

CONNECTING IN THE GREY ZONE

Curated by Anador Walsh

Mentored by Mark Feary

4–20 December 2019

BLINDSIDIS

BLINDSIDE acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate. We recognise that sovereignty was never ceded – we are on stolen land.

BLINDSIDE would like to pay respects to Wurundjeri Elders, past, present and emerging, to the Elders from other communities and to any other Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders who might encounter or participate in our program.

CONNECTING IN THE GREY

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CONNECTING IN THE GREY ZONE

Connecting in the grey zone draws its title from a term coined by art historian Claire Bishop. In 'Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone: Dance Exhibitions and Audience Attention', a 2018 article for *The Drama Review*, Bishop discusses the rising prominence of the dance exhibition. She describes the dance exhibition '...as the paradigmatic form of the new 'gray zones' for performance that have evolved out of the historical convergence of experimental theatre's 'black box' and the gallery's 'white cube,'¹ and highlights the integral part that smart phones and social media play in the documentation, distribution and proliferation of performance based art.

Connecting in the grey zone contends that the dance exhibition and emergent digital technologies are both 'grey zones', in that they are characterised by an absence of regulation and an indeterminacy of form. By situating itself in the gallery, the place where these two 'grey zones' converge and become ubiquitous, this project poses questions concerning the symbiotic relationship between these zones, the role of the body and the audience in this context, and the part that social media plays in the current popularity of dance in the gallery and performance art more broadly.

This project exhibits 'conceptual dance'² side by side with, and in the same context as performance art, for the purpose of exploring these questions. Central to these lines of inquiry are the notions of the 'spectator' and the 'witness'. Dance theorist André Lepecki describes a 'spectator' as an audience member who 'chooses to check his iPhone or to Google the latest blog on the piece he is presently (non)watching...'³ and a 'witness' as 'an actor-storyteller who takes responsibility for the work by transmitting an experience of it to future audiences through the work of translation into language'.⁴ It is by observing these descriptors, and in turn observing this exhibition's audience — as they engage with the works installed and performed, reach for their phones (or don't) and move through the gallery's two spaces, as if clicking through internet tabs — that we begin to address the questions posed by *Connecting in the grey zone*.

Ivey Wawn 'makes dance-based work for various contexts'.⁵ Her contribution to *Connecting in the grey zone*, *Surfacing v.2*, 2019, is the first

1. Claire Bishop, 'Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone: Dance Exhibitions and Audience Attention,' *The Drama Review* 62, no. 2 (Summer 2018): 24.
2. Dance theorist Bojana Cvejic uses the term 'conceptual dance' to describe all dance that is performed outside of the traditional, 'black box' canon. See Bojana Cvejic, *Choreographing Problems: Expressive Concepts in Contemporary Dance and Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
3. André Lepecki, *Singularities* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 175.
4. Bishop, paraphrasing Lepecki, 2018, 36.
5. Ivey Wawn, Artist Biography.

work you encounter when entering BLINDSIDE's gallery one. *Surfacing v.2*, is composed of two white, 50x50x50cm plinths, joined together to form a bench. Behind this bench sits a mirror, suspended from the ceiling by a long length of rope, in which a floor mounted video work is reflected. In this silent video, Wawn dances and talks about dancing. *Surfacing v.2*, is the second in a series of works, first exhibited within the context of Asad Raza's *Absorption*, for Kaldor Public Art Project #34 in May 2019. Wawn's *Surfacing* series employs dance and reflection as mechanisms through which she explores the way that 'the commodity form obscures the social relations that bring it into being'.⁶ On the opening night of *Connecting in the grey zone*, Wawn and regular collaborator Ellen Davies danced and talked together, drawing on their shared knowledge and experience. Wawn and Davies moved individually and in unison, rolling plinths across the floor, to transform them into podiums on which to gyrate, then together across gallery one and through the audience into gallery two. By staying in constant physical and verbal dialogue with one another throughout, Wawn and Davies made opaque the process by which dance is made, and exhibited it in the space, the gallery, where it is usually presented as a resolute performance.

ie.-bs, *if everything is porn then let your ears weep softly*, 2019, is an open, multi-disciplinary and collaborative exchange between artists Ichikawa Lee and Joshua Edward and tech-Artist Brooke Smith. Conceptually ie. deals with architectures and social infrastructures, digital landscapes as queer bodies, and the frictions of disability. *if everything is porn then let your ears weep softly*, 2019, is composed of two dazzling, polished aluminium objects, coated and sitting in a pool of glycerine, mounted on a 100x100cm aluminium tray. These objects are new sculptural works made in response to the sound element of IchikawaEdward's 2018 *not to hide our stench*. *not to hide our stench*, was a durational performance work, 1 hour in length, performed at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2018, as part of the artists' graduation exhibition. *if everything is porn then let your ears weep softly*, 2019, takes the form of a contemporary pool of reflection, and is an engrossing, sculptural manifestation of ie.-bs' ongoing study into the way that algorithmic systems interpret sound based data. 'This study aims to interpret the 'body' through the conversion of one 'body' (literal, sound) into a new 'body' (analysed, interpreted and systematic, but also a literal object, confined in three dimensional reality)'.⁷

Eugene Choi is a performance-based artist, who 'seeks comfort through intimate gestures, relying on the live response of her physical and emotional body'.⁸ In addition to her own practice, which encompasses sculpture, performance, installation and video, Choi regularly performs in the dance and performance work of others. *just thoughts*, 2019, is a new work composed of a pdf document made from all of the tweets Choi made between 2014 and the present, during periods of performance development, rehearsal and performance. Presented on the same iPhone 6 that the majority of these tweets were written, *just thoughts*, 2019, is a confessional stream of consciousness, offered up to the twitterverse in an act of release. Throughout the three weeks of *Connecting in the grey zone's* run, *just thoughts*, 2019, sat plugged into a wall in BLINDSIDE's gallery one, charging, and allowed visitors to pick up Choi's old iPhone and interlope on her unfiltered thoughts: 'SCUM is my life', 'i love SCUM', 'ivey wawn ivey wawn, my favourite vocal warm up', 'Capital

6. Ivey Wawn, Artist Statement, *Surfacing v.2*, 2019.
7. ie.-bs, Artist Statement, *if everything is porn then let your ears weep softly*, 2019.
8. Eugene Choi, Artist Biography.

letters in tweets signify spiral’, ‘I am suddenly making dance work — is this my pre-teen dream coming truuuuu?????’⁹ At *Connecting in the grey zone*’s opening and during the exhibition’s public program *Grey Zones, just thoughts*, 2019, was performed by Chi Tran and Arben Dzika respectively. Tran and Dzika read Choi’s tweets without theatre or personal intonation, but instead as a monologue, mirroring Choi’s own ongoing dialogue with the world through social media, and highlighting the connection/disconnection dichotomy implicit therein.

Jess Gall, Arini Byng and Rebecca Jensen’s collaborative project *Sinkhole* is exhibited twice, in two distinct capacities in *Connecting in the grey zone*. A monitor, sculpturally installed on the floor of gallery one of BLINDSIDE, *Sinkhole I – VII*, 2018, is a single-channel, high definition digital video, that amalgamates footage from all of the iterations of *Sinkhole* to date. Mounted on the wall, to the left as you enter gallery two, *Sinkhole VII*, 2018, is a single-channel, high definition video of aerial GoPro footage from *Sinkhole*’s seventh incarnation, performed last year at RMIT Design Hub, as part of Liquid Architecture’s *Why Listen to Plants?* In the artists’ own words *Sinkhole*: ‘deals with improvised scenarios and the agency of it’s performing body through responding from a text-based score’.¹⁰ To quote Jess Gall: ‘more a process than a work’,¹¹ *Sinkhole* is a way of thinking, working and doing. Participants of all ages and skill levels are invited to participate, and through processes of workshopping and collaboration, these separate bodies become interconnected, and engage in a process of action that dismantles existing hierarchies and erects wholly new ones in their place. Just as a real sinkhole creates the space for a pond to form in the wake of a topographical depression, so too does Byng, Gall and Jensen’s *Sinkhole* give birth to something new, through a course of structural collapse.

Angela Goh’s *Scum Ballet*, 2017, was originally commissioned by Campbelltown Arts Centre as a live performance, and in *Connecting in the grey zone* is presented as a documentation video edit, made by Goh for this exhibition. In *Scum*, the 1841 ballet *Giselle* and Valerie Solanas’ 1967 *Scum Manifesto* collide in a choreographic showcase of the implicit power and potential danger posed by a pack of women. *Scum Ballet* is choreographed for five dancers, Angela Goh, Eugene Choi, Ellen Davies, Verity Mackey and Ivey Wawn, and as Goh says ‘...five is a gang, and gangs make their own rules.’¹² *Giselle* tells the folktale of a coven Wili, virgin spirits who dwell in the forest and seduce men to their death, and *Scum Manifesto* is a radical call for the destruction of the male species. In simultaneously unpacking these two texts, Goh melds traditional ballet repertoire with contemporary choreography. Set to a discordant soundtrack of unnerving electronic music, complete with the sounds of shattering glass, *Scum Ballet* accelerates through multiple scenes of group and individual action, towards an unpredictable, implicitly violent end. Ellen Davies drags a wooden board, heavy with the weight of threat, along the ground in a circular motion; the group sits, caressing one another’s flesh, clothes and hair with knives; and later, in the piece’s denouement, the gang thrash violently against a multi-coloured, foam core mat, before collapsing, satiated, into an exalted slumber. *Scum* is reminiscent of the millennial turn of phrase: ‘a girl is a gun’, but in this case, she’s a razor sharp knife blade, poised at the ready and capable of anything.

9. Excerpts from Eugene Choi, *just thoughts*, 2019.
10. Arini Byng, Jess Gall, Rebecca Jensen, *Sinkhole*, Artist Statement.
11. Taken from a conversation between Jess Gall and the author, 2019.
12. Angela Goh, Artist Statement, *Scum Ballet*, 2017.

