecology, the theme of empathy seems to me to be of great importance. I think that there might be something worth exploring in the relationship between surprise, embarrassment and the reaction to that, of empathy, that we are missing out in our everyday, strictly choreographed urban lives, in cities where every action has its specific place, as if the traffic rules would extend to social contracts on behaviour, and we close ourselves into institutions where our gestures can be seen every day as a behavioural norm.

The improvisation with the preset beginning and end was also successful. Participants felt safe with the given time limit and having the anchors of preset gestures, rather than being “out in the complete unknowing” as one participant put it. Reflecting upon how the Chekhov exercises would fit participants without any theatrical background or exposure to it, I believe that this exercise, with a preset beginning and an end which contrasts it somehow, gives the performer of the task an impulsive, intuitive feeling and experience of a turning point. That dramaturgical device is an important tool for shaping ecological narratives later.

Based on feedback from the only group case study (Case study D), where the two spectators felt the desire to join in on the vocal improvisation, I will open the possibility for those spectating to join an improvisation if one gets the impulse.

In general it is slightly frustrating, especially after talking with another student who has also made the observation, that when you pick a specific technique, particularly a well-known one, such as Chekhov, a lot of focus in action, thought and discussion afterwards ties into it. I question if it is the best way to go if one's focus is on the places and sites themselves? Frequently I've had to discuss the exercises more than the places and how they affected people.

One participant had trouble to create the psychological gesture and with the tasks brought forth the question of what to do when one doesn't feel like any gesture or act is needed, thanking the other participant for involving sound and voice. Perhaps sound based exercises could alleviate such dilemmas. Reflecting upon all the case studies, I see a personal tendency to hide my voice also throughout the facilitations and explorations.

I was also happy to facilitate a *dérive* for someone who prefers urban landscapes. I think this is a fruitful approach both in terms of accessibility but also for bringing awareness to our close vicinity, the architectural spaces and social choreographies in our cities.

4.0 Conclusion

I have written the conclusion in a smaller font than the previous headers with a reason, I believe that the conclusion is less important than what is above and below this section, the act of researching, the journey itself.

Based on the material I've gathered, I see this thesis as a springboard for continued research. I am personally left unsatisfied with the results: a small focus group and lack of long-term follow-up on results. I also ran out of time and initiative to facilitate a final workshop with a larger group as part of the research's initial goals. I didn't even manage to account for the time necessary to gather written feedback from all participants (case studies C and D). It is perhaps due to this that my private insecurities have gained ground, and I'm left sceptical that the participants will continue or mould this practice into their own. At the core a private insecurity, which now, one day later seems insignificant and amusing, gnaws that I didn't change the world. Of course I didn't, and no single person can. I have to trust my participants feedback and their honesty whilst being aware that the period for the research was highly limited.

After some insightful comments by my mentor Freja Bäckman in the final days, I now also see the positives beyond the sceptical, self-centred, ironically, anthropocentric thoughts and very humane, but grandiose ambitions. The gift of this thesis is, that I can more clearly see several actions which I would like to take next to improve both the research and my role as a facilitator.

Regarding shaping knowledge and my own future praxis, what I'd like to call a personal revolution, I sense myself having inched further. Through the blog writing practice and localized case studies, I have managed to deepen my daily awareness of nature, my knowledge regarding weather and other natural or site-specific phenomena. I also have the personal knowledge and habit now of exercising my profession outdoors and in places I'd like to visit, for this research, the blog or other reasons. This allows me to rehearse and maintain some aspects of my professional skills on the go or if I were to be without a specific studio space to practice in. I consider that a huge benefit situated in a society where political and economic currents are driving space-related costs upwards in the central urban areas whilst employment possibilities are becoming less in quantity and duration (Rejström, 2025).

With the case studies I've gained a hunch of which exercises suit my means and which I'd like to modify or discard in favour of looking for something else. For example, the expansion and contraction exercise seems to be fit as a sensitizing warm-up.