The soundtrack to Isabella Hone-Saunders, *dynamic values, an effective use of peripheral space*, 2019, instantly alerts you to the balletic nature of this work. The music of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky – *Pas de Deux ‘The Nutcracker’*, Antonio Vivaldi – *Cantate Cessate, Mai Cessate – Ah h’infelice sempre* and Mac Quale – *Adagio in G Minor* swells in BLINDSIDE’s gallery two, their luxurious, virtuosic waves, lapping into gallery one, drawing you from one space to the next. *dynamic values, an effective use of peripheral space*, 2019, centres around the transference of memory, from one body, Isabella Hone-Saunders’, to another, Jess Gall, using choreography as the medium of doing so. Presented on a custom mdf screen, attached to a chromed steel structure and bordered by braided, flesh toned, satin ribbon, *dynamic values, an effective use of peripheral space*, 2019, is a single channel video that offers an intimate insight into this transference. Through the act of teaching Gall the choreographic steps ingrained in her muscle memory from years of ballet training and examinations, Hone-Saunders is able to transcend the oppressive rigidity and the trauma inherent of ballet education, to regain a sense of freedom and joy in dance. To the right of this structure, *dynamic values, an effective use of peripheral space*, 2019, is also composed of a monitor, mounted on a grab rail, showing documentation footage of *number six performs Gallop*, Jess Gall’s live performance at *Connecting in the grey zone*’s opening. In *number six performs Gallop*, Gall wears a homemade t-shirt with a spray-painted number on the front and a hand drawn version of the Royal Academy of Dance coat of arms on the back, in homage to the homogeneity of the ballet exam process. Gall’s performance was loose and fun, and indicative of a clear breakaway from the onerous structures of ballet education. The inclusion of this performance documentation in *dynamic values, an effective use of peripheral space*, 2019, brings full circle the dialogical exchange between these two people and bodies.

It is by no means *Connecting in the grey zone*’s intention to provide an exhaustive study of or conclusive answers to the questions it poses, but rather to highlight these ‘grey zones’ and the function of the body as a conduit, through which we connect to one another in these spaces. At its core, *Connecting in the grey zone* is a web of connections. There are the connections between the exhibiting artists: if you sit at Ivey Wawn’s work, you can gaze, past Eugene Choi’s into gallery two, at Angela Goh’s *Scum Ballet*, in which they both perform. Jess Gall also features twice, as the performer in Isabella Hone-Saunders’ *dynamic values, an effective use of peripheral space*, 2019, and as a co-creator of *Sinkhole*. There are connections between bodies, as they perform, dance and navigate the exhibition space. And there are connections between the exhibition and its audience, as they focus and refocus their attention, witness, spectate and share *Connecting with the grey zone* with their networks, digital and physical.

Mark Feary

NOBODY MOVE

Contemporary dance is predominantly presented within a theatre-type environment in which the conditions, spatial, practical and temporal can be controlled. While such conventions are intermittently challenged or consciously dispensed with, such structural conditions enable choreographers to determine the manner in which audiences engage with their work, with established performative parameters defined for the stage, sprung floors to enable the gamut of performed actions and movements, theatrical lighting and audio configurations, and importantly, with audiences positioned to best encounter a spectacle for its duration. Through such structures, contemporary dance frequently mirrors the traditional modalities of theatre or ballet. This is a context that can be suggested to be a black box, a flexible and alterable environment for durational performances and presentations with a set up encompassing stage, configurable lighting and acoustic conditions, and establishing a clear demarcation between the environment for performers and audiences. In this, all of the conditions can be directed and controlled.

Similarly, contemporary art has a preference for controlled environments. Coined by artist and critic Brian O'Doherty in 1976, 'the white cube' has become synonymous with the architecture that has come to define and platform contemporary art. In such spaces, the architecture has been neutralised of all adornment, largely dispensing with all windows and natural light as if to remove any perspective upon the outside world. Through this, the work or works are given primacy, existing in a space attempting to be a non-space. They have become a sort of secular place of worship for the agnostic, with bright fluorescent light framing objects of spiritual importance, high production values, conceptual gravitas or staggering commercial value.

Proliferating over recent years, museums and galleries have sought to expand and incorporate dance within their environments, reflecting the importance of the body and movement within contemporary practice, expanding on from historical modes of representation within traditional visual art forms, and offering extension to decades of presenting performance practices. It is this inclusion and, and to a degree, co-option of contemporary dance into the programming of and presentation within the spatial environments of

contemporary visual art institutions that *Connecting in the grey zone* situates its conceptual underpinning. The grey zone it focuses on and draws attention to is how the activities normally devised for and presented within the black box might be transposed to and activated within the white cube. So here, the use of the term grey zone does not suggest a situation of ambiguity, but rather, an interstitial space of new possibilities, an expanded platform drawing on an expanded field of creative endeavours.

It ought be noted, perhaps to only reinforce the obvious, that there are some fundamental differences in how performance and the visual arts are normally experienced in their most commonplace respective realms. For the most part, galleries and museums are static environments, insofar as the works presented exist in a particular place, be that on the wall, on the floor, or as an overarching environment. In this context, the audience provides the mobility, with their unstructured choreography unfolding as they navigate a space and the works contained therein, with a rhythm incorporating architectural logic and sensorial capture. Yet in contemporary dance, the tides are turned, and the audience is the static component, and the dancers and performers are the embodiments of the spatial trajectory who also define the temporality. In the former, audiences create the mobility of engagement with the predominantly static artwork, and in the latter, the static audiences engage with the mobility of the performed artwork.

Herein exist the differences of this grey zone as proposed by curator Anador Walsh, in its oscillation between both an exhibition of performative works presented largely as filmic offerings, while also simultaneously (although at structured points in time) constituting a platform for live performative works. The choreography must therefore move around and respond to both mobilised and static audiences while additionally navigating an interior environment with static sculptural objects punctuated throughout. In such a context, both the performers and audiences are to a degree mobilised, with the dancers responding to the dynamism and mobility of a given space, and audiences too, either moving to better view the performance, or consciously retreating so that they can create a more expansive stage for the dancers and ensure their absence from its spotlight. Through this, the dancers and audiences create a more spontaneous and dynamised choreography in concert with one another, of both inclusion and avoidance. This hybrid space more deeply entangles us, implicating us with all in the room, both audiences and performers alike, and disrupting the parameters of a given space. This is the grey zone. And this is how it connects us.

Lizzie Thomson

{SCORE FOR A DANCE}

Dear Reader,

I am writing this with you in mind. I offer you this score for a dance in lieu of my physical presence. We are connecting now through this elusive linguistic exchange. Our shared attention is defying linear imaginings of time.

For the duration of this text, I am supporting the soles of your feet with the palms of my hands. Virtually. Energetically. Psychically. Our shared attention right now is somatically queer.

You may of course do whatever you wish with this score. Perform it as a spontaneous dance in the gallery, read it quietly in the soft privacy of your bedroom, or simply breathe it in and expel it back out into the world again.

Your engagement with this text will produce a dance.
Your engagement with this text is already a dance.
This encounter is dancing.

Here you are.

Please take some time to acknowledge the First Nations People whose Country you are in right now.

Sense the ongoing presence of the many histories of this place.

Sense the weight of this place.

Lower your gaze to gently shield your eyes from the apocalyptic fire-blazing sun.
Sense the liquid inside your mouth. Under your tongue. Sliding down your throat.

This This This This

This score for a dance is a performance.

Consider performance here as a means for gently nudging your surroundings with your full-bodied self.

Consider performance here as a means for listening to the many forces nudging your full-bodied self.

It's not so much a question of discipline as it is the discipline to question.

Tap stagger stutter. Open up space for this work to hover in states of unheroic, unresolved ambiguity.

There are two virtual facades gently holding this work together in time and space. These facades come into existence each time you enter the formations of jazz dancing... or a confabulation of the jazz dancing you don't remember, the jazz dancing you never did...

'We have no edges', said the dance.

If you stand in the corner closest to the door, you may sense a diagonal aspiration tilting towards a persistent weirdness that beams brightly just beyond the solid purple form.

A momentary pelvic drama.

And over there, to your left, is the puddle of fabric from Pam's last performance.

Blimsie. Brian. The ghost looms broadly.

And if you plummet your attention downwards, underneath this floor, you might hear the reverberations of the last devotional tapping.

An underground art movement, performed by feminist angels.

Your body is in a perpetual process of tonal shifting.

You realise that every artwork here negotiates walls and permeability.

A sleeping lioness in five directions. Potentialities abound.

Consider the fallen particles of dusk on the floor as your audience.

Shift your weight effortlessly from foot to foot. Pouring the contents of your interior self into each foot. Filling up the legs with sensations and feelings. Rocking between the past, present and future. The rhythm of erotic care.

Greyness slowly blurs the dominant gaze, until eventually it is blinded and discarded. We embody an androgynous, tactile exchange. The spectacle's spotlight is diffused. We gather under a common light. We gather in the same room. We collectively attend to the work.

We synthesise. We empathise.

Pause as the space performs around you.

Amidst this greyness, we mobilise a social workspace.

We work with the unusual social circumstances in which we watch one another for elongated arms of time. It is a permissive and experimental space for exploring alternative modes of being together.

And inside the work is another work: the work of the work.

And inside the inside is another inside: the inside of the inside.

It is the ungraspable in action, whispers M quietly into the back of your neck. The sounds drift through your skull and work their way into the grey matter of your brain.

We slide into printed breath slopes. The words soften with the moisture inside your brain. They splay like sleeping fingers.

Letters drift away from each other. Words fall open.

'It is the ungraspable in action', is a quote from Maurice Blanchot's, *The Space of Literature* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).

Eugene Yiu Nam Cheung ON LOSS

Every generation conjures aphorisms that assuage and mask the melancholy of departure — 'write me from time to time,' 'we're looking at the same moon in the night sky,' 'I'll see you in another life' — and perhaps one so sharply entrenched in our milieu is that 'we have the internet, so you're never too far away.' It's a phrase of comfort that masks and betrays a fundamental truth that the body cannot be substituted. Physical presence, or rather, direct contact, is something that carries with it an enigma that cannot be replaced. One can find comfort in the scent of another on shirts left behind, hair splayed in errant corners of white tiled bathrooms, or in love bites on flesh itself, but like all things these fade and disappear. And while it is true that the body too is meandering towards dust, there is nothing quite like sharing this ride with the actual corpus. The internet, and more specifically, video chats, render the body and its auratic pull into something that is 'better than nothing' — a mere reminder of presence once there but now dissipated. In other words, much like the grooves left in clay before firing to become ceramic, the nature of that touch is transformed into something harder and less organic. If it is the internet that we lean on as a crutch to intimacy then we are doomed. The conceit affixed to this twenty-first century maxim makes invisible our fundamental desire for physicality. Yet we willingly acquiesce to the sentiment anyway — because it's much better to indulge a compromise that is ultimately unsatisfying, than to let go completely so as to confront the true nature of things: that no matter how altruistic we become, the physics of our condition dictate that things will leave us, wither and invariably perish.

I recently moved overseas, and in the week following my departure I called home twice a day. It was during one of these calls — in an otherwise unremarkable hour — that the temporal fissure between here and there opened, becoming so pronounced I found myself profoundly disembodied for the first time. As I stood there poaching chicken for lunch, I said goodnight to a friend on FaceTime just as a flock of pigeons broke through a canopy of dry, brown leaves, swirled their way upwards towards my apartment and passed by my window with such force that they blew a wildly foul stench into my face — the particles of which also conceivably made their way into my soup. I was

poised to perform indignation but by then my screen had turned black and my audience had vanished. Where another's face had been a beat before, I was instead caught staring into the spotlight of my own façade. Here, the moment became elliptical. In having no-one to regale my umbrage to, I was left not only to stew in introspection but to also abandon the feeling just as quickly. It was as though the disconnection between myself and the other was all too sudden, that in realising there was no longer a bodily presence watching — or at least the mirage of it — I was forced to live through and resolve a feeling prematurely, faster than if my companion had remained online, rationalising with me the incident which had just transpired. A part of me believes that this fragment of unresolved indignation still circles inside of me waiting to be released, frozen in anticipation of being thawed by the affirmative presence of another and their act of bearing witness.

And yet, as I stood there awed and disgusted, I also began to imagine the world in which my friend's face disappeared into. What was she dreaming about? Was it the promise of summer and salt evaporating from the sea that soaks the mise-en-scène of her dreamscapes? Or, was it much like me, that she too was consumed in a task equally as banal and circuitous in this netherworld, wading through hours of unremarked darkness before her act reached completion and could be devoured? Perhaps, she too was watching cock flesh fall from bones into oily broth that begs to be skimmed: fat and pigeon dust floating onto the surface of a soup so filled with the promise of sustenance that it can only be seen as artefact. Like this layer of fat, I imagined her dreams to effuse a gelatinous and alien sheen; unable to be fully pinpointed and removed, ever-present in the master-stock as a necessary ingredient for flavouring something that only she knew and I dared only guess thousands of miles away through the anaemic blackness of a screen.

I have stopped calling home as much because perhaps I am learning to let go of what I left behind. Loss and sentimentality appear inescapable, but in the process of adapting to new ways of living we ought to reflect and derive meaning in our lives from something else, something more forward looking. That is to say, where loss and sentimentality buckle at the knees perspective rears its head — presenting us with a chance to look up and see into the proverbial titan's eyes. In other words, I have forced myself to acknowledge the complex emotions attached to participating in digital platforms so obsessed with being pallbearers of my past. The bodies I double-tap are persons I am used to holding. Every conversation now feels formulaic and impersonal. Each scroll and swipe feels akin to mourning: I have lost their breath down my back, stubble against my shoulder. I have lost their tenderness. Like an aside in a tragedy I am but a Horatio that dies too early, and in my hands I hold something that never fails to remind me that all we can do now is wait for the inevitable course of things: nothing more, nothing less.

Brooke Stamp

*
substance

I come to working in gallery spaces in around 2011 by way of my friendship with Agatha Gothe-Snape, a friendship enkindled by a shared trust in the bodily and the apparitional, and the abiding intermingling of both. Our conversation at this time is neither determined by a black box, a white cube or a grey-zone, but a fervid orbit where our disciplinary DNA dissolves under the iridescence of instinct, to re-synthesise her exhibition *between* art and dance.

It's through working with Agatha that I first begin to notice in my dance a singular temporal condition I can at once indwell and produce with lucid agency. I can describe it as a real-time *surfing* of sensation and forces, concept and context. The cool glossy concrete floor and the gently exacting white walls of the Tin Sheds Gallery are the container and conductor for *affect* circulating between mine and other bodies *attending*. Agatha's beautiful painted image of blue and yellow arcs and lines peppered with subtle hand-written cues and clues to me — 'LA 2008' — 'NY 2005', is the substance of my psycho-physical production. In 2014, the curator Anneke Jaspers observes from an image taken of this work: 'One arm stretches sideways; the other is thrust directly forward, hand upturned and palm facing outward, as though Stamp is refuting the act of her photographic capture. Amplifying the intensity of this exchange between dancer and camera, an audience hovers in shadow behind her, deep within the gallery'.

Motivated by the broader context of communion, the work becomes '*Three Ways to Enter and Exit*'.

*
branches

Outside on the dance-deck my body is alert and my eyes overstimulated. I'm three-dimensional pressing into a fourth. *I can choose* to see into and be moved by the overpowering density of the forest or I can close my eyes to receive

something of its localised texture — fragrances, animal sounds, rustling and breaking branches. One moves my body by volume and the other burrows into and out of my imagination. The air is pungent with the smell of Redwoods — damp, mossy and earthy, and the timber dance floor reciprocates a history of epic proportions under my feet.

The cadence of Anna Halprin's voice sounds unequivocally like her voice I know so well from Youtube. My attention hooks onto her modulations and inflections part matriarch part child, with acute familiarity. In person Anna is in every way younger than her 97 years, not nostalgic for a past but present in her accumulation of it. She teaches us enthusiastically as if imparting her knowledge for the first time, although her pedagogic legacy is the stuff of legend — *thickly-threaded* into the bodily milieu of the Judson Church experiment — Simone Forti, Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown. I've not witnessed Anna's work in a Museum or Gallery but I know its ethos intimately online. A most striking image in her catalogue of 'experiments and environment' *captures* a trail of blindfolded women in leotards engaging in a 'sensory walk'.

It's July 2017. I'm blindfolded and in a sensory walk led by Anna Halprin.

*
skin

Psycho-kinetic characters built from the embodied lineages and pedagogic leanings of my peer network pass across my skin, oceans and time-zones. Frequently. By the immediacy of in-studio togetherness, by witness or by facetime *I'm haunted* by a relational flow with dance and performance as a practice of ecology-making. We make language and vocabularies that parallel our sentience, but our sentience destabilizes desire for any one common thread. Images too, network our network.

Mickey Mahar, arguably one of the most photographed and digitally disseminated dance-artists in recent history has looped into my body, through a process with the choreographer Adam Linder. Something of Mickey's humanness, resolute gaze, essential expressivity and corporeal tonality I've known already prior to meeting, via his avatar, circulating in his contributions to the works of Anne Imhof, Maria Hassabi and Miguel Gutierrez. My virtual myth-making coalesces with Mickey's material proximity, and something of his authorial corpus animates my body.

Sarah Michelson, who might be one of my favourite artists, doesn't seem to be online.

ARTIST STATEMENTS

Ivey Wawn
Surfacing v.2, 2019
video, rope, mirror, 00:09:00

The commodity form obscures the social relations that bring it into being. Dance resists this fetishisation in its ephemerality, and in the way that it reveals the history of the bodies and the movements that make it up. Dance is explicitly social and for this reason it is also intensely political. A mirror on the other hand proposes a new set of social relations by offering the appearance of negating itself through becoming a reflection.

Surfacing is a series of works located between these ideas. The first version occurred in the context of Asad Raza's *Absorption*, for Kaldor Public Art Project # 34 in May 2019.

With thanks to Ellen Davies, Mark Mailler, Verity Mackey, Daniel Jenatsch and Anador Walsh.

ie.—bs
if everything is porn then let your ears weep softly, 2019
aluminium, glycerine, dimensions variable

(that is).

ie. unlearning
ie. the identification of your frictions and positioning ourselves to smooth them
ie. going fishing for the porn of things
ie. making things great again
ie. wondering again, how often the againness of activity will again

ie. the culmination of faggot fragments, bag of dicks bag of clits, in a tumble dryer filled with asphalt & molasses
ie. knowing you might live long enough, for your sinus to clear of all the substance you shoveled up into it – and smell the roses

ie. multiplying rapidly in the hopes to... go missing? Anyway, someone went missing in the ocean. He was an artist? You know his name can't you tell me? isn't that frustrating when you assume someone should fucking know something and they don't? He liked the slant, and to fall 'all is falling.' falling!falling!falling! rolling, it's body is practicing being dead. slipping nightly, it thinks eileen said also, we practice death daily here it is, wooshing & cloud. it knows this is confusing to you and it will try to make things clearer at some point. can you spare a finger or nail bed to help? if everything is porn, then let your ears weep softly.

ie. your brain playing ketamine ping pong
ie. people who don't pick their feet up when they walk... are trash. honestly.
ie. i just streamed that – a sitcom, or is it a romcom?
ie. becoming vengefully active before you became sexually active
ie. getting emotionally wrecked by a fictional character
ie. the understanding that you need a truth to hold on to
ie. wondering what you can boof? the inherent answer is anything you put your mind to, ref.
person eating cereal out of someone's dilated anus
ie. being gay

ie. getting really dark
 ie. knowing none of your drawers have neatly folded ham in them anymore.
 ie. everyone wants something that's theirs
 ie. not dating someone for love, but dating them for art
 ie. total bs
 ie. basic bitches wearing the same silhouette
 ie. body expelling body, expelling body... expelling body — producing — body
 ie. your shrill squeak
 ie. soft pink inward revolution
 Ie. selling off parts of you
 ie. hard polish & wet paint
 ie. a coated tongue
 ie. mass
 ie. you

Jess Gall, Arini Byng and Rebecca Jensen *Sinkhole I – VII*, 2018
 single-channel high definition digital video, 1:18:02, loop

Jess Gall, Arini Byng and Rebecca Jensen *Sinkhole VII*, 2018
 single-channel high definition video, 00:26:46, loop

Sinkhole deals with improvised scenarios and the agency of it's performing body through responding from a text-based score. Each performance depends on its participants and differently stretches durational and spatial thresholds. When participants work as a collaborative system, their differences often result in structural collapse. Each time this happens, new choreography expands on cyclical loops.