In the first case studies I forgot, and in the end scrapped the idea of sharing the "going against the atmosphere" exercise, because it felt daunting, anthropocentric and even disrespectful within the site-sensitive approach I'd like to cultivate. I'd like however to explore contrasts in atmospheres geographically close to each other.

The psychological gesture offers a bodily and visual insight into different perceptions of places. These differences and resemblances posit fruitful springboards for continued storytelling, narratives, meaning making and knowledge shaping.

Going back to the semiurgy which I propose is central to this research and practice, the psychological gestures are visual compressions of the activity of modifying signs. As I reflect upon the different gestures, it seems to me be rooted in the activity of condensing the perceived signs, such as that of the architecture in the landscape, the conditioned or efficient body position of an activity (such as sitting in a hot sauna), the perceived atmosphere, a combination of light, sound, air quality etc. of the cave into an embodied position. Continuing from here, by collaborating, the gestures could communicate in a meaning making process, which also is fundamental in the larger concept of Deep ecology and acts toward a more sustainable structure of society.

Regarding the facilitation of ecological storytelling through the case studies and writing, and its importance, I think that an overall shift resituating our pedagogy, practice and thinking towards the elements and ecology have several uses. Regarding the mnemonical use of stories, Jody Enders talks of the overall pervasive violence in the culture as an explanation for the violent scenes in medieval drama's in her book *The Medieval Theater of Cruelty*, offering violent examples from medieval pedagogy, such as that of memorizing star signs through violent images of a bloody childbirth and a ram kicking testicles nearby (Enders, 2002). Through a shift towards more ecological devices in memorization techniques and pedagogy, I'd hypothesize a similar result of an

increased representation of localities, how they are, how they change and ecology in our art.

Beyond the effects of ecology- or place-minded stories and experiences as benefactors in our human operations and society, and seeing them as a function rather than inherently valuable in themselves, perhaps a language and practice rooted in places could also just help us remember places, how they were and remind us to give them a visit again or sensitizing us to their calling, increasing our perceptivity to how they change which again ties in to Naess' conservationist postulations of Deep Ecology.

Through the case studies I've also lowered the threshold of inviting other people for practice sessions. By inviting cohorts, classmates, artist acquaintances and colleagues on a trip to nature with the purpose of improvising and acting, you both get a low effort practical skill maintenance session and the health benefits of leisure in nature. It is, based on feedback and the effects of the environment where we currently proceed our way of doing things (theatres, university campus, studios, black boxes), a welcome *change of scenery*.

I plan to research in which ways Mikhail Chekhov's acting method could be synthesised with Viewpoints, and which exercises would suit actors, and which non-actors. Perhaps there is something to study as a larger field of eco-acting, open for more thoughts, developments and approaches than those of the very personified and premoulded techniques with surnames attached. I hope to eventually go on to doctorate, which would offer the economic resources and time to proceed with the research. I would hope to enlist within the institution and impact the pedagogical structures of the University of the Arts. In the near future, as I orient myself on the professional (or unemployment) field as a freelancer, I hope to establish a Laboratory for exploring these phenomena with cohorts.

Also placing myself within the exercises as a researcher, it's different from being a traditional scientific "outside" observer or pedagogue. I would still prefer to be one amongst participants, both because I gain something in each experience and also to make the common space less hierarchical.

By combining the writing practice that I've outlined in this dialogue of situated writing, the blog, with that of the academic, structuralized and reflexive writing in longer research with subjects I've attained a writing practice that will probably be a constant. With that I mean keeping the blog alive but also having the skillset and know-how to send more academic, essayistic and journalistic texts to different publications, such as newsletters for the acting labour union, *Ämyri*, and ones more focused on ecology, such as *Suomen Luonto*.

For now, my more artistic, poetic, essayistic, mosaic research will be focused on maintaining the blog *In Search of a Scenery*, where you can read and hear of future workshops and turns of events. In further research I will also utilize question forms and sending them out to people, asking theatre makers if they use places as a creative force in their work, and if so how, or whether they use specific places for leisure, such as a nearby forest, and if so, how it makes them feel. I would hope that these means of reaching out could result in some form of community and collectivized research from which a platform of creative and scientific work could emerge.