Sinkhole offers a site for meaningful collaboration: makers and collaborators share agency via processes and skills, investigating, constructing and dismantling hierarchy. Different modes of thinking, occurring through doing, feed into the sinkhole as its collective of disparate but connected selves work together, navigating uncertainty and confusion like cells exploring a body.

Angela Goh, with Eugene Choi, Ellen Davies, Verity Mackey, Ivey Wawn
Scum Ballet, 2017
 documentation video edit, edit by Angela Goh, 00:10:13

Scum Ballet is a patchwork of power, desire, violence and tenderness. The female body has always been sympathetic to secrets, magic, transformation and cruelty, and gatherings of females have always produced fear and mystery, or the fear of mystery. *Scum Ballet* is a choreography for five dancers. More than a lone wolf, but not quite a mass, five is a gang, and gangs make their own rules.

Scum Ballet slows down, but with an accelerationist attitude, not in order to produce new futures, but instead to assemble a multiplicity of fantasies. In *Scum Ballet*, fantasy is the weapon, the body is the ammunition, and the target is forever transforming. The beauty and the horror is that the danger is always moving, reforming, and shapeshifting, like an ethereal being, unable to be named but definitely real enough to be felt. A bit foggy, like a forest glade, a half asleep dreamstate, or maybe a mirage.

Continually forming and unforming notions of control, *Scum Ballet* uses seduction as a means for transportation, not between places or times, but between moods and sensations – more difficult to define, but much easier to get lost in, not somewhere to settle, but something which is constantly unsettling. We know what you did last summer, but last summer could be any summer because when knowledge is embodied it isn't a matter of timing, but of feeling.

Scum Ballet was commissioned by Campbelltown Arts Centre as a live performance. This documentation edit is made for the exhibition *Connecting in the grey zone*.

Exhibition Documentation INSTALLATION VIEWS

Photography by Nicholas Archer, unless otherwise stipulated.



Connecting in the grey zone, installation view, gallery one.



Ivey Wawn, *Surfacing v.2*, 2019, video, rope, mirror, 00:09:00.



ie.—bs, *if everything is porn then let your ears weep softly*, 2019, aluminium, glycerine, dimensions variable.



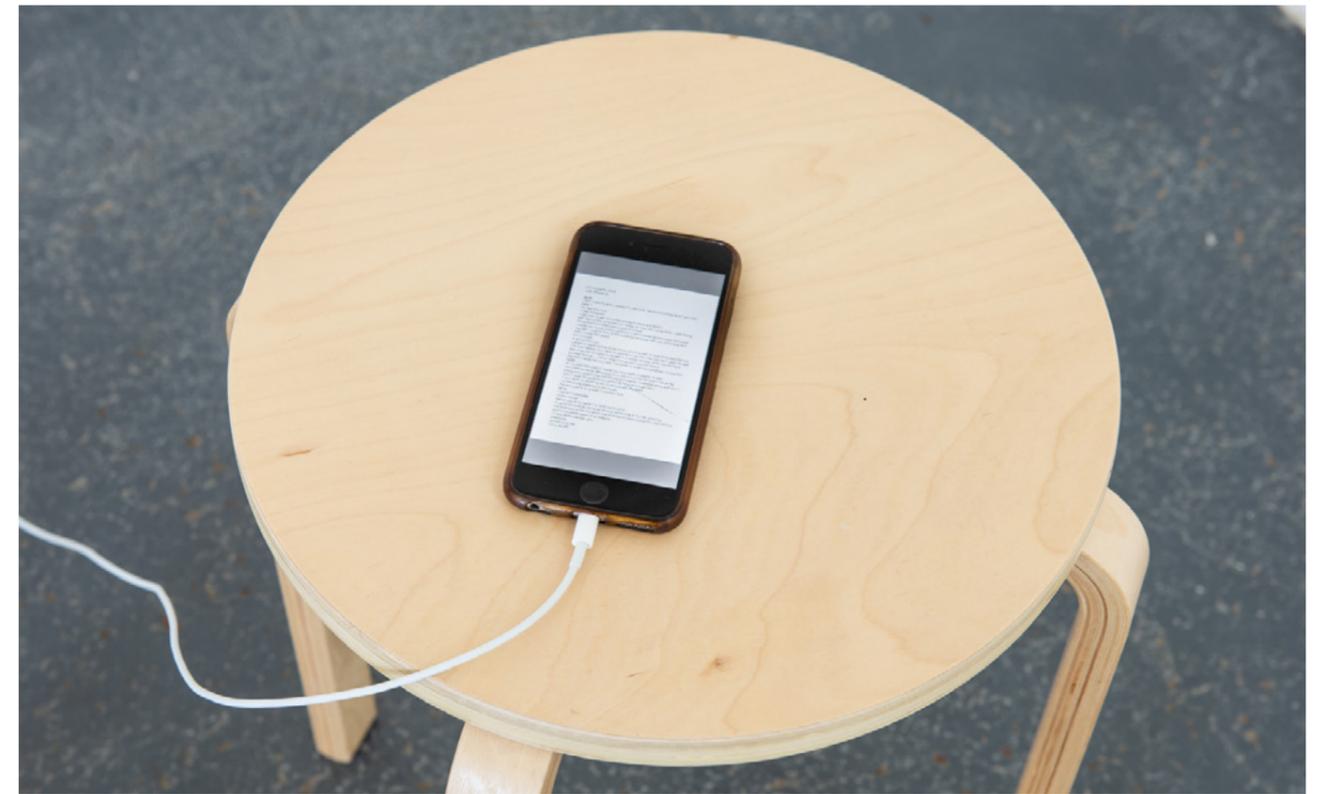
Ivey Wawn, *Surfacing v.2* (detail), 2019, video, rope, mirror, 00:09:00.



ie.—bs, *if everything is porn then let your ears weep softly* (detail), 2019, aluminium, glycerine, dimensions variable.



Connecting in the grey zone, installation view, gallery one.



Eugene Choi, *just thoughts* (detail), 2019, pdf, iPhone 6s.



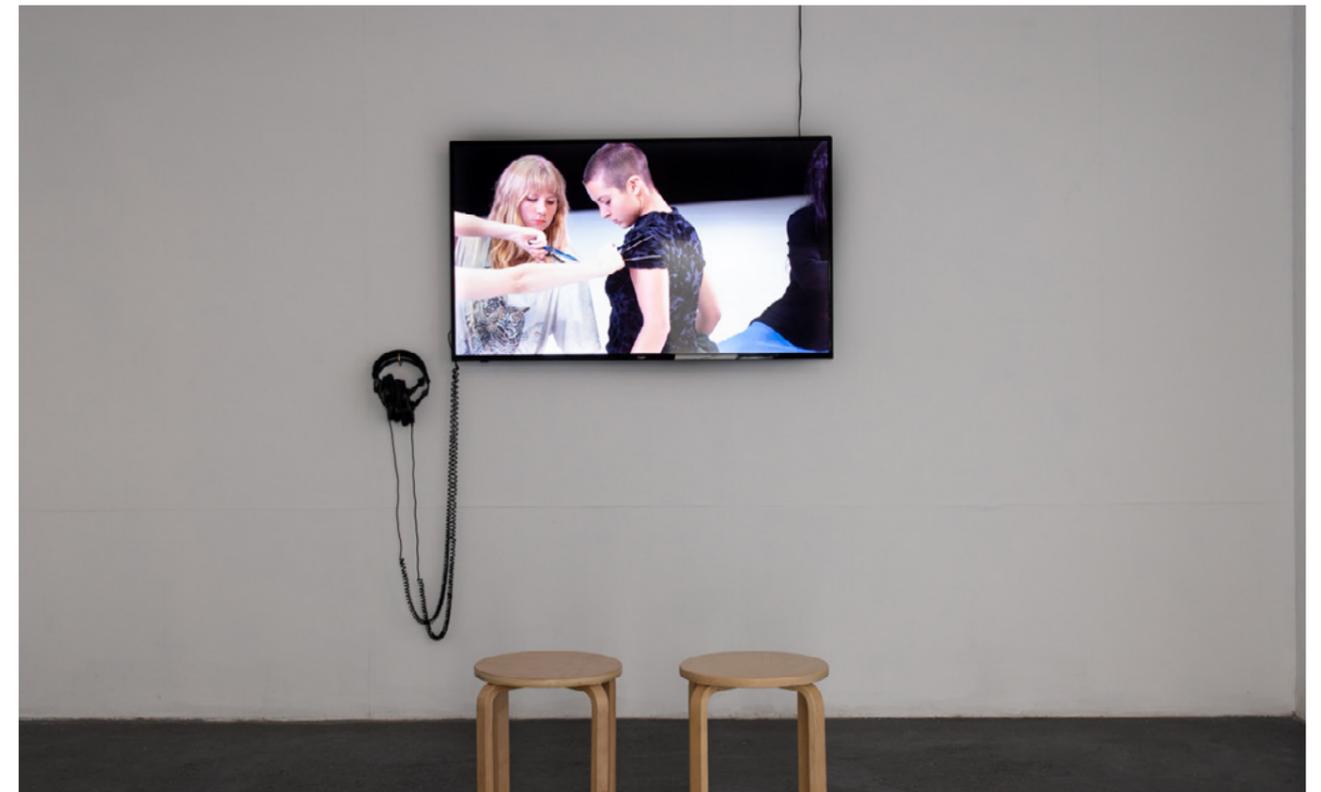
Eugene Choi, *just thoughts*, 2019, pdf, iPhone 6s.



Jess Gall, Arini Byng and Rebecca Jensen, *Sinkhole I – VII*, 2018, single-channel high definition digital video, 1:18:02, loop.



Jess Gall, Arini Byng and Rebecca Jensen, *Sinkhole VII* (detail), 2018, single-channel high definition video, 00:26:46, loop.



Angela Goh, with Eugene Choi, Ellen Davies, Verity Mackey, Ivey Wawn, *Scum Ballet*, 2017, documentation video edit, edit by Angela Goh, 00:10:13.



Connecting in the grey zone, installation view, gallery two.



Angela Goh, with Eugene Choi, Ellen Davies, Verity Mackey, Ivey Wawn, *Scum Ballet* (still), 2017, documentation video edit, edit by Angela Goh, 00:10:13.



Angela Goh, with Eugene Choi, Ellen Davies, Verity Mackey, Ivey Wawn, *Scum Ballet* (still), 2017, documentation video edit, edit by Angela Goh, 00:10:13.



Isabella Hone-Saunders, *dynamic values, an effective use of peripheral space*, 2019, single channel video, 00:07:51, mdf sheet, chromed steel, satin ribbon, Royal Academy of Dance Logo, grab rail, documentation of 'number six performs Gallop' live performance. Music: P. Tchaikovsky – *Pas de Deux 'The Nutcracker'*, Antonio Vivaldi – *Cantate Cessate, Mai Cessate – Ah, h'infelice sempre*, and Mac Quayle – *Adagio in G Minor*.



Connecting in the grey zone, installation view, gallery two.





(Above and opposite bottom) Isabella Hone-Saunders, *dynamic values, an effective use of peripheral space* (detail), 2019, single channel video, 00:07:51, mdf sheet, chromed steel, satin ribbon, Royal Academy of Dance Logo, grab rail, documentation of 'number six performs Gallop' live performance.
 Music: P. Tchaikovsky – *Pas de Deux 'The Nutcracker'*, Antonio Vivaldi – *Cantate Cessate, Mai Cessate – Ah, h'infelice sempre*, and Mac Quayle – *Adagio in G Minor*.

Exhibition Documentation OPENING PERFORMANCES

Photography by Anador Walsh, unless otherwise stipulated.





(Opposite & above) Eugene Choi with Chi Tran, *just thoughts*, 2019. Photo: Talia Caroll.



(Above) Isabella Hone-Saunders and Jess Gall, *number six performs Gallop*, 2019.



(Above) Isabella Hone-Saunders and Jess Gall, *number six performs Gallop*, 2019.



(Above) Ivey Wawn and Ellen Davies, *Surfacing v.2*, 2019.



(This spread) Ivey Wawn and Ellen Davies, *Surfacing v.2*, 2019.

Exhibition Documentation PUBLIC PROGRAM: GREY ZONES

Photography by Roberta Govoni, unless otherwise stipulated.



Eugene Choi with Arben Dzika, *just thoughts*, 2019. Photo: Martina Copley.



Eugene Choi with Arben Dzika, *just thoughts*, 2019. Photo: Anador Walsh.



Ivey Wawn, *Spectral Orange*, 2019.





(Opposite & above) Ivey Wawn, *Spectral Orange*, 2019.



(This spread and next) *Grey Zones*, round table discussion. Arini Byng, Jess Gall and Rebecca Jensen, Amelia Wallin and Pip Wallis, moderated by Anador Walsh.



Audience watches Ivey Wawn perform *Spectral Orange*, 2019.







Grey Zones, round table discussion. Arini Byng, Jess Gall and Rebecca Jensen, Amelia Wallin and Pip Wallis, moderated by Anador Walsh.

Public Program

GREY ZONES: THURSDAY

12 DECEMBER, 2019

Eugene Choi with Arben Dzika, *just thoughts*, 2019.

Eugene Choi is a performance-based artist, who 'seeks comfort through intimate gestures, relying on the live response of her physical and emotional body'. In addition to her own practice, which encompasses sculpture, performance, installation and video, Choi regularly performs in the dance and performance work of others. *just thoughts*, 2019, is a new work composed of a pdf document made from all of the tweets Choi made between 2014 and the present, during periods of performance development, rehearsal and performance. Presented on the same iPhone 6 that the majority of these tweets were written, *just thoughts*, 2019, is a confessional stream of consciousness, offered up to the twitterverse in an act of release. Throughout the three weeks of *Connecting in the grey zone's* run, *just thoughts*, 2019, sat plugged into a wall in BLINDSIDE's gallery one, charging, and allowed visitors to pick up Choi's old iPhone and interlope on her unfiltered thoughts: 'SCUM is my life', 'i love SCUM', 'ivey wawn ivey wawn, my favourite vocal warm up', 'Capital letters in tweets signify spiral', 'I am suddenly making dance work - is this my pre-teen dream coming truuuuu?????' At *Connecting in the grey zone's* opening and during the exhibition's public program *Grey zones*, *just thoughts*, 2019, was performed by Chi Tran and Arben Dzika respectively. Tran and Dzika read Choi's tweets without theatre or personal intonation, but instead as a monologue, mirroring Choi's

own ongoing dialogue with the world through social media, and highlighting the connection/disconnection dichotomy implicit therein.

Ivey Wawn, *Spectral: Orange*, 2019.

The meeting that occurs between a body, a choreography and a moment in time gives birth to a dance that can only be of that moment; with genealogy made up of the body, the circumstances and the instruction contained within the choreography.

Using geometry as a tool to simplify choreographies, and colour as a material for filling the shapes, *Spectral* proposes a method for producing dances that embraces all that has been as material for understanding how we might be with now, and construct a version of what we might like for the future.

By engaging in a kind of violent mass-production of choreographic material, through appropriation, association and adaptation, *Spectral* looks to critique linear notions of progress that run parallel to industrial, and post-industrial capitalism.

*As part of *Spectral: Orange*, Ivey Wawn performed an excerpt from Joan Jonas' *song delay*, 1973.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

ANADOR WALSH: Hi, I'm Anador Walsh (A), the curator of *Connecting in the grey zone*. Welcome to this evening's round table discussion. As part of our panel this evening we have two curators with an avid professional interest in performance: Amelia Wallin (AW), the Director of Westspace, and Pip Wallis (PW), Curator, Contemporary Art at the NGV, as well as Jess Gall (JG), Arini Byng (AB) and Rebecca Jensen (RJ), the three artists behind *Sinkhole*, which features twice in this exhibition.

Connecting in the grey zone draws its title from a term coined by art historian Claire Bishop. In a 2018 article in *The Drama Review*, Bishop discusses the rise in prominence of the dance exhibition, which she describes as constituting a new grey zone, where experimental theatre's 'black box' and the gallery's 'white cube', converge. Central to Bishop's thinking is the integral role that smartphones (and social media) play in contemporary spectatorship.

At the beginning, when I initially pitched this exhibition to the involved writers and artists, I had been reading a lot of Baudelaire, and was thinking a lot about the way that late capitalism endeavours to isolate us by focusing our attention onto screens, but also musing on how I personally had never felt more connected to art, than I did to the performance work I was seeing online.

In the making of this exhibition, I have used Bishop's 'grey zone' as a starting point, from which to interrogate performance in the gallery and the ubiquity of digital technology in this context. Within this curatorial scope, all of the artists and works I selected or commissioned for this exhibition, I first encountered and connected with via social media and digital technology. And it is there that I started to notice the networks implicit in this space, which this exhibition reflects, for example Ivey Wawn's work behind you, also sits parallel to Angela Goh's *Scum Ballet*, in which Ivey performs. Jess (Gall) is present in multiple works and *Sinkhole* is exhibited in both gallery spaces.

From this place of interconnectedness, I wanted to focus, in this conversation, on *Sinkhole*.

To give you all a bit of background on this work, I have pulled some information from MPavilion, where *Sinkhole's* next iteration will

take place on Saturday 18 January 2020: '*Sinkhole* explores improvisation and its performers' agency as they respond to a text-based score, which is enacted by a group of volunteers. Jes, Arini and Rebecca invite all ages, skill-levels and capabilities to take part. The process begins with a workshop — a connective and critical discussion that disrupts homogenised ways of doing. For volunteers, there is no right or wrong way to perform the score'.

To kick things off, Jes, Arini and Bec, I was wondering if you could speak to the origins of *Sinkhole*, how it originally came to be, and how it is formed through the workshopping process?

REBECCA JENSEN: *Sinkhole* is a really amorphous thing and it's had eight iterations so far, which includes the workshop which is filmed and then the performance, which is public, the workshop is private. *Sinkhole* emerged out of the three of us wanting to work together in some capacity, and it often feels like the space between us is an actual sinkhole, and maybe the sinkhole is getting deeper and that's a good thing, or as we keep doing it, it gets shallower, I don't know, I can't really tell. There's many facets, where to start? The score itself is ever changing and evolving through it being spoken and enacted, then any changes that happen during the moment of it being transcribed, are then added to the next score, sort of like an accumulative thing. Some people have done all eight and others have done none, others just show up for the performance. Some people have more knowledge than others when performing the score, whereas some people have none. We can say that there's no right or wrong way to enact a score, however that's deeply problematic, because within a group there's always a certain mode, and a decided right and wrong. Which is a really interesting part of it.