In the very near future, I will partake in the optional studies of the University of the Arts Centre for Joint Studies course *Integrating Arts and Science*, which is a collaboration with the University of Helsinki and will be a 10-day course at the Institute for Atmosphere and Earth System Research (INAR) located in Värriö. I expect the research to continue and gain new forms there.

I also find it helpful and important to gain some experience in pedagogy. I aim to use my alumni rights which allows a graduated student to apply for courses up until two years after graduation for courses in theatre pedagogy. I should also get acquainted with pedagogical theory in general.

Referring to the title of the thesis, *Acting Towards a Sustainable Society*, a result I'd like to highlight is that I've found the process of this research and writing of master's thesis personally sustainable. In contradiction to my previous experience of writing my bachelor's thesis, partaking in student and citizen activism, creating works at the school or rehearsing plays, this is the first time I don't feel exhausted by the subject. I've had multiple experiences of still wanting to be active with the subject of research or artistic practice in the time beyond the project itself yet physically feeling symptoms of

exhaustion when getting involved with it. Now I'm ending this thesis slightly scared by this new feeling, have I forgot something important or is this just how it feels when one hasn't exhausted one's resources? Either way, I can barely contain my curiosity and eagerness to carry on with the research.

4.1 Plan for a future workshop

I will outline a plan for how I would organize a future workshop, based on the results, feedback and where I'm now with the research.

The research, its aims and progress will be documented, formatted more accessible and coherent by creating a website with the basic information and participation form. I'd also send an open call invitation through email lists, using the contacts I have at the university and at Svenska Teatern for my advantage. Posters would be made with the basic information and a link to my website/blog for further inquiries. The poster could be posted on social media and printed for spreading to public spaces, such as libraries.

The email begins with an introduction of my research and purpose of the workshop. Then it refers to my blog, which the participants could read as non-obligatory preliminary material. Thus, they would already have a sample of the lens which with I

view the practice, or perhaps someone else could have different perspectives on what it is that the blog does in practice.

Practical information will include food and clothing suggestions according to the season and weather forecasts for the designated workshop days. I would schedule a weekly day for the workshop, at a specific location, the Mustavuori cave area, so that a larger group of people could participate, hopefully some would participate continuously, to gain a possibility to follow effects of the practice over a longer period. It would also contain my contact information, for personal workshops taking the form of urban dérives or a site of the participants selection (such as in the case studies A, B and C). This allows following how these two approaches differ in results and purpose whilst diversifying the methodology.

The workshops would be longer than in the case studies, 3-4 hours would be enough considering climate realities such as getting cold during most of the year in Finland. I would begin by asking the participants to approach the site in silence, observing the atmospheres that they pass on their way to the location, thus already elevating the senses and making the moment special compared to everyday leisure activity.

Field notes regarding weather and time are to be taken, so that the effects on weather can be surveyed and future modifications in regard to it made.

I present the Viewpoints categories and give 20 minutes for exploring the place, alone or in groups with simultaneous discussions allowed. Embedding a preparation for the last task, each participant would be asked to take something with them or memorize an observation for later.

The participants would then be gathered in a circle to share observations regarding place or for personal check-ins anchored in the here and now.

Then I would propose to do the Extension and contraction exercises from Chekhov. That would continue into the direction stretches. The directions exercise would be preceded by a discussion regarding personal associations regarding north, south, east

and west. This could include meteorological relationships, such as the cold wind blowing from the north, or spiritual such as the East symbolizing new beginnings.

Presentation of the 3 types of qualities: radiance, swaying and forming (sculpting). The Chekhov propositions for qualities would be framed more as representations of this way of working through embodiment, and what it could mean. More weight would be given to finding a personal fourth quality, open for interpretation. It would consist of a participant's personal perception of a quality they sense in the place. We will then proceed through the previous movements again with the personal site-specific qualities superimposed on them.