JESS GALL: I'll touch from there.

Sinkhole isn't necessarily about sinkholes, but a sinkhole is an indeterminately edged space and it's infinite in depth, and what's right or wrong isn't predetermined either. But then I think, overtime, there begins a sense of how something gets done, and I think that it's still evolving, and I think it's important to talk about it as a process, not a work, and also removing ourselves from that process as much as possible. Which I think is a really difficult thing to do as well, because there's some sort of scaffolding or structure involved, but then also

you're thinking about how to make this enjoyable and how to make this something that isn't just for you. When working collaboratively, I think that's important, knowing where you stand within the work.

A: Do you think that the workshopping helps with that? With making sure that the voices of everyone who is participating become part of the process?

RJ: Yes, I think in ways yes, and maybe in future iterations there will be more of that. But I think it's more through choices and the way that people choose to respond to verbal instructions, that their voices are heard, rather than us having a verbal conversation. It's about allowing space for contribution.

A: Do you find that because *Sinkhole* is such a malleable process, that it fits easily within multiple curatorial contexts? We spoke early on in the process of working together, about *Sinkhole* at Liquid Architecture's *Why Listen to Plants?* for example.

RJ: Yeah in many ways it's a very responsive work, to the conditions of being an artist. The time we've had to get it together, everyone's a volunteer, no one's paid, sometimes there's money in it, but that often goes towards materials.

JG: And lunch is a very important part of that.

RJ: Yeah, it's a very amorphous work. It could happen here, right now.

A: Early on in our conversations, Jess mentioned that they see *Sinkhole* as a kind of hive mind. Is this something that's intrinsic to the work, and do you think that this allows participants to move beyond their physical boundaries?

RJ: I think the idea of the hive mind speaks to the consensus that happens to the group, when you give instruction, people look around, there's a decision made and then there's a way.

ARINI BYNG: They also don't have very long to decide as well. The way the workshop happens is we do a run through and then we film it and that's it. Then they come on the day, and it happens live. No one's given the score and no one's learning it.

JG: There's also the interpretation, which is the initial, more intimate experience that we have with the group, then there's the performed

version, and that's more when the hive mind comes into play. You notice there's a behaviour or sense that everyone has, that we have to get through this together. Then there forms ways of communicating without actually communicating. Within that, you can kind of do whatever you want, there are infinite possibilities and that's scary and overwhelming at times.

RJ: A point to add there, is that the workshop is heavily directed, people are taken through something, whereas the performance happens from memory, and is a re-enactment without us cuing. So there is a lot more freedom to navigate that structure.

AW: What's your involvement in the final performance?

RJ: It varies.

PIP WALLIS: So you invite people to participate and then they come and then there's a performance?

RJ: They come for three hours and we go through a score and they enact it as they like, we do a warm up as well, that's filmed, and it becomes a reminder of that. People are then invited to come and watch the performance.

PW: On the same day?

RJ: No, maybe a few days later. The same people who did the workshop, enact their memory of the score, and can refer to the paper score.

AB: The film of the rehearsal is always present as well, during the performance, so people can always refer to that.

AMELIA WALLIN: And can the audience see this film?

AB, JG, RJ: [*Together*] Yes.

AW: Pip you've seen an iteration of *Sinkhole*...

PW: I've seen it twice — once at what used to be Irene Rose and is now TCB, and at RMIT Design Hub as part of *Why Listen to Plants?*

A: Having been an audience member, how do you see what we've been discussing as translating?

PW: The first instance is interpreting what you're looking at, ascertaining what's going on here, who's a trained body, who's an untrained body, what's the relationship between the screen and the performance, it seems to have a relationship, but it's not clear, how much of this is choreographed,

how much is directed? There's a whole journey of interpretation that you go through trying to understand how *Sinkhole* is made.

A: Is that, the hearing how people have interpreted *Sinkhole* and getting feedback, a part of the process?

RJ: Of course, but I actually find it terrifying that people are experiencing it that way from an audience perspective, because, being a process, it's always been something we can't quite grasp. I guess in many ways, it's been quite intuitive, which is a way, I don't usually work.

JG: I think it's important to think about how this all was established. It begun at Irene Rose, where Arini and I shared a studio and we had a space, and it was initially a navigation process of we're working on this thing together and we wanted to work with Bec as well and we wanted to bleed over these areas of dance and the gallery. Which now, when I think on it, everything looks good in the gallery. Thinking about a group of peers and friends, and a network through social media and connecting, we reached out and asked people to come and meet and try something, let's attempt to feel and extend.

A: I want to go back to something you just touched on Jess, dance in the gallery, and throw it over to you Amelia, as someone who has a lot of experience working with performance. I feel like we are seeing a huge renaissance of dance and performance in the gallery, and I was wondering how you would account for that and if you had any thoughts on this?

AW: I'm definitely no expert, but thanks for asking such a good question. I think, there's many things going on at the moment, we are seeing lots of performance in the gallery. One there's a kind of general collapse of disciplines into each other, and two, I think it's driven by social media, and that's the more cynical answer. That's why we're seeing galleries like MoMa staging big, spectacular performances, because there's content there and selfie opportunities and things like that. I think, even though that's a really cynical position, something really interesting is emerging out of that, and I personally am really interested in seeing what happens when performance rubs up against objects in the gallery. Some of the inherent problems come from institutions trying to bring performance into

museums without the expertise of working with performers, without knowing things like lunch for instance, or the need for sprung floors for dancers, and treating performers like another object, rather than actual people, who need vary material things in order to do their work. So I think that can be a flaw of it, and there's this really quick turn around, which Ivey touched on before, and it's like 'okay so we're going to get you in next week, we'll get you to jump in here and do a thing'. I think that's problematic, but I think people are getting smarter.

Ivey Wawn: If I can just jump in here, I guess that's why I made that project (*Spectral*), because I love that people want me to do things and I want to be able to do things that speak to the conditions of things, but of course I'm not going to do things, I love art. Whilst it is problematic, it's also a wonderful time to be a dancer, because I think dance is cool, and now everyone else does too.

AW: I love that your response to that was, 'hey, you're going to ask me to do things at short notice, well there's a machine that I have developed that's going to help me respond to that and I'm going to set a score and a structure that allows me infinite potential'. I just think it's such a wonderful response to the proliferation of dance and the demands on dancers and performers.

A: Ivey and I also touched on that in the lead up to the show, that idea of not wanting the performances she presented to be hugely laborious and take six months to prepare, when I couldn't ensure, due to budgetary restraints, that Ivey would be remunerated or cared for in a way that is appropriate to a project of that scope. I think it's so important that Ivey has something that she can go 'yeah, I can do this, this isn't overly strenuous for me, but is still a part of my practice, and it fits within this space'. Leading on from that, I'd like to bring us back to that point of digital spectatorship. By inviting performance into the gallery, are we inviting it for social media, or are we inviting it into the gallery because we're genuinely interested in performance? As a collective, do we feel social media adds or subtracts from performance?

RJ: One of my favourite things about the theatre is that you have to turn your phone off. I know that's really basic, but it's rare.

A: I work at the moment, doing marketing for a youth orchestra, and one thing I've noticed is

that orchestral mums cannot stand people on their iPhones, which I find really interesting, because my instinctual reaction, coming from a visual arts perspective, is to whip my phone out and document everything. Is that a unanimous opinion?

AW: I'm more interested in documentation from an artist's perspective. I'm really taken, for example, with this documentation of *Sinkhole* from above. It's a really deliberate decision, which is so different that the experience of an audience member, and for me far more interesting than someone's record of it. What was the thinking involved in that decision?

JG: There was just heaps of tech available at Design Hub. I think documentation and social media are very different, but that they work hand in hand.

A: What're the differences for you?

JG: The go pro documentation of *Sinkhole*, as someone who's been in the sinkhole, feels really like a peripheral experience, of someone looking in, whereas the edited video of *Sinkhole* in gallery one, is cut together and very decisive in where it focuses in and out. Everyone approaches social media differently, but people can still focus in or crop an image to showcase a specific detail that could be overlooked, then framing that and posting that and making it visible. I think social media is really capable of doing this in a broader sense as well.

A: Do you think that social media has a tendency to reframe work as well?

JG: Maybe. It's more individualistic when it's being displayed on someone else's Instagram, with their branding, it changes the language of the work to suit them. Maybe that's a beautiful thing though?

A: On the flip side of that sometimes there are delimitations put on the use of social media in a performance context. I don't remember for example, seeing a lot of Simone Forti's *Huddle* at the NGV on Instagram. Pip, were people able to capture that work on their phones?

PW: Yeah!

A: On really? I totally missed that. I guess what I'm trying to get at is the way that some institutions or artists put restrictions on filming, and to ask whether we think that's a perspective we all endorse?

PW: It's really interesting in the case of

Sinkhole because you get to hear people's thoughts on the video of the work, which is filmed from within the work, so you're already participating already in the screening of it.

GEORGIA HUTCHINSON: For this iteration of *Sinkhole*, as I remember, you were filming as a live stream.

AB: Oh yeah, we were too.

GH: So there was the display of the rehearsals as well as a live, action feed.

AB: Every single performance rehearsal, I always film in the same way, up close, kind of like I am a part of the work as well. Which I think you can see.

A: I've run through my questions really quickly, so my last one is about the link that is constantly drawn in academia between dance and digital technology, and whether or not we think digital technology accounts for the recent popularity of dance in the gallery, or if, this is more about the recognition of the history and lineage of performance and dance and showcasing and respecting that?

PW: The relationship between dance and the camera has always been really productive and also fraught. Even with those early camera tests, the beautiful movements they captured, that relationship began at the beginning of those technologies emerging. In the late 20th century the key moments of performance history have included the role of the camera, so in some sense they are intertwined. Now that anyone can capture the work, I think that relationship is accelerated. But I think the will to capture dance, comes down to its being a time based medium and the want to capture what's fleeting. I think there's definitely a conversation to be had about the experience economy and the role of dance in the museum, and the arts sector more broadly, and what that fulfils for institutions. Whether that's through the camera, or just as a visitor in the space seeking an experience.

A: I don't know if you can, but are you able to talk more to that? Are you talking about the way that performance is used to drive visitation?

PW: Yeah, I think even outside of the arts institution, just in life in general, given that we're living in late capitalism, we've moved past the object as the object of consumption, and now we want to consume experiences.

GH: It's also affecting collecting practices, performance being an increasingly large part of the contemporary art context, I think that's maybe part of the bigger picture of this conversation. With dance coming more into these spaces, we're seeing institutions like MoMa and Performa engage more with it, and so its becoming an economic question also. There's a desire to capture but also to acquire performance work, to own the rights to it.

PW: And the relationship between footage and that conversation is also really important. For the Simone Forti work, which we loaned from MoMa, it was a fascinating experience to present it at the NGV last year as part of the MoMa exhibition. It was the first choreographic work that MoMa collected into their collection, and so for them, they were still undergoing that huge process. They'd acquired all of Simone's dance constructions, and as part of that, they'd acquired a lot of footage of the works in different contexts, so that they would be able to present them in the future. So the documentation becomes a collected object, because of course you can't collect the performer, and becomes really crucial for the future of the work.

AW: That's really significant, because it's not just collecting documentation, you're collecting the social contract. I'm also really interested in the way that dance can be archived in bodies and passed down through embodied knowledge. I think the relationship of the archive to documentation underwrites all of this, even the fact that documenting dance is a learning tool for dancers and performers. That early relationship with the record is already there.

PW: It's interesting to see how museums, as they begin to collect performance and program the work, have to reorientate away from the object experience, towards how we look after a physical score. So for the Simone Forti work, I know that one of the MoMa curators actually learnt the works herself. She physically embodied the work as a way of preserving it. This raises the question of how do you reorientate a whole profession of conservation away from how to hold on to an object, to how to let an object be a human who is going to remember the work and perform it.

AW: That brings up the question of training, if you're a trained conservator, do you then need

dance training to carry on the knowledge of dance?

IW: I just finished up a project at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Kaldor Public Art Projects acquired one of Tino Sehgal's works in 2014 for *This is so Contemporary*, and as part of their 50th Anniversary show they wanted to re-present the work. But with Tino Sehgal's work there's no documentation, so because I'm within that network of people and know Tino, I was tasked with the transmission of the work onto new bodies. Interestingly then, the discussions I had with the conservators at the art gallery, because the Kaldor family had donated the work to the Art Gallery of New South Wales, revolved around how they were going to care for the art work, because there's nothing, no contracts, only bodies. Which was made difficult because in our meetings about the work, they weren't allowed to take minutes, which puts me in a funny position, as the person transmitting the work to others, and makes me kind of the caretaker.

ANNA VARENDORFF: There's a similarity between that and the way we digest oral histories, which are as legitimate as any other form of history but they are experienced through a conduit body, and the idea of processing and storing knowledge through digital media is actually as temporary as anything else, we can't maintain the resources to host these materials. So the body is a conduit, and even social media, I don't know why we talk about these as separate things, is completely entrenched in the way we digest information and communicate. All of this stuff is multiple temporalities linking in together, and that experience that you had (Ivey) is an amazing experience.

IW: It was really nice!

RJ: How open is Tino to the work evolving because of your memory?

IW: You're called an interpreter, and the nature of the work is difficult to take hold of, but I asked so many questions and then was like 'alright we're going to do this'. But that's a really interesting question — I'm not sure how Tino feels about it.

PW: I think that's such a good point, we've got so much to learn in terms of these practices, and Athena from MoMa, when she was in Australia, was here to spend time in Indigenous communities and learn about that practice of art making as something that we can learn from. The technologies

exist and are transcendent, like the body learning.

IW: Yeah, that's what I was getting at before (with *Spectral*). When I talk about the machine, the concept is a technology or your body is a technology, it's not separate from your phone.

A: I totally get that, that's what interests me the most I think. I read early on in this project about André Lepecki's notions of the 'witness' and 'spectator' split. He describes the 'spectator' as requiring a factual understanding of the work as being the same for them as it is to the audience they are transmitting it to via their phone. By contrast, he says that the 'witness' observes the practice of fully engaging with what they're watching and then orally retelling or transmitting it, in a similar way to Ivey's learning Tino's work and then teaching it to others. That's what interests me, that murky territory, where these behaviours converge and diverge. I, personally find it really difficult, because I work in marketing, not to instinctually reach for my phone, but I also feel there's a great deal of power in the oral recounting and the physical reteaching too.

JG: How you choose to do that as well — like is there a way you should be doing it, or is it a process of tailoring to the audience that's learning it? How much do you remember of it?

IW: Are you asking me that question?

JG: I guess, but I'm also just throwing it out there.

IW: Of course. I mean the way that I care about people is different from how Tino cares about people, and the relationship I have with the person I'm transmitting the work to, is different from all of my other relationships. Which is the powerful thing about embodied work; there is history and social relations that cannot be separated from that body, that does that thing. So the power comes from this kind of resistance to the modification process. It is always a live body, always connected to its history and technology.

ZOË BASTIN: Also, I think there's that thing about when dance is collected, it's often trying to be made into an object. But then you have this thing where you learn a work or make a work, where it's often thought of like a score, like copying something that is preexisting and separate from the movement being made. You can teach a score and it will be the same to the dancers that are learning

it, but it's not about copying, it's about reanimation in whoever's body it is. The context of the work whenever it's reperformed will be different because bodies can't be the same, from body to body, or day to day. The understanding needs to be that dance work in collections can't be objects ever.

IW: I love dance, it's so cool.

A: I'm a bit conscious of time, so I might throw it out to the audience and see if there are any questions you have? No? Okay — I think we might wrap it up there. I'd like to thank all of our panellists: Amelia, Pip, Jes, Arini and Bec for their time, BLINDSIDE for hosting us this evening and for supporting this project, Mark Feary, for his mentorship throughout this whole process, and everyone here this evening for coming out. Thank you.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Arini Byng works with the affective qualities of materials, gestures and settings — undertaking exercises in image, movement and form to negotiate political scenes. Her work has been exhibited across Australia including Blak Dot Gallery, Watch This Space, Neon Parc project space, c3 Contemporary Art Space, Hobiennale, Bus Projects, Slopes, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, The Australian Centre For Contemporary Art, and The Centre for Contemporary Photography; selected works published by Perimeter Editions, *Higher Arc*, *Le Roy* and *Photofile*; and with work held in publication collections of V&A, MoMA, MOCA, Tate Modern and NLA. Arini is of Australian, African American and Native American ancestries and lives and works in Naarm (Melbourne) on the unceded sovereign land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation.

Jess Gall, based in Naarm, works across multiple platforms using improvisation as a method of enquiry. Their work seeks to rupture, fragment and re-learn processes and values by composing collective and intimate experiences. Jes completed their BFA with Honours at RMIT, and is currently a resident at Dancehouse for the Emerging Choreographers Program. They have shown at TCB, Bus Projects, C3 contemporary art space, Neon Parc project space and BLINDSIDE.

Rebecca Jensen is a Melbourne based, New Zealand born, dancer, choreographer, and teacher.

Rebecca's work collages narratives, symbolism and physicality's with an enduring interest in improvisational scores that examine social and ecological systems. Works include *Deep Sea Dances Dance Massive* 2017; *Explorer Kier* Choreographic Award finalist 2016; *Blue Illusion* VCA 2018, *Spawn* Venice Biennale College Dance 2018. As well as short works with Liquid Architecture, *Spring Art Fair 1883* 2016, *Lucy Guerin Inc* 2011. With Sarah Aiken, she has created *What Am I Supposed To Do? (WAISTD)* Art Centre Melbourne/Melbourne Fringe Take Over! 2019, *OVERWORLD* Next Wave Festival 2014/Dance Massive 2015 and *UNDERWORLD* Supercell Festival Brisbane/Northcote Town Hall 2017/ Melbourne Knowledge Week 2019 and ongoing participatory project *Deep Soulful Sweats* presented locally, interstate and internationally.

Eugene Choi (b. 1993) is a performance-based artist whose practice has evolved around the physicality of constructing internal and external structures working across sculpture, performance, installation and video. Often influenced by the body in movement, Choi seeks comfort through intimate gestures, relying on the live response of her physical and emotional body. A self-made system of geometry becomes integral between objects, bodies and space, attempting to achieve equilibrium.

Est. July 2017, IchikawaEdward is an open multi-disciplinary collaborative exchange. In its origins, *ie.* existed as a shared project primarily between artists Ichikawa Lee and Joshua Edward; having taken place in Naarm, (Melbourne). These artists studied alongside one another at the Victorian College of the Arts, following prior ventures of education in varying design practices.

Conceptually *ie.* grapples the realities of architectures and social infrastructures, digital landscapes as queer bodies, and the frictions of disability. These ideas are realised through mediums of installation, sculpture, performance, sound, digital media and creative writing.

Submitting to the flux — *ie.* matures and shifts — in environment and body.

The open nature of the collaboration has seen Artists Daniel Ward, Kirby Casilli, Marlia Stucci and now Brooke Smith, reinforce the investigative extensions of this practice.

Tech-Artist Brooke Smith joins *ie.* with an arsenal of technology-based arts processes developed through her educational and professional background in Design & Technology. She is currently completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Parsons, The New School.

ie.—bs takes place between Naarm, (Melbourne) and Lenapehoking, (New York).