Instead of moving imaginary objects, I would propose us to choose one of the aforementioned qualities and move with it in the space/place and opening up the exploration for touching and interacting with real things in the place (with emphasis on mindfulness and sensitivity regarding the site and life we might be unaware of).

We would then gather to discuss the kinaesthetic, emotional and imaginative impulses we've gathered.

Then I facilitate the improvisation. The improvisations start solo, but keep open the possibility to join from the audience and also an option to signal for continuation beyond the 3-minute time limit if desired. I also emphasize the possibility of using sound and voice in the exercises.

After the improvisations a snack or lunch break.

After lunch, I would begin by asking the participants to lay down or take a comfortable position. From there I would facilitate a modified somatic exercise which I remember from the first semester of my bachelor's studies by Satu Palokangas. They facilitated it by proposing embodying and moving through a personal evolution, starting from an embryo. My personal modification would be to propose beginning from earlier, from the lives that have sustained throughout the big five extinction events, the worst of which wiped out 96% of living organisms.

I would ask those willing to share some moments or stories that were created.

After that I would propose us to device a collective story through two parts: first a loose discussion, with a thing or observation made by each participant at the beginning of the session as a starting point.

I would then ask us to do a 5-minute collective improvisation after the discussion and presentation of discoveries.

Based on the material and observations gathered, we would try to either create a 15-minute scene, with partly planned scores, scenes or qualities and other parts open for improvisation and further exploration. If the group would prefer to just brainstorm a narrative through discussion, that could also be a possibility.

Thank You / Credits

Thanks to:

All the places I've gone through, all participants who came to and through places for this thesis, Aune Kallinen for smooth operating as the professor, Freja Bäckman for support, ideas, sharing resources & caring about this writing process, Tom Rejström for facilitating the necessary practical information in good humour, everyone around for giving the time and space to write this thesis amidst tumultuous and emotionally intense complex circumstances of changing relations, Satu Palokangas for facilitating somatic explorations despite the first four years of confused movement, the countless random and not-so-random people I've met who've replied "Oo, that sounds interesting...",

Katalin Trencényi, the wonderful people at CDPR, maa-ilma, maaemo, väet, haltiat, the Coming Home to Life-podcast, A.W. Yrjänä, humans, life, mom, dad, grandparents, forefathers, -mothers, beings, survivors of mass extinctions, the big bang, space, particles, atoms, this used m1 pro macbook, svenska kulturfonded for providing a grant to buy it, Marko Leppänen for Esoteerinen maantiede ja periferiaterapia, everybody i`m forgetting, ex`s, futures, university of the arts, the finnish education system, the remnants of the social welfare state, this last dot. no I have to go on, I forgot my little sister, thank you for being a punker and more brave than i`ve ever been and the 16 year old i would have wished to have been, for inspiring to evolve, my roommates for meetings, discussions and sharing perspectives but also breaks from my own shit in the kitchen, thank you first being to thank, the Tibetan Book of the Dead for balancing out my reading palette, fairies, the cracks in rocks with wet moss, Catarina Korkman for neverending inspiring and thought provoking moments sharing perspectives on life in the field of ecology and beyond, breaks in seventh heaven, magick for making meditation a semi-regular everyday activity, all beings who have tolerated my lateness, taxpayers and Gaia.

Thank you for reading =) Soz 4 the long rambling. It`s just the way I am.

If you crave more, read my blog!

Maybe it`s time to go out and change scenery.

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Appendix: Map and List of Places

Commented [BF9]: denna kan du ännu ta bort om du inte inkluderar bilagor

- Places
-  Mustavuoren linnoitusalue
 -  Hyrylä
 -  Munkkivuori beach
 -  Anti-stage, Jätkäsaari
 -  A dérive, On situationists.
 -  Home
 -  Taideyliopiston Teatterikorkeakoulu
 -  Mellunmäki Metro station