Key accomplishments of *ie.* include Solo Show *iv. with a common theme of disappearance afoot* at SEVENTH Gallery (2018); Graduate Exhibition *not to hide our stench* at VCA (2018); Recipient of Daniel Dorral Sculpture Award (2018); Recipient of Tatana Mihulka Art Encouragement Award (2018); outdoor installations for PITCH Music & Arts Festival (2018 & 2019); Spoken Word for *Foreground* as a part of the M-Pavilion series (2019); Exhibition *v. their body swells and asked to be held* at C3Artspace (2019); exhibiting multiple installations as *ie.*— IchikawaStucciEdward for Art Biesenthal in Germany (2019).

Angela Goh is a Sydney based dancer and choreographer working with dance in theatres, galleries, and telepathetic spaces. Her work considers the body in relationship to commodity, materiality, technology, and feeling. She approaches choreography as a situation and a container in which not yet formed relations can grow, and with

them the possibility to access the world. Angela thinks of dance as a friend, as a condition with which to feel the world, as a bearer of knowledge, and as the point where everything starts and nothing ends. Her works have been presented widely in Australia and internationally, including SPRING Festival (NL), Baltic Circle Festival (FIN), PSI22/Performance Space New York (USA), Auto Italia South East (UK), Liveworks Festival (AUS), Artspace Sydney (AUS), Arnolfini (UK), Fusebox Festival (USA), Festival of Live Art (AUS), Perth Institute of Contemporary Art (AUS), Campbelltown Arts Centre (AUS), the Asia-Pacific Triennial of Performing Art (AUS), the Judson Church (USA), among others, and presented by Galerie (int) at La Biennale de la Danse (FR); Jan Mot Gallery (BE); Dansehallerne (DK); Menagerie de Verre (FR); Saal Biennial (EST) and Oslo Internasjonale Teater Festival (NO). Angela has been artist in residence at Tanzhaus Zurich (CH), Cite Internationale des Arts (FR), Critical Path (AUS), Arts House Melbourne (AUS), ADAM/The Kitchen (TWN), and received the danceWEB Europe Scholarship, the Create NSW Emerging Fellowship, and won Best Artist in the 2017 FBI Sydney Music Arts and Culture awards.

Isabella Hone-Saunders is currently practicing as a curator, arts worker and artist in Narrm (so-called Melbourne), on the unceded lands and water ways of the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) people of the Kulin nation.

Her curatorial practice is concerned with accessibility, representation and shared social responsibility, while examining with criticality, the inclusivity of public art spaces. She aims to interrogate modes and implement methodologies towards an ethical and activist informed curation.

Hone-Saunders' artistic practice most utilises movement, with the use of video as preferred medium, often centering her body as a focal figure. She aims to explore ideas of body idealisation, physicality, residual body-language, identity and embodied readings and representations of gender constructs.

In 2017 Bella Hone-Saunders completed her Masters of Art Curatorship at The University of Melbourne. In 2016 she completed a Graduate Diploma in Art History at The University of

Adelaide. From 2013-2015 she completed a Bachelor of Arts, with a Major in History and a double Minor in Art and Visual Culture and English from the University of Adelaide.

Ivey Wawn makes dance-based work for various contexts. Her artistic work and research centre on social relations and their historic specificities, with particular interest in relations of power, control and consent in the organisation of labour. She is committed to dance as a potential form of resistance to social abstraction and commodification. Her works have focused on the wage relation, microbial reproductive labour, commodity fetishism, and invisibility among other things.

She was commissioned by Kaldor Public Art Projects to make *Surfacing* (2019) in the frame of Project 34; Asad Raza's *Absorption. Greyness and Infinity* (2017), was commissioned for Underbelly Arts Festival and presented at RMIT Design Hub (2018) with the support of Liquid Architecture. *Adventure Dances* (2016) was made with support from DirtyFeet, and *Colour Dances (Spectral)* have been shown at various galleries and art events in Sydney since 2016. She has a collaborative project with visual artist, Mark Mailler called *Consejos de Farez*, that has been supported by Critical Path and presented at First Draft Gallery. In 2020 Ivey is a Next Wave Festival artist.

Ivey works extensively as a performer primarily between Sydney and Melbourne, with national and international artists, including Amrita Hapi, Angela Goh, Atlanta Eke, Asad Raza, Brooke Stamp, Melanie-Jame Wolf, Rhiannon Newton, Tino Sehgal, Xavier Le Roy and more. She is grateful for the development support she has received from Ausdance NSW, Australia Council for the Arts, Bundanon Trust, Critical Path, DanceWEB Scholarship, DirtyFeet, Ian Potter Cultural Trust, Readymade Works, and more. Ivey also sells her labour as a waiter between projects and is a part-time student of Political Economy.

WRITER BIOGRAPHIES

Eugene Yiu Nam Cheung is an art critic based in Berlin. His writing imagines non-Western and decolonial frameworks for contemporary art and culture. Eugene contributes to publications such as *The Saturday Paper*, *4A Papers*, *Art+Australia*, *Art Collector* and *Running Dog*. Eugene holds degrees in art history, gender studies and law from The University of Sydney.

Brooke Stamp (b. Sydney 1979) is an Australian based dancer, performer and choreographer. Her artistic career spans two-decades of inquiry in dance bridging visual art, sound-performance, writing and dramaturgy, alongside a prolific contributions to collaborative presentation for theatre and museum worldwide.

Stamp's early career has been distinguished for stand-out performances for esteemed choreographers: Phillip Adams Balletlab (Melbourne), Miguel Gutierrez (NYC), Chunky Move, Shelley Lasica, Rebecca Hilton and Sandra Parker among others; earning her multiple Helpmann and Green Room Award nominations for best female performer. She was awarded an Australia Council Skills and Development Grant in 2005, to study NYC aged 25, and in 2017 was again recognized with the prestigious Australia Council Fellowship for Dance. The same year, Stamp was awarded an MFA from the UNSW Art and Design School.

Since 2011, Stamp's name has become synonymous with contemporary arts discourse

and choreography for museum and gallery environments. She has performed in over 15 major galleries globally including in the works.

Some Cleaning and Some Trade by the Choreographer Adam Linder; at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), the Hannah Hoffman Gallery (Los Angeles), The Wattis Institute (San Francisco), Kunsthalle Bern (Switzerland) and the The Grand Duke Jean Museum of Modern Art (Luxembourg). In 2020 she will perform new work by Linder at the Museum of Modern Art (NYC).

Stamp has regularly collaborated with Australian visual artist Agatha Gothe-Snape; for the works *Here, an Echo*, 20th Biennale of Sydney; *Three Ways to Enter and Exit*, Tin Sheds Gallery & QAGOMA; *Inexhaustible Present*, AGNSW, Ian Potter Museum; and *Oh Window*, for The Mori Museum Tokyo. Stamp has also collaborated with Sally Smart, for her ongoing project, *The Choreography of Cutting*, performing at the Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA), Margaret Lawrence Gallery, and the National Gallery of Australia (NGA).

Stamp's creative works include: *Spells of Temporal Stasis*, exhibition at the Walls Contemporary Art Space (QLD), *Pulling down from the Ephemeral*, Bombo Headland Geological Site (2017); *A satellite, a letter, a rock, a Score*, commission Barco Dance Collection with Critical Path, Sweden/Sydney (2017); *1992*, Spring 1883 Art Fair (2015); *Tearaway Part One: The Crater of Motor Power*, Inaugural Keir Choreographic

Award (2014); *And All Things Return to Nature*, Phillip Adams Balletlab's Inaugural Choreographic Commission, MTC Lawler Theatre (2013); *Restitution Ephémère*, sound performance, Arts House; *Venus Devotional 2010 Next Wave Festival*, MCG Stadium; *Metaverse Makeover*, commission, curated by Thea Baumann, L'Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival, 2011; *Orbit Score for Yoko*, commission for *Pieces for Small Spaces*, Lucy Guerin Inc (2009).

Stamp has supported young artists through teaching, dramaturgy and mentoring; at Victorian College of the Arts, Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association and for companies: Sydney Dance Company, Balletlab, Chunky Move, and Lucy Guerin Inc; introducing her distinct practices.

Lizzie Thomson is a choreographer, performer and researcher living and working on unceded Gadigal land of the Eora Nation. Over the past 20 years, she has performed extensively throughout Europe and Australia with artists including Rosalind Crisp, Marina Abramovic, Mette Edvardsen and Tino Sehgal. Her work has been supported and presented by organisations such as MAMA, Carriageworks, Performance Space, Campbelltown Arts Centre, the Art Gallery of NSW, Critical Path and ABC Arts. Lizzie regularly collaborates with artists and scholars including Agatha Gothe-Snape, Brian Fuata and Erin Brannigan, and has been engaged in several artistic projects in Nordic countries. Lizzie is undertaking a PhD in dance theory at the University of NSW. Her writing on dance has been published in books, journals and exhibition catalogues. She recently performed in a work by Mette Edvardsen in the Oslo Biennale and has written an essay about the project for Edvardsen's new book *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine*, published by the Oslo Biennale.

CURATOR AND MENTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Anador Walsh is an emerging curator, writer and arts administrator who lives and works in Naarm (Melbourne) on the unceded sovereign land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. Anador is predominantly concerned with performance and conceptual art practices, and their ability to reflect our current socio-cultural condition. Central to Anador's curatorial practice is a dialogical approach that preferences relationship building and the sharing of knowledge. Anador has held the professional positions of Marketing and Development Manager at Gertrude Contemporary, and Gallery Assistant at both Neon Parc and STATION Gallery, and has volunteered extensively in the not-for-profit sector, with galleries like ALASKA Projects.

Mark Feary has worked within the visual art sector for fifteen years in a range of contemporary art centres, universities, museums and artist-led initiatives, with an emphasis on contemporary art and almost exclusively within the not-for-profit sector. Feary has worked in curatorial and programming roles at Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney; Artspace, Sydney; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne; and West Space, Melbourne.

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